UN WOMEN

Summing up Success

ADVANCING **GENDER EQUALITY** AND THE **EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN** IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

META-ANALYSIS OF 2011–2016 EVALUATION REPORTS
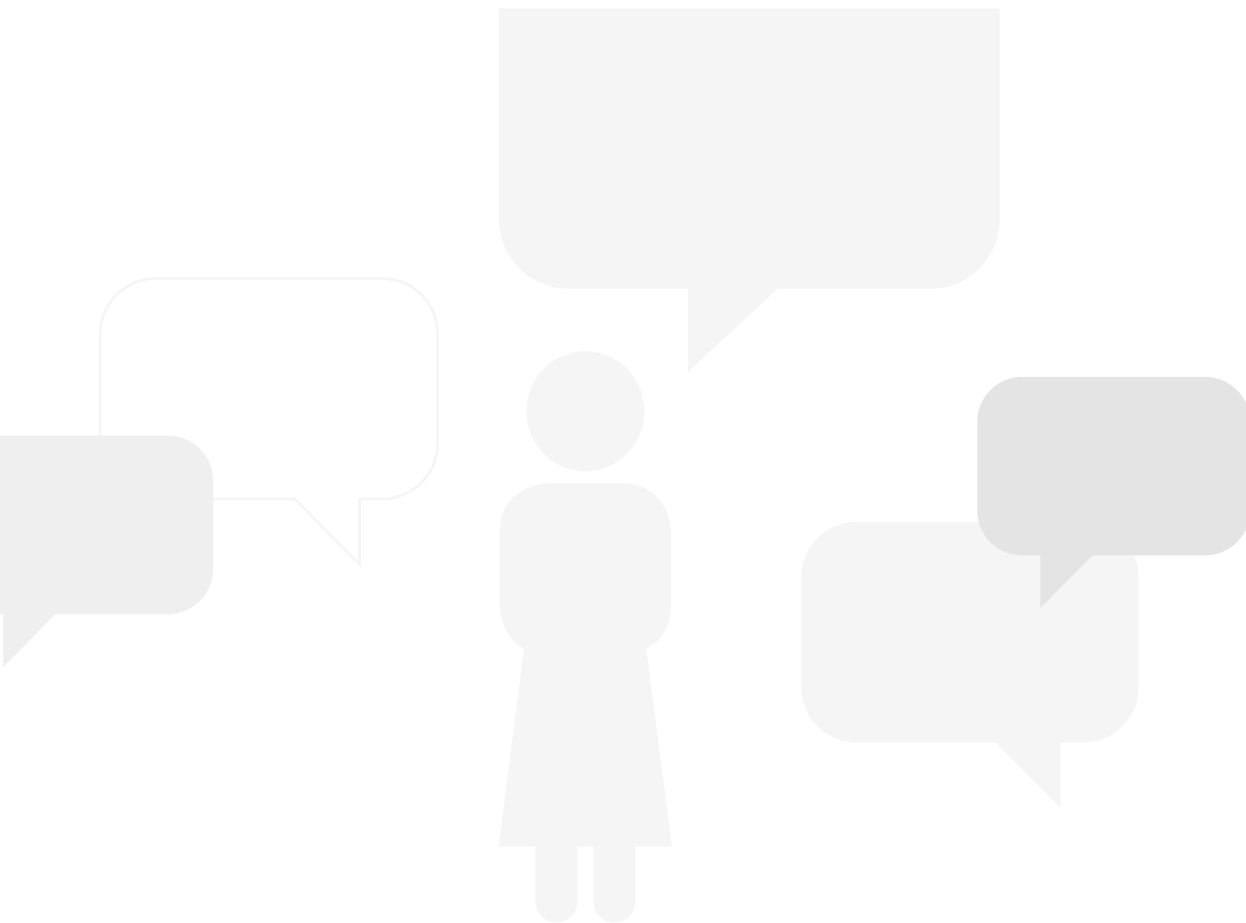
FINAL REPORT

ADVANCING **GENDER EQUALITY** AND THE **EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN** IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
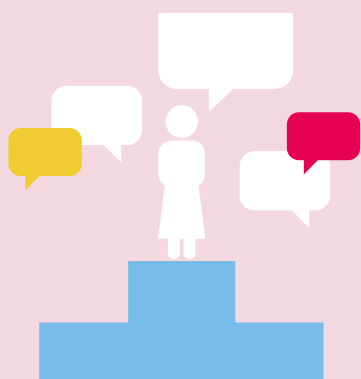
META-ANALISIS OF 2011-2016 EVALUATION REPORTS

FINAL REPORT

KEY TRENDS AT A GLANCE

RELEVANCE

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF RIGHTS HOLDERS AND DUTY BEARERS AND ALIGNING WITH NATIONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL PRIORITIES

EFFECTIVENESS

CONTRIBUTED TO A DIVERSE RANGE OF INCREASINGLY ACTIVE, EMPOWERED AND CAPABLE RIGHTS HOLDERS ACROSS THE REGION AND HAVE PROVIDED A MEANINGFUL PLATFORM FOR MARGINALISED AND VULNERABLE GROUPS TO ARTICULATE THEIR VOICE

HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY

IMPORTANT TO ENSURE THE PROCESS OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION ADHERES TO GENDER-RESPONSIVE, HUMAN-RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

INCREASED INVESTMENTS ARE NEEDED TO FURTHER INCREASE PARTNER'S AND GRANTEES' KNOWLEDGE IN THIS REGARD

OPERATIONAL
COMPLEXITY LED TO
IMPLEMENTATION
DELAY

STREAMLINING
ADMINISTRATION
FOR EFFICIENCY

ORGANISATIONAL EFFICIENCY

JOINT PROGRAMMES AND
COLLABORATION WITH UN ACTORS
HAVE YIELDED IMPRESSIVE
RESULTS BASED ON THEIR ABILITY
TO LEVERAGE THE NECESSARY
EXPERTISE AND RESOURCES FROM
RELEVANT UN PARTNERS. HAVING
MULTIPLE AGENCIES INVOLVED ALSO
MAXIMISED SYNERGIES AND REDUCED
TRANSACTION COSTS
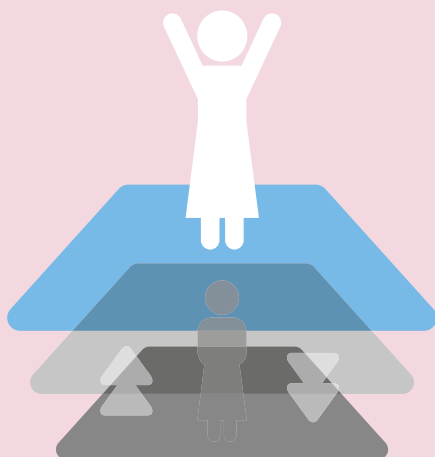
SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

ADDRESSING THE ROOT CAUSES OF
INEQUALITY AND MARGINALISATION
REQUIRES FURTHER SCALING UP OF
MULTIDIMENSIONAL APPROACHES
THAT MAXIMISE CROSS-THEMATIC
LINKAGES. SUCH APPROACHES REQUIRE
SIMULTANEOUS ENGAGEMENT WITH
RIGHTS HOLDERS AT NATIONAL AND
LOCAL LEVELS AND INCLUSION OF A
DIVERSE RANGE OF RIGHTS HOLDERS

ACRONYMS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CAW	Conflict Affected Women
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CO	Country Office
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
EVAW/G	Ending Violence Against Women/Girls
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GATE	Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluation
GEOS	Global Evaluation Oversight System
GEPG	Gender Equality and Political Governance
GERAAS	Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System
GE	Gender Equality
GEEW	Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
GRRSP	Gender Responsive Recovery for Sustainable Peace Project
HR	Human Rights
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office
ILO	International Labour Organisation
LBTI	Lesbians, Bisexual women, Transgender and Intersex persons
MCO	Multi-Country Office
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MP3W	Making Politics Work with Women
NAP	National Action Plan
PEACE	Partnership for Equality and Capacity Enhancement
RBM	Results-Based Management
RO	Regional Office
ROAP	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
SASA	Start Awareness Support Action
SEAP	South East Asia and the Pacific
SHG	Self-Help Group
SIWPSAIN	Strengthening Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Nepal
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UN WOMEN	UN Women (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women)
VAW	Violence Against Women
WDD	Women's Development Directive
WLHA	Women Living with HIV/AIDS

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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The purpose and role of evaluation in UN Women is to contribute to learning on the best ways to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, enhance UN Women's accountability, and inform decision-making. By providing evidence-based information, evaluation contributes to UN Women's role to generate knowledge on what works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

Given the decentralized nature of the organization, the majority of evaluations supported by UN Women are managed at a decentralized level. To address the organizational demands for enduring good quality and credible evaluations, particularly at decentralized level, the UN Women's Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) has designed a Global Evaluation Oversight System (GEOS) and a Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS)[1] driven by similar good practices enforced by other UN entities and consistent with the UNEG Norms and Standards.

In addition to the quality assessment of individual reports, the GERAAS system requires a Meta-Analysis of evaluations to capture the key insights from evaluation reports rated 'satisfactory' or above according to UN Women standards. This ensures that the body of evidence produced by corporate and decentralized evaluations are synthetized and used to inform corporate-level and decentralized policies and strategies. **Whereas the Meta-Evaluation provides a rating of the quality of evaluation reports according to UN Women standards, Meta-Analysis synthesizes the key findings conclusions and recommendations for the body of evaluation reports that meet UN Women quality requirements**.

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[1] GERAAS is an approach to rating evaluation reports using UN Women, UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) and UN System Wide Action Plan (SWAP) standards and indicators of report quality. As part of this process, the IEO assesses the quality of decentralized evaluations on a yearly basis.

This Meta-Analysis is the third component of a larger review process. The first part included analysis of the Evaluation Oversight System of UN Women in the Asia-Pacific region and the second entailed a Meta-Evaluation to analyse the quality of evaluations using the Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS) . Together, all three components will be used to share key insights from different evaluation reports in order to develop constructive lessons for future systemic strengthening of programming and organizational effectiveness[2].

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The main uses of this Meta-Analysis are **accountability and learning**. This report is designed for sharing within UN Women among the primary users including the Regional Evaluation Specialist and management of the UN Women IEO and management and staff of the Regional Office and Country Offices of the Asia and Pacific region.

> THE FINAL META-ANALYSIS WILL BE USED TO SHARE KEY INSIGHTS FROM 30 EVALUATION REPORTS IN ORDER TO DEVELOP CONSTRUCTIVE LESSONS FOR FUTURE SYSTEMIC STRENGTHENING OF PROGRAMMING, ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS.

The **purpose** of the Meta-Analysis is to promote accountability by aggregating and synthesising the recurrent findings, conclusions, lessons learned, good practices and recommendations that have come out of the body of evaluation reports. The Meta-Analysis also aims to foster learning through identifying lessons and good practice. The synthesis of this information will support the use of evaluation findings by UN Women Asia and the Pacific as well as stakeholders. It will also inform donors and other development partners about the effectiveness of the interventions supported by UN Women Asia and the Pacific in the last five years[3].

The **objectives** of this Meta-Analysis are:

- To provide better understandings and insights into UN Women Asia and the Pacific's performance;
- To analyze the impacts of the UN Women Asia and the Pacific's programmes/projects;
- To capture experiences and lessons learnt from the evaluations to enhance organizational learning and knowledge management[4].

In line with a human rights and gender-responsive approach, this analysis examines how effectively gender equality and the empowerment of women (GEEW) has been integrated in the design and implementation of UN Women projects/interventions in the region and the results achieved. **A stand-alone criterion on GEEW and human rights has been added to the first part of the analysis and good practices in achieving GEEW results are highlighted throughout the report**.

[**2**] Terms of Reference: Evaluation Consultant to Review Evaluation Oversight System (GEOS), Meta-Evaluation and Meta-Analysis (GERAAS) of UN Women Asia and the Pacific in 2010-2016.

[**3**] UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Terms of Reference: Evaluation Consultant to Review Evaluation Oversight System (GEOS), Meta-Evaluation and Meta-Analysis (GERAAS) of UN Women Asia and the Pacific in 2010-2016.
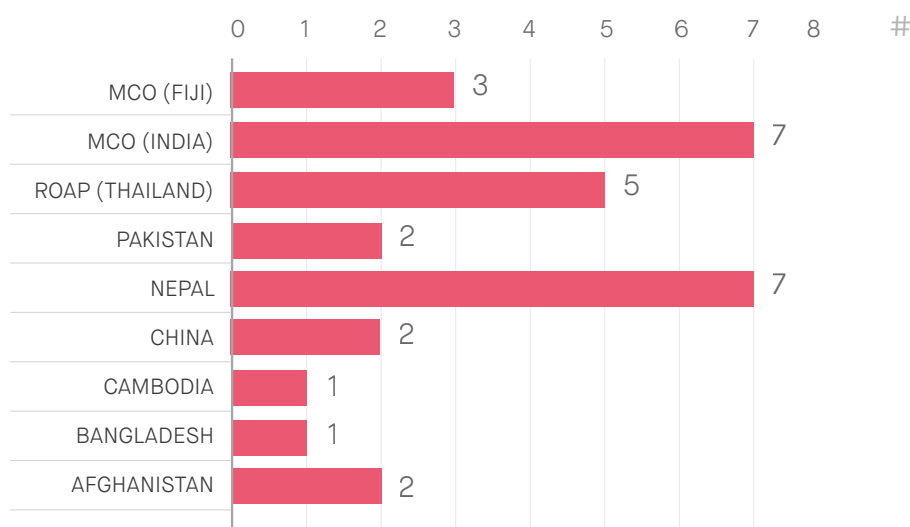
[**4**] Ibid.

SCOPE

The scope of this Meta-Analysis is **30 evaluation reports**[5] of the UN Women Regional Office, Multi-Country Offices (MCO) and Country Offices (CO) in the Asia and the Pacific region produced between 2011 and 2016. The analysis only considers findings, conclusions, recommendations, lessons and good practices identified in reports assessed as 'satisfactory' or above according to UN Women GERAAS standards (see Annex 1 for a complete list of reports included). This ensures that reports can be used with a reasonable degree of confidence to inform evidence-based planning and programming.

Evidence from evaluations managed by the Regional Office, Multi-Country Offices, Country Offices and one Project Office was included in the Meta-Analysis, representing **eight countries** in total (see Figure 1). **Four thematic areas are addressed and analysed within this report**[6]; however for the areas of women's leadership and political participation and governance and national planning, only two report were included so less insights could be drawn for this thematic areas (see Figure 2).
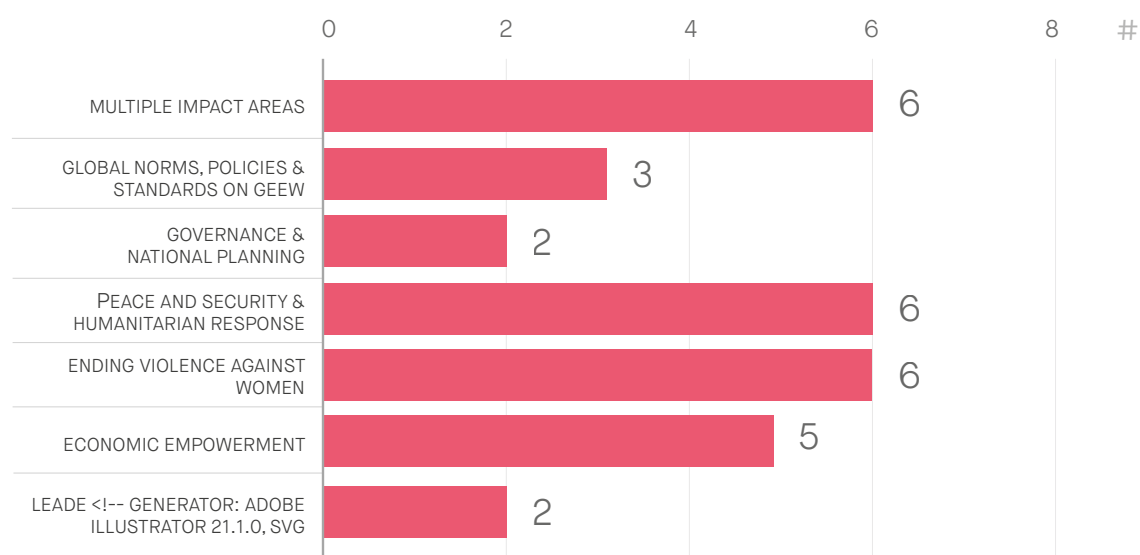
FIGURE 1: GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE OF EVALUATIONS INCLUDED IN THE META-ANALYSIS

FIGURE 2: THEMATIC FOCUS OF 2011-2016 EVALUATION REPORTS

Thematic Area	Count
MULTIPLE IMPACT AREAS	6
GLOBAL NORMS, POLICIES & STANDARDS ON GEEW	3
GOVERNANCE & NATIONAL PLANNING	2
PEACE AND SECURITY & HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE	6
ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN	6
ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT	5
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The scope of the Meta-Analysis includes an assessment of UN Women programme interventions in the Asia-Pacific region based on the United Nation Evaluation Group (UNEG) criteria assessed by the evaluations (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact). Across these criteria, specific consideration is given to the integration of human rights and gender equality principles. The Meta-Analysis also provides further analysis on the progress made against UN Women's organizational goals and priorities.

In addition to analysing the criteria, efforts were made to harness knowledge from the evaluation reports about what works and does not in terms of advancing programmatic work across the different thematic areas of UN Women's work. In each area, the analysis identifies key recurrent findings, conclusions and recommendations that have come out of the evaluations.

The Meta-Analysis addresses a number of key questions (see Box 1). **The list of questions was modified during the inception phase of the review process and further expanded from the original list included in the Terms of Reference**. The list in Box 1 includes only those questions relevant for this analysis.

BOX 1: META-ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

1. What are the recurrent findings, conclusions and recommendations that have come out of UN Women managed evaluations in the region?
2. Which types of efforts and strategies being implemented have shown high degrees of relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, efficiency and impact?
3. What factors have contributed to this or inhibited success?
4. Are there any patterns and lessons to be learnt regarding results produced by UN Women Asia and the Pacific's programmes in general, in particular in relation to UN Women's thematic areas of work?
5. Are there findings and conclusions that point in the same direction?
6. What strengths and challenges in programmatic work in the region do the evaluations expose?
7. What are good practices and lessons learnt?

METHODOLOGY

APPROACH

In aggregating and synthesizing key insights from the portfolio of 30 evaluation reports, a realist synthesis approach[7] was applied which involved distilling all relevant existing evidence in order to draw out relevant policy evidence. During the Meta-Analysis process, findings, conclusions, recommendations, lessons learned and good practices from each of the evaluation reports reviewed were harvested and coded using an excel table. **This process resulted in 1,210 harvested statements**.

Each area was then further tagged based on the analytical framework categories (see Table 1) and relevant statements were harvested from across the 30 reports. Identified evaluation good practices were also harvested and coded in order to provide illustrative examples for the findings of this report. **This led to a total of 3,146 meta-tags**.

UNEG Criteria (including UN Women operational effectiveness and efficiency priorities)	**Effectiveness** (including overall organizational effectiveness of programme interventions) **Organisational Efficiency** (including partnerships/coordination, results-based management and knowledge management) **Relevance** (including harmonization with national strategies, policies and UN Women Strategic Plan) **Sustainability** (including national ownership and capacity development/empowerment) **Impact** (including indirect and interconnected outcomes) **Human Rights and Gender Equality** (integration in the programme design and implementation)
UN Women Thematic Areas	**Leadership and Political Participation** **Economic Empowerment** **Ending Violence against Women** **Peace, Security and Humanitarian Action** **Governance and National Planning** **Global Norms, Policies and Standards on GEEW**

[7] Realist synthesis is an approach to reviewing research evidence on complex social interventions, which provides an explanatory analysis of how and why they work (or don't work) in particular contexts or settings (SOURCE: betterevaluation.org/sites/default/files/RMPmethods2.pdf).

In analysing the coded and tagged information, quantitative and qualitative methods, including frequency mapping and cluster analysis, were applied. Convergences in data were identified and clustered to support the development of key findings where clear evidence from multiple good-quality sources (or a single very-good quality source) existed. The findings in this report include a reference to the primary evaluation reports that provided evidence and data specific to each finding.

CONSULTATION

The approach and methods proposed for the Meta-Analysis were laid out in the Inception Report which was shared with the evaluation manager (the Regional Evaluation Specialist) and members of the Reference Group who also had the opportunity to provide comments on the report which were addressed in the final version.

The final report was shared with the Regional Evaluation Specialist and members of the Reference Group for further review and audited responses to all comments received were provided by the evaluator.

LIMITATIONS

The overall design and conduct of the Meta-Analysis encountered the following limitations:

1. The findings of the Meta Analysis were restricted to the content of the evaluation reports and therefore depended on the quality of the evaluation findings and analysis.

2. Assessing efficiency and impact within the meta-evaluation proved to be challenging given gaps and weaknesses of evaluation reports in addressing these criteria. In order to address 'efficiency' additional sub-criteria (including coordination/partnerships, results-based management and knowledge management) were included as these areas tend to be covered in most evaluations. As most evaluations either did not include impact as a criterion or included very limited analysis, it was also difficult to harvest sufficient information to include this criterion in the meta-analysis.

3. For some thematic areas there was a very limited number of reports to draw upon (e.g. in the case of leadership and political participation and governance/national planning, there were only two reports for each theme) which hampered the ability to provide detailed analysis and lessons learned.

4. The qualitative synthesis process required judgments to be made on how to interpret findings from the evaluation reports and their implications and what combinations of findings from different reports represented a reliable pattern.

5. A very limited of number of evaluation reports included sections or specific discussion on lessons learnt. Because many evaluation reports were accountability based, focusing on whether outcomes and outputs were met, few provided deeper insights and analysis about effectiveness of strategies applied (i.e. what worked and why). This posed a major limitation for this analysis.

6. As this meta-analysis marks the first and only meta-analysis for the region, it was not possible to compare and contrast findings with previous meta-analysis reports and identify areas of change and improvement in the region.

KEY INSIGHTS:
UNEG CRITERIA

This section presents the results of the synthesis of the evaluation reports reviewed across the UNEG criteria including: relevance, effectiveness, organisational efficiency, sustainability, impact and an additional criterion on human rights/gender equality. Key insights captured are based on frequency and cluster analysis in order to highlight convergence across the evaluation findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned.

Key questions considered in this section are:

- Which types of efforts/strategies being implemented have shown high degrees of relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, efficiency, impact and alignment with gender-responsive and human rights based approaches? What factors have contributed to this or inhibited success?
- Are there any patterns and lessons to be learnt regarding results produced by UN Women interventions in the region?

RELEVANCE

FINDING 1: UN Women programme interventions corresponded to increased challenges and opportunities in the region. Flexible approaches ensured relevance of interventions and enabled UN Women to respond to evolving contextual changes and priorities.

*Based on reports: 6, 7, 8, 10, 23, 24, 26, 30

UN Women programmes were implemented within a context of increased challenges and opportunities in the region. These included: a heightened number of humanitarian disasters (and the need for gender-responsive disaster response and prevention approaches); increased movement of people within the region (and women's vulnerability to exploitation); the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (and opportunities to address women's economic empowerment); and a rise in state led extremism

coupled with shrinking space for civil society (and the disproportionate effect this has had on women in terms of control over women's agency and human rights set-backs)[8]. In response to this context, UN Women repeatedly chose interventions in areas that corresponded to the evolving needs of duty bearers and rights holders and engaged with relevant stakeholders such as women migrant workers, civil society organisations operating in restricted environments, home-based workers, humanitarian actors and ASEAN bodies. Most evaluation reports underscored the high relevance and timeliness of interventions in adjusting to and addressing emerging political, economic and social trends and developments across the region.

CHANGING POLITICAL AND SOCIAL/CULTURAL DYNAMICS ACROSS SOUTH EAST ASIA REQUIRED PROGRAMMING TO BE SENSITIVE TO THE STATUS QUO, BUT SUFFICIENTLY FLEXIBLE TO BE ABLE TO ADJUST WHERE OPPORTUNITIES AROSE AND NEEDS WERE THE GREATEST.

Evaluations cited a number of instances where UN Women maintained a flexible approach and ability to tailor and adjust interventions to evolving opportunities and challenges. An illustrative example of this was the five-year regional programme on improving women's human rights in South East Asia (CEDAW-SEAP). The programme operated in eight countries with very different political and social dynamics during a period of significant change in the overall human rights context and civil society space, with some countries opening up greater space for human rights and gender equality attainment and others establishing new barriers or reinforcing existing sources of inequality. The evaluation found that, in all cases, UN Women demonstrated its ability to tailor approaches to the individual national circumstances, thereby yielding good results within the confines of each context.

Programme flexibility was also important in regional programmes where progress and change were not uniform across countries due to contextual, political factors. In such contexts, evaluations cited the importance of designing interventions in a way that ensured realistic results for each country.

In Pakistan, UN Women's approach in maintaining flexibility during Phase II of the programme on home-based workers was seen as a valuable example as it allowed for the agency to be a catalyst and provided space for innovation.

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[8]   Final Report, Mid-term Review of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Strategic Note (2014-2017), 21 September 2015.
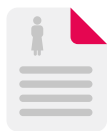
FINDING 2: UN Women's interventions across the Asia-Pacific region were well-aligned with national priorities and policies and highly relevant to the needs of target groups. Interventions designed in a participatory manner with strong engagement of government and civil society stakeholders were assessed to be more relevant to country priorities and more likely to be owned and sustained over the longer term.

*Based on reports 1-30

Evidence from evaluation reports demonstrates that UN Women is strongest in terms of the relevance of its interventions. Overall, most interventions were assessed as well-aligned with national priorities and policies, in particular national development plans, gender equality strategies and action plans and international treaty body norms and commitments (see Finding 3 for more detail). Programme interventions also reinforced and contributed towards United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) priorities and were informed by and aligned with UN Women's Strategic Plans.

In their design and implementation, interventions were also tailored to address the specific needs of duty bearers and rights holders, although a number of evaluations cited the need for greater reliance on available data and analysis (including capacity and baseline assessments from previous phases) in informing the selection of programme interventions and strategies. An important achievement highlighted by many evaluations was UN Women's focus on a broad range of marginalised and vulnerable groups in most of its interventions.

A number of evaluations found that where stakeholders were actively involved as partners in the design and implementation of programmes, interventions were more aligned with their priorities and needs resulting in greater ownership and leadership. For example, in India during implementation of the Anti-Trafficking Programme, UN Women's decision to allow the various implementing partners to come up with their own prioritization, as well as modification to the various programme activities, helped increase the relevance of each project under the programme. In Nepal, the SIWPSAN project used a participatory planning approach to engage stakeholders and beneficiaries during project design phase which included a situation analysis (based on key informants interviews, focus group discussions, baseline and endline surveys and a desk study) as well as start-up and inception workshops at district and national levels. Under the regional programme on EVAW, UN Women developed and piloted the various technical tools in full partnership with relevant government line ministries/departments which ensured strong ownership for the programme interventions and results (see Box 2).

BOX 2: FEATURED GOOD PRACTICE: PARTNER-DRIVEN PROGRAMME DESIGN

REGIONAL PROGRAMME: LEVERAGING TECHNICAL TOOLS, EVIDENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO ADVANCE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS AND PROVISIONS OF SERVICES TO WOMEN EXPERIENCING VIOLENCE IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

At the outset of the Programme's implementation, government officials and CSOs from participating countries participated in a regional programme inception workshop hosted by UN Women in Bangkok where representatives from each of the four countries shared their experiences with VAWG and EVAWG, learned about and discussed available options and strategies under the Programme. Partners then selected Programme components that would best address their country's needs. From Programme design to implementation, the highly consultative and participatory approach used by UN Women played a pivotal role in ensuring that governments and relevant CSOs developed a sense of ownership towards Programme implementation (especially the technical tools developed) in their countries.

FINDING 3: More than half of interventions (57 per cent) were aligned with, and informed by, national and international frameworks including human rights norms and instruments but detail was often lacking about how they were designed to supported implementation of treaty body recommendations.

*Based on reports: 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28

Most evaluation reports stated that, in their design, inventions were aligned with human rights norms and instruments, in particular CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) and UN Security Council Resolution 1325; however, in their implementation, programmes did not always link implementation of treaty body recommendations with interventions. There were however a few notable exceptions to this that stood out as good practice examples:

- The programme on migrant workers in Nepal, was informed by CEDAW's Concluding Observation regarding Nepal's obligation to protect the rights of women migrant workers. UN Women played a crucial role in collecting women migrant workers voices and in lobbying with the CEDAW Committee in connection with General Recommendation 26.
- In Pakistan, the programme on home-based workers was directly aligned with CEDAW Concluding Observations. Interventions focused on implementing recommendations related to the extension of social security benefits to home-based workers and the approval of policies and laws.

- The CEDAW Committee's Concluding Observations for Viet Nam identified the need for a community mobilization strategy to reform and support the functioning of rapid task forces and reconciliation committees in dealing with cases of violence against women and girls. In response, implementation of the regional CEDAW-SEAP programme in Viet Nam focused on community mobilization support.

- The Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) programme in India was designed to support rights holders and duty bearers in implementing CEDAW's Concluding Observations which noted discrimination against women in the North East region. Interventions under the programme therefore focused on the region and included a partnership with the North East network, a women's rights organisation.

- During implementation of the EVAW programme in Cambodia, interventions responded directly to CEDAW Concluding Observations which were addressed in the implementation plan of the second National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women.

Whilst implementation of CEDAW remains a core focus of UN Women, it will become increasingly important for interventions to align with GEEW issues across a broader range of human rights norms and standards such as recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review and gender equality commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals. Given the trend towards increased conservatism in the region and the resulting push-back on women's human rights in a rising number of countries, it would also be important for interventions to continue to address normative commitments made at the regional level including for example those under the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development.

FINDING 4: UN Women's partnerships have been relevant and have reinforced its triple mandate by supporting operational results, normative work and UN coordination although further efforts are needed to further diversify and deepen partnerships. Whilst UN Women's ability to engage high level and community level stakeholders simultaneously have been a particular strength; intervention strategies need to be customised to ensure sustained stakeholder commitment and capacity.

*Based on reports 1, 10, 14, 21, 23, 26, 28

Evaluations highly assessed UN Women's ability to forge successful partnerships across a range of diverse and relevant actors. Whilst most partnerships have been operational ones at the country level, effective partnerships with regional normative bodies such as SAARC and ASEAN have also been developed and were the sole focus of two programmes. Collaboration with ASEAN was found to be highly effective and has resulted for deepened engagement and support to other bodies within ASEAN.

In terms of UN coordination, there were a number of good examples where relevant synergies were achieved and where the mandate and technical expertise and country experience of each agency supported the design and implementation of projects that were relevant to stakeholder needs. Such approaches enabled UN Women to bolster technical expertise within its programmes and positioned UN agencies to contribute to GEEW based on their respective mandate. A good example of this was the project "Strengthening Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Nepal (SIWPSAIN), where technical expertise of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) resulted in a scoping study to identity potential business and income-generating opportunities for conflict-affected women which was used to identify beneficiary need and market demand in the project districts. Some evaluations however noted that UN Women's coordination mandate and strategic positioning within UN Country Teams could be better leveraged in terms of using the established credibility and partnerships of agencies with a broader range of government actors to foster greater political commitment for GEEW.

UN Women's ability to engage a range of partners from ministers to community-based organisations was also cited by most evaluations as a particular strength. Engagement with local women's organisations, particularly through the different Funds administered at a regional and country level (i.e.: the China Gender Fund, the China Gender Facility for Research and Advocacy Fund, the Pacific Regional EVAW Fund and the EVAW Special Fund in Afghanistan), has enabled UN Women to be connected with the priorities and needs of rights holders. Such partnership however have required a significant investment in order to capacitate smaller and local organisations with the knowledge and skills they need to effectively deliver results in line with UN Women standards and systems.

In order to garner greater political will and commitment towards GEEW (including the allocation of resources), a number of reports identified a continued need to expand government partnerships beyond women's machineries given the limited influence and positioning they often have. Whilst the evaluation reports noted an increased number of partnerships with a broader range government actors, such as ministries of finance and planning through work on gender-responsive budgeting, ministries of interior/security in relation to work on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and disaster management authorities at the national and local level, the need for expanding the breadth and depth of government engagement was highlighted. UN Women's increased engagement with the justice sector in several countries under the regional CEDAW-SEAP programme was found to be a critical entry point in the quest for greater access to justice for millions of women as it contributed to strengthened capacity, awareness, knowledge, and skills on the need for a gender-sensitive and CEDAW-compliant judiciary and implementation of gender-sensitive justice delivery, and helped mitigate the risk of resistance from the judiciary.

The need to further diversify partnerships, particularly towards more non-traditional partners, was raised by a number of evaluations. Nearly one third of evaluation emphasised the importance of engaging with men and recommended that this strategy be applied more systematically as male family and community entry points are positive entry points for creating a supportive and enabling environment for GEEW. For example, the evaluation of Phase II of the programme on home-based workers in Pakistan regarded male engagement as a contributing factor to the success of the programme and it was a key approach in all of the Implementing Partner's projects.

> "AS A RESULT OF THE CONSULTATIONS AROUND THE SECOND NATIONAL ACTION PLAN TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, MORE WOMEN KNOW ABOUT THEIR RIGHTS, BUT ONLY 10% OF PARTICIPANTS AT THE CONSULTATIONS WE ATTENDED WERE MEN AND UNTIL MEN UNDERSTAND HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER ISSUES WE'LL GET NOWHERE."
>
> - NGO Siem Reap, Cambodia

EFFECTIVENESS

FINDING 5: Through its convening role, UN Women has been able to play a crucial role in institutionalizing spaces for dialogue between stakeholders at all levels by creating space and voice for civil society and marginalised groups; linking civil society, governments and regional bodies; and facilitating a whole-of-government approach in advancing GEEW.

*Based on reports 5, 11, 12, 21, 23, 30

A significant number of evaluations found that UN Women's ability to convene civil society and government actors helped to position rights holders to advocate for greater accountability among duty bearers and establish systems for genuine collaboration and partnership. For example, under the programme "Regional mechanisms to protect the human rights of women and girls in South East Asia," UN Women's access to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and government stakeholders was of considerable value to project CSO partners, particularly smaller CSOs and networks. UN Women received repeated high praise for having contributed to improved dynamics and collaboration between government and CSOs on advancing GEEW. Partners also highlighted UN Women's ability to leverage its position and mandate to bring together stakeholders from civil society and government to share knowledge and discuss key issues. The evaluation report cited how CSO consultation on the development of the Declaration on Violence against Women and Violence against Children was improved with the incorporation of several recommendations from civil society.

In Cambodia, the process for formulating the second National Action Plan to prevent Violence against Women (NAPVAW) under the EVAW programme was cited in both the mid-term self-evaluation and the final evaluation as a good practice for the region in how it was able to influence and support transformation of governance processes through participatory approaches. The development of the NAPVAW presented an important opportunity to evolve relations between the Government of Cambodia, non-state service providers, gender equality advocates and women from grassroots communities, by modelling a policy dialogue that espoused principles of human rights and gender equality (see Box 15 for more detail).

Similar results were achieved under the CEDAW-SEAP programme where concerted efforts to engage CSOs were made and, despite regressive trends with respect to political freedom in some programme countries, opportunities were created for cooperation between government and civil society actors (both national and regional). As a result of this approach, in Myanmar, 18 CSOs participated in developing the first ever NGO CEDAW report and CSOs were consulted for the first time in the report writing process for the State Report, marking significant progress in opening up broader space for collaboration for women's human rights.

Whilst UN Women's convening role often relates to its ability to bring together different actors, a number of evaluations highlighted instances where this role has transcended creating space for dialogue and resulted in emboldened and empowered groups and individuals who have been able to advance their rights and hold duty bearers accountable for their GEEW commitments. In a positive example from Pakistan, community hearings proved to be a potent means of bringing important visibility to concerns of marginalized community members. The programme helped to connect community hearings based on the testimony of women, with elected representatives and district administration which enabled women's voices to be heard and provided important impetus to begin resolving long-standing concerns.

The regional programme with ASEAN also provides a good example of direct participation of excluded groups in higher level normative processes. Under the programme, UN Women engaged in significant advocacy work and supported a range of forums and consultations between ASEAN representatives and civil society on the Human Rights Declaration development process which enabled representatives of civil society and vulnerable and marginalized groups such as women, trafficked persons, migrant workers to make a substantial range of recommendations to ASEAN representatives.

In a number of instances, UN Women's convening role also enabled it to facilitate the engagement of a wider group of government actors, beyond the traditional focus on women's machineries. For example, under the regional CEDAW-SEAP programme in Myanmar, the programme was able to improve communication and cooperation between government actors on CEDAW elaboration, including through the development of a cross-governmental strategy. An important outcome of these efforts was that specific activities and indicators relating to implementation of CEDAW Concluding Observations on violence against women were incorporated in national action plans and line ministry work plans.

BOX 3: FEATURED GOOD PRACTICE: OPENING EYES TO A BLIND SPOT IN THE REGION: LBTI RIGHTS

REGIONAL PROGRAMME ON IMPROVING WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTH EAST ASIA

Many state institutions and NHRIs in the region have a blind spot when it comes to recognizing rights abuses on the basis of sexual orientation. Lesbian, bisexual women, and transgender and intersex persons face barriers to legal protection in the form of cultural bias, extreme ideologies, and general ignorance of rights among both rights-holder and duty-bearers. UN Women CEDAW SEAP II joined together with OutRight Action International, UNDP and UNAIDS to bring together key stakeholders for a regional consultation on promoting and protecting the rights of LBTI. Held in early 2016, the workshop was the first of its type in a region where nearly half of the countries outlaw same-sex relationships, aiming to open up eyes and foster new partnerships and a deeper understanding of the issues and challenges faced by LBTI to achieve equality and empowerment. The impact of the consultation was notable in some evaluation consultations, sparking a greater commitment from some stakeholders to raise their voices and find new strategies to achieve LBTI rights in the region.

BOX 4: FEATURED GOOD PRACTICE: A WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTING THE WOMEN EMPOWERMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK IN PAKISTAN ADMINISTERED KASHMIR

WOMEN LEADERSHIP AND SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME IN PAKISTAN

In order to support implementation of the Women Empowerment Policy Framework, UN Women collaborated with the Women Development Directive (WDD) to develop a strategic plan and an accompanying process to engage a wider group of ministries (including representatives of 17 government departments) to contribute to it. Discussions held enabled the Departments to build synergies on their work for women's empowerment which was then integrated in the Strategic Pan.

The resulting Strategic Plan 2016-2020 is a document that sets out seven Goals, including goals on economic empowerment, political empowerment, health, education, legal reforms, strengthening humanitarian response and inclusion of gender. Strategies and activities have been formulated against each goal. The Strategic Plan also discusses how the Directorate will develop linkages and work with relevant stakeholders, including traditional partners (Education, Health, Planning and Development Departments) and non-traditional partners (Information, Forest, and Animal Husbandry Departments) for enhancing women's participation and inclusion in development planning and project. Under the Resource Deployment Plan, the responsibility of implementation of activities is not the sole responsibility of the WDD but rather a shared responsibility of relevant Government Departments.

A number of evaluations noted some of the challenges in engaging solely with gender machinery given their limited resources and the peripheral role they are often given and their difficulty in influencing and generating commitment for GEEW among peer ministries. The experience of the Women Leadership and Social Reconstruction Programme (see Box 4) demonstrated that institutionalization of social, economic and political empowerment of all women has a greater chance of succeeding when a whole-of-government approach is adopted and when GEEW is not considered the sole responsibility of one ministry.

 In generating wider government support, some evaluations noted how United Nations Country Teams (UNCT) could be better leveraged in terms of using their established credibility and partnerships with a broader range of government actors to foster greater political commitment for GEEW. For example, the evaluation of the EVAW programme in Cambodia recommended that UN Women could build on its contacts through the thematic working group on gender-based violence and the UNCT to involve relevant and higher ranking ministries.

FINDING 6: Improved advocacy through the creation of, and engagement with networks, coalitions and movements resulted in greater reach and impact of interventions and proved to be an effective way to build capacity and advance women's empowerment.

*Based on reports: 6, 7, 11, 13, 18, 23, 30

Many evaluations concluded that interventions that helped to strengthen women's movements, networks, community-based organisations, and nationally-based organisations in programme countries enabled UN Women to achieve GEEW at a greater scale. There were many examples of how networks were expanded and used to empower women and mobilise civil society in effective advocacy efforts:

- Under the regional programme with ASEAN, synergies were generated from the collective voice of networks and alliances under the South East Asia Women's Caucus on ASEAN (which increased from 49 to over 100 organisations) that national governments (via the ASEAN commissions) are now increasingly paying attention to.

- A powerful outcome of the "Empowerment of Widows and their Coalitions" programme was that women's engagement with coalitions enhanced their respect within the community due to strength of the network. Participation in the coalition activities helped break socio-cultural barriers to mobility and voice faced by single women.

- In India, with the support of UN Women and other organizations, the Positive Women's Network (PWN+) was successful in creating a safe space for Women Living with HIV/AIDS (WLHA) to meet and exchange experiences and achieve tangible improvements in living conditions of WLHA such as improved access to the health services.

- In Nepal, the project "Sustaining gains of foreign labour migration through the protection of migrant workers' rights" supported increased leadership of women migrant workers in all programme districts through the creation of their own structures and facilities, supporting collective action, and enhancing the voice and agency among the rights holders to claim their rights and entitlements.

In order to build on these networks, a number of evaluations concluded that UN Women's support needs to be more strategic in continuing to strengthen CSOs in movement building to create solidarity, facilitate coordination and networking, and undertake collective action to push for women's human rights and ensure they are at the forefront of government agendas.

FINDING 7: A range of factors have driven effectiveness of interventions in the Asia-Pacific region including: the high quality of UN Women's technical expertise, joint and longer-term programming and simultaneous engagement at the macro and micro level.

*Based on reports: 2, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 16, 18, 24, 26, 29

Evaluation findings provided evidence of re-occurring factors that contributed towards effectiveness of interventions in the Asia-Pacific region. The high quality of technical expertise either provided directly by or brokered through UN Women staff was regarding as a key factor contributing towards the effectiveness of interventions across the region. The evaluations found such expertise to be highly valued and appreciated by representatives of regional inter-governmental bodies, government officials at the national and local level, civil society actors and UN agencies.

Joint programmes and interventions based on strong partnerships with UN partners were also assessed highly in terms of their effectiveness. In a positive example from Nepal, the evaluation concluded that whilst the Gender Responsive Recovery for Sustainable Peace Project (GRRSP) was relatively short and resources were limited, it was able to harness the expertise of different UN agencies to have them work together effectively. The GRRSP Project was jointly designed by three UN agencies: UN Women, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and ILO. It provided an opportunity to learn that if a project aims to reach vulnerable groups like Conflict Affected Women (CAW), it is preferable that more than one agency be involved in the design of future projects. Under the programme, each UN agency had a different mandate according to their respective expertise: UN Women for capacity development through awareness raising and counselling, FAO for production of goods, and ILO for entrepreneurship and technical and vocational skills training courses that generated confidence in wage earning and self-employment while promoting fair wages and income. Thus the project was catalytic in terms of unleashing peace relevant processes and creating synergies among agencies to achieve a concerted effort to optimise results and avoid duplication.

Another illustrative example was the "Localising Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Cetral Terai Districts of Nepal" programme, which was a joint programme of UN Women and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), whereby UN coordination and management structure reduced the cost and increased efficiency of project implementation. Overall, the evaluation found that the project benefited from the comparative advantage of each agency with UN Women having institutional expertise in women's empowerment and gender sensitive and post-conflict programming and UNDP with expertise on conflict prevention, dialogue, leadership, and community security.

Longer-term programming, especially for policy interventions, was also found to have contributed towards programme effectiveness and institutional capacity change which resulted in greater ownership and sustainability. Some evaluations also concluded that any interventions aiming to achieve social norm change need to be designed for a longer period of time with impact assessments after programmes are completed to assess the degree of change achieved.

UN Women's work to equip and capacitate rights holders, particularly those who are most vulnerable and marginalised, has been core to its mandate and in line with a human rights-based approach; however evaluations found that such efforts have had the greatest effect when they are directly linked with broader policy initiatives at a macro level. For example, under the regional programme on empowerment of widows, interventions supported widows and single women to organise into coalitions at the local level whilst at the national level, supporting policy advocacy for women to ascertain their rights. Another example was the project on home-based workers in Pakistan which had the dual focus of enhancing the capacity of Implementing Partners to advocate for legal protection of home-based workers and building the capacity of women home-base workers to make effective demands of government at their immediate local level to resolve their community issues.

A number of external factors that hinder effectiveness were identified through the evaluations including the lack of an enabling environment for GEEW due to ongoing constraints faced by women such as societal norms and pressures and mobility blockages. Frequent and rapid turnover of government personnel and insufficient political will were identified as other major hurdles hampering programme effectiveness. An illustrative example of this was the Ending Violence against Women (EVAW) Commission project in Afghanistan where Commission members openly questioned whether the EVAW Law was in alignment with Sharia, undermining the benefit of any gained experience or training. Internal factors hampering effectiveness included resource constraints and sustainability of funding, turnover of programme staff and administrative challenges which in some cases affected relations with partners and challenged the timeliness of interventions.

FINDING 8: Peer learning opportunities and platforms for knowledge sharing that leveraged upon existing good practice and innovation were pivotal in developing and deploying relevant and effective programme interventions and fostering active collaboration across the region.

A particularly effective and scalable intervention strategy was to provide opportunities for peer knowledge exchange through the sharing of tools, approaches and experiences at the local, national and regional level. For example, under the regional EVAW programme, UN Women actively worked towards developing channels for South-South Exchange and collaboration by creating knowledge sharing platforms for the four target countries. These channels were not restricted only to collaboration among the different UN Women Country and Project Offices, but actually connected relevant government institutions and CSOs in each of the countries and in the region. Drawing upon existing knowledge products, advocacy materials, and evidence-based approaches which were assessed for their effectiveness and impact, was found to have contributed to the effectiveness of the work accomplished under the Programme (see featured good practice Box 6).

Under the regional programme with ASEAN, representatives of the Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children from Brunei, Malaysia, and Myanmar found that peer learning and networking opportunities helped them to learn how other countries are addressing women's human rights issues, identify good practices, and examine their own activities at the country level to identify potential improvement. Such exchanges were also found to have motivated the formation of further organisations and groups in ASEAN countries that are bringing critical mass to national and regional movements on women's human rights.

A number of evaluations concluded that Funds administered by UN Women at a regional and country level are in a unique position to access information and insights from a wide range of actors and activities across numerous, diverse countries. For example, the evaluation of the Pacific EVAW Facility Fund found that South–South Exchange activities add significant value to the Fund as networking opportunities were highly valued by both stakeholders and grant recipients.

Despite these positive examples, most evaluations concluded that knowledge management was not a key strategy employed across most interventions and that the quality of knowledge management was often too weak to be used as an effective strategy to advance GEEW.

FINDING 9: Capacity-development needs to be pursued through systematic, sustained, and strategic interventions and processes that are increasing based on innovative approaches and supported by deliberate and systematic efforts to capture, generate and share knowledge.

*Based on reports 11, 12, 16, 21, 23, 25

Whilst the results of capacity development interventions are difficult to measure and the true impact can often only be seen after the end of the programme, a number of evaluations concluded that UN Women's programme capacity development initiatives contributed to the establishment of a stronger foundational framework in the region for the attainment of women's human rights, though evidence of this is better understood with qualitative glimpses into individual lives.

In order to ensure that investments in capacity development are sustainable, effective and lead towards impact, a number of evaluations emphasized the need for more institutionalized and innovative approaches that are informed by successful strategies applied in other contexts. Interventions that embedded knowledge and capacity in the training programmes and curriculum of national institutes were found to be more effective in terms of sustaining learning and building capacity at a greater scale. For example, under the regional CEDAW-SEAP programme, UN Women worked closely with legal training centres in the programme countries and successfully integrating women's human rights in the curricula and training materials of legal training centres in Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam and Thailand. Eighty per cent of judicial actors responded in post-training self-assessments that they had acquired knowledge and skills to apply international human rights law to domestic gender-related issues. In the Cambodian justice sector, the programme made headway in integrating CEDAW and gender into the country's human rights curriculum for lawyers, judges and prosecutors run by the Legal Training Centre, facilitating sustainable mechanisms for capacity development past the close of the programme.

BOX 5: FEATURED GOOD PRACTICE: CREATING EFFECTIVE PLATFORMS TO LEVERAGE TOOLS AND INNOVATIONS

LEVERING TECHNICAL TOOLS, EVIDENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO ADVANCE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS AND REVISION OF SERVICES TO WOMEN EXPERIENCING VIOLENCE IN SOUTH EAST ASIA

Through the Regional Office's connections with other UN agencies and development agencies, as well as access to technical experts and regional bodies and networks, it was well-positioned to facilitate the creation of knowledge platforms and information sharing within and among countries and stakeholders using a South-South Exchange model.

Under the regional EVAW programme, the idea was to ensure the development of technical tools, as well as to leverage regional innovations and adopt evidence-based approaches from other regions. For instance, the Start Awareness Support Action (SASA!) model on EVAWG from Uganda was selected as a good guiding practice for the community interventions, and the Gender Equity Movement in Schools from India was selected as a good model to inform the school-based intervention.

The regular regional meetings that were hosted by UN Women ROAP allowed for the various stakeholders – government and CSOs – to engage with each other and identify common interest and strategies, as well as increase use of knowledge, evidence, and good practices. South-South Exchange meetings were also organized between Lao PDR and Viet Nam, countries with very similar political structures and both were implementing community mobilization interventions inspired by SASA!. These channels for inter-country exchange were developed to spur discussion and synergies that would further contribute to regional dialogue and knowledge and information exchanges on subjects of gender equality, VAWG, and EVAWG.

A number of evaluations highlighted the importance of capacity development as a process more than an activity. For example, the evaluation of the EVAW programme in Cambodia found that the process for supporting the formulation and implementation of the second national action plan on EVAW had a real effect on EVAW knowledge and capacity in the country. The need to shift away from traditional training-based capacity development approaches towards innovative approaches was underlined by a number of evaluations. For example, the use of social mobilization strategies to effectively increase participation of women and promote women's empowerment in communities under the programme on home-based workers in Pakistan was assessed as highly effective. The need to continue supporting networks and knowledge sharing platforms to enable organisations that have benefited from UN Women training and mentoring (particularly under the different regional and country-level Funds) also need to be supported and scaled up.

Under the regional CEDAW-SEAP programme, the increasing popularity and utility of social media was seen as a useful adjunct to more traditional networking and capacity-building approaches used in previous phases of the programme. The evaluation found that such approaches were of particular importance for young activists and in countries where geographic coverage is challenging or in situations where civil society space is restricted. Other capacity development approaches that were found to be effective by evaluations included:

- Training of Trainers for multiplier effect, and building a pool of national experts on particular topics;
- Capacity development of 'change agents' and institutional partners who are well-positioned to contribute to a gender responsive and enabling environment;
- Action-oriented trainings, workshops, meetings linked to commitments to action by participants related to specific project outcomes;
- Placement of GEEW experts within government ministries in order to provide day-to-day support using a mentoring, learning-by-doing approach.

While individual competencies increased in most programmes, evaluations repeatedly pointed out that the environment, with traditional mind-sets, cultural attitudes and customs, continue to pose a barrier in effective application of such knowledge.

CAPACITY BUILDING CANNOT BE LIMITED TO A FEW TRAININGS BUT HAS TO BE INCORPORATED AND INSTITUTIONALIZED SO THAT IT CONTINUES TO MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF THE FREQUENT STAFF TURNOVER COMMON IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES THAT LEAVE A VACUUM IN TERMS OF INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY AND INFORMED CHAMPIONS.

GENDER EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

FINDING 10: Beyond having GEEW as the object and focus of interventions, a number of projects integrated human rights and GEEW in the design and implementation; however increased efforts are needed to fully apply gender-responsive and human rights-based principles and approaches.

*Based on reports: 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 15, 17, 20, 25, 26, 29

Although all interventions had GEEW as their focus, a number of evaluations highlighted a need for deeper gender analysis to inform the design of programmes including greater detail about the capacity of rights-holders to claim their rights, and duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations, together with an explanation about how programme strategies will support their capacities.

A particular challenge for many interventions was in supporting and capacitating partners to apply human rights and GEEW principles and approaches to the process of programme implementation. For example, under the programme on migrant workers in Nepal, the Implementing Partner chosen was assessed as weak on human rights and GEEW which required constant mentoring and monitoring by UN Women in order to bring rights holders to the forefront of programme implementation and ensure gender balance and participation of rights holders during programme events.

The evaluations of the Pacific EVAW Facility and the EVAW Special Fund in Afghanistan found that whilst there were good examples of efforts to strengthen gender-responsive and human rights-based approaches at the stakeholder and grant recipient level (including a requirement for Fund applicants to explain how their proposals would implement a human rights-based approach and extensive training and field support to grant recipients of the Fund in this area), during the project implementation process, there were more instances where human rights approaches were not considered. Supporting the right of target groups or beneficiaries to participate in a meaningful manner throughout project implementation was identified as a particular challenge for some of the regional and country-level Funds.

The need for programmes to ensure responsiveness to diversity by identifying possible barriers to participation and tailoring intervention strategies to maximise inclusion of target groups and beneficiaries was also highlighted by a number of evaluations. For example, the evaluation of the Gender and Climate Change project in Bangladesh noted that since most of the target women were illiterate or less educated, trainings would have been more effective had they been provided in local dialect by local experts. Several evaluations highlighted the need to develop training modules and curricula in local languages and dialects so that linguistically marginalised communities can benefit from them. The importance of using regional, national and local experts wherever possible was also highlighted in order to strengthen national capacity and empowerment.

Despite these challenges, there were positive instances where gender-responsive and human rights-based approaches guided the design and implementation of programmes. A good practice example was the regional EVAW programme which was highly assessed in terms of its ability to support inclusion, participation and fair power relations; the three key principles of human rights and gender equality.

BOX 6: FEATURED LESSON LEARNED: OVERCOMING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION BARRIERS

LOCALISING THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA IN CENTRAL TERAI DISTRICTS OF NEPAL

In relation to stakeholder participation, the evaluation found that the project did not have budgetary arrangements for women with children to allow for the support of caretakers whilst they participated in trainings. This caused challenges for mothers to be fully attentive or actively participate as their attention was often divided. While this matter seems simple, it was vitally important for mothers with young babies and children, and the evaluation found that the project should have been sensitive towards such matters.

FINDING 11: Overall, programmes were effectively designed to address underlying causes of inequality. Whilst a significant number of interventions focused on marginalised groups, evidence from evaluations shows that there is still a need to look deeper at intersectionalities of inequalities when programmes are designed and implemented.

*Based on reports: 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 28

Overall, most programmes, in their design and implementation, effectively addressed the underlying causes of inequality and a significant number of programmes were assessed to have contributed to fostering a more enabling environment for gender equality and women's human rights. For example, under the China Gender Fund, the Call for Proposals and grant application screening procedures were based on the Technical Advisory Committee's human rights and gender analysis of underlying causes and barriers to human rights and gender equality in China.

The programme on empowerment of widows in South Asia was informed by the experience of a wide range of NGOs on issues of violence against women, especially widows and single women as well as baseline data showing significant financial insecurity, reported harassment and daily fear as underlying causes of inequality for widows and single women in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The programme was therefore designed to work with widows and single women who needed financial as well as psychological support to deal with their vulnerabilities.

BOX 7: FEATURED GOOD PRACTICE: INTERSECTIONALITY ANALYSIS TO MAXIMISE PROGRAMME REACH AND INCLUSION

"PARTNERSHIP WITH CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL OF INDIA TO PROMOTE GENDER RESPONSIVE PLANNING, BUDGETING AND AUDITING IN SELECT STATES"

Intersectionality analysis has also been relevant in the Indian context as Indian society has deep and complex layers of discrimination and deprivation. Various sections of people (landless labourers, migrant workers, nomadic communities, threatened tribal groups, urban squatters, etc.) face inequities along caste, class and gender lines. Women across these sections are the worst victims because they suffer the multiple burdens of patriarchy, caste-discrimination and poverty.

Therefore, recognizing individuals and groups who are at the intersections of different inequalities and assessing the budgetary priorities for them (especially Dalit and Muslim women and transgender communities) has been an extremely relevant activity.

In India, the programme "Empowering Women in Rural and informal Settings through Capacity Development" acknowledged that, in restrictive contexts such as Jodhpur where lack of mobility was a serious constraint, interventions to support increased social mobility positively changed women's lives by enabling them to access services and information; thereby positioning them to understand and claim their rights. In designing interventions to address the main barrier of mobility, significant gains were reported by beneficiaries of the programme including increased knowledge about government schemes, increased knowledge of production processes and increased ability to negotiate wage rates within their livelihoods domain.

A significant number of programme interventions also focused on marginalised and vulnerable groups. For example, under the regional CEDAW-SEAP programme, special efforts were made in all programme countries to build the capacities of marginalised groups, who are most likely to have their rights violated, to claim their rights. Targeted groups included rural women, indigenous women, women with HIV/AIDS, disabled women and lesbians, bisexual women, transgender and intersex persons (LBTI). CEDAW Shadow Report writing exercises also helped to identify particular issues facing marginalised groups, with representatives from those groups taking greater roles in report writing and presenting as well as follow-up.

The evaluation of the EVAW programme in Cambodia concluded that the second National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women reflected the needs of a much broader range of women than the first Plan, including "women with increased risk" - LGBTI women, those living with HIV, women with disabilities, sex workers, entertainment workers, garment factory workers and other female workers, women who use drugs or whose partners use drugs, women in prisons, indigenous women and women from religious or ethnic minorities. This was achieved through the breadth of the consultation undertaken.

Under Pacific EVAW Facility Fund, calls for proposals specifically encouraged proposals focusing on marginalised women and girls, including those living in poverty, those with disabilities, and those affected by HIV/AIDS or areas otherwise especially excluded or disadvantaged. As a result of this focus, the Fund was able to reach a variety of hard-to-reach groups, including commercial sex workers, lesbians and trans-gender persons, street workers, people living in informal settlements, people who are illiterate, and persons living with disabilities.

Despite this targeting of vulnerable and excluded groups, evaluations identified the need for programmes to also consider how different types of discrimination intersect and compound gender inequality. For example, under the SIWPSAIN programme in Nepal, interventions were designed to address the underlying causes of social, economic and cultural inequality but the causes of discrimination such as age, language and disability were not taken into consideration. The evaluation also found that the project was not sensitive in terms of proportionately engaging conflict victims of all marginalised sections of the population such as Dalit and Janajati and selecting most the remote Village Development Communities affected by conflict in districts.

Another example where intersectionality was limited was the Gender and Climate Change Project in Bangladesh where the evaluation identified the need for more diversified coverage of target women in terms of marital status, head of household, ethnicity and religion as divorced, widow and separated women are usually more vulnerable during disasters.

ORGANISATIONAL EFFICIENCY

FINDING 12: Organisational efficiency across programmes was found to be mixed with evidence of cost efficiency but significant administrative challenges which resulted in implementation delays.

*Based on reports: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 15, 17, 22, 23, 26, 27, 30

Although most evaluation reports commented on efficiency, the evidence provided through the evaluation reports was limited in most instances and analysis tended to focus on implementation rates and cost-efficiency with more than half of the programmes assessed to be cost-efficient.

Evaluations found that administrative challenges were particularly apparent during the roll-out of UN Women's regional architecture, which shifted the delegation of authority from the Regional Office to country representatives. In such cases, evaluations cited a number of administrative issues encountered which created delays for some Implementing Partner cooperation agreements. Evaluations of earlier programmes, such as the Gender Equality and Political Governance Project in the Pacific region, cited challenges caused by the transition from UNIFEM to UN Women (including the longer lead time required to set up the national and sub national offices) which had an impact on some of the project deliverables and required extra efforts to adjust to new systems and operational structures.

More than one third of evaluations cited significant administrative challenges which had a negative effective on programme implementation. Procedural delays and long processing times for the disbursement of funds and recruitments were commonly cited as particular challenges by many evaluations. For example, under the "Women Leadership and Social Reconstruction" programme in Pakistan, the Provincial Disaster Management Authority Gender Advisor was recruited in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa when only four months of the project period remained.

> "THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES OF UN WOMEN WAS UNNECESSARILY LENGTHY AND NOT SUITED FOR A SHORT DURATION PROJECT THAT WOULD DEMAND QUICK AND PROMPT ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS."
>
> – Evaluation of the Partnership for Equality and Capacity Development (PEACE)

A number of evaluations found that the balance between adherence to UN mandated guidelines and the need to reduce redundant layers in the procedures remained a challenge for programmes. For example, the regional CEDAW-SEAP programme evaluation noted that that whilst UN policies on funding of partners drove fiscal discipline among partners, these have proven to be overly cumbersome for some partners and administrative requirements for partners and grantees under the regional and country-level Funds were repeatedly cited as a challenge to efficient operations, taking considerable time and energy on the part of both UN Women and its partners to resolve and comply with.

Under the regional and country-level Funds, evaluations identified a significant number of changes made to strengthen cost effectiveness of operations. Such measures included improved calls for proposals and proposal vetting processes and increased support to grantees through the addition of professional staff and further capacity building opportunities. Despite these positive measures, Fund evaluations noted continuing challenges faced by grantees in terms of monitoring and reporting. For example, under the Pacific EVAW Facility Fund, the evaluation cited concerns of grantees that the reporting forms were too long, complicated and time-consuming. The evaluation of the China Gender Fund, noted problems faced by grantees and Fund staff with regard to time-consuming financial reporting requirements and grant disbursement procedures and highlighted the need to streamline reporting procedures.

FINDING 13: UN Women's strong reliance on partnerships enabled it to achieve greater results in limited timeframes; however further investments are needed to strengthen coordination, communication and knowledge sharing among partners.

*Based on reports: 4, 12, 15, 17, 19

Across most of its programmes, UN Women employed multi-stakeholder approaches involving different partnership modalities across a diverse range of actors with varying skills and capacities. In their assessment of programme partnerships, evaluations found that such approaches require that roles and responsibilities of each partner be clearly defined for maximum effectiveness and resource efficiency in order to avoid overlap whilst at the same time encouraging collaboration and cooperation and facilitating synergies.

Where joint programmes and collaboration with UN actors was a focus of programmes, such partnerships were seen as yielding impressive results based on their ability to leverage the necessary expertise and resources from relevant UN partners. For example, the GRRSP project in Nepal demonstrated the advantages of having three UN agencies deliver the planned outputs, thereby reducing transaction costs and increasing the efficiency of programme implementation. Despite the low budget and ambitious targets of the three agencies, significant achievements were made because the project utilised the comparative advantages of the three UN agencies in delivering the planned outputs.

Given the increasing resource constraints faced by UN Women and other UN agencies in the region, evaluations were unanimous in their call to scale up successful examples of joint programming and effective collaboration. Some evaluations noted instances where further measures were needed to support and enable improved coordination with UN partners. For example, the evaluation of the "Localising Women, Peace and Security Agenda" in Nepal concluded that provision of a project manager under the joint programme would have made coordination more efficient and effective. Many of the regional programme evaluations cited constraints to coordination caused by limited UN Women presence in individual countries. For example, under the regional CEDAW SEAP programme and the third phase of the programme on Empowering Migrant Workers in Asia (EWMWA), evaluations identified challenges in engaging with programme officer-only offices in terms of coordination with other UN agencies where attempts to do so were in some instances delegated to subordinates who did not have the decision-making power or access to relevant information which had the effect of stymieing efforts at coordination and risking duplication.

In terms of efficiency and effectiveness of partnership modalities, some evaluations found that engaging government agencies in project implementation is best achieved through formal agreements, such as Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to receive government partners' optimal support for smooth project implementation. Under the "Partnership for Equality and Capacity Enhancement (PEACE)" project in Nepal, the evaluation found that the absence of a MoU with the three partner ministries resulted in some difficulties in achieving full cooperation during project implementation.

Evaluations also noted the need for improved cooperation between Implementing Partners in order to facilitate increased dialogue and mutual learning so that interventions can be replicated and scaled up.

While specific partnership dynamics depend on individual contexts and the performance of NGO partners, evaluations found a strong preference among partners for long-term partnership arrangements as they allow for greater flexibility than short-term agreements and tend result in less piecemeal or ad hoc interventions and lead to sustained partnerships.

Despite the plethora of UN Women programming evidence and lessons learned about what works in relation to advancing GEEW, the majority of evaluations found knowledge management to be a particular weakness of most programmes and concluded that more should be done to strengthen and expand knowledge sharing by documenting, evaluating, and disseminating results. For example, the evaluation of the EVAW Special Fund in Afghanistan highlighted the need for UN Women to work closely with grant recipients and their target groups to capture EVAW success stories and to translate these into useful knowledge products that can be shared with donors and to solicit new donors, as well as with the government and other projects and agencies involved in the EVAW response.

BOX 8: FEATURED GOOD PRACTICE: ACHIEVING GREATER RESULTS THROUGH PERFORMANCE-BASED CONTRACTS

PARTNERSHIP FOR EQUALITY AND CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT (PEACE) PROJECT IN NEPAL

Performance-based contracts with the Implementing Partners proved to be effective and innovative instruments to accomplish outcomes which would not have been possible with the conventional input or output-based contracts. The Implementing Partners invested extra efforts to generate employment and forge linkages with appropriate agencies despite all odds mainly as a result of their agreement to performance based contract.

FINDING 14: Although UN Women has worked to apply result-based management programming, resource constraints and challenging programme contexts have meant that some of the elements of an effective RBM system were not put in place or adequately implemented, particularly systematic methods and tools for tracking and verifying indicators of progress. Programmes with past mid-term or previous phase evaluations were assessed highly in terms of achieving programme objectives and results.

*Based on reports: 2, 5, 8, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30

Many evaluations found that whilst RBM systems have been put in place[9], gaps remain in the capacity of Implementing Partners and UN Women staff to systematically collect, analyse and use data, particularly baseline data. Most evaluations revealed a need to strengthen monitoring systems and to allocate adequate human and financial resources to enable UN Women to effectively track and measure progress and changes resulting from programme interventions.

Only 30 per cent (n=9) of programmes implemented had an explicit Theory of Change in place. Evaluations noted the important role that these can have in creating an organisation-wide understanding about the types of strategies and interventions needed to affect change and it was recommended that having Theories of Change for the regional and country-level Funds would enable projects to further test and develop these.

More than half of the evaluations found the allocation of resources for monitoring and the quality of monitoring systems and tools to be weak and, with the exception of the China Gender Facility, all other regional and country-level Funds identified the need for grantees to receive more technical support and capacity building to effectively conduct baselines and carry out systematic results-based monitoring and reporting.

In a number of instances, evaluations found monitoring systems to be largely geared towards assessment of deliverables and outputs and without sufficient reflection on strategy and approach. Some evaluations noted that data was used in a cursory manner at the national level to confirm that activities were on track in accordance with the results framework, but it was not well utilised either internally or with stakeholders to help inform activities over the programme implementation period.

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[9] Following the roll-out of the regional architecture, UN Women developed a strategy to strengthen RBM in the organization including a corporate RBM system to better manage country programmes and ensure strong linkage between country and regional results to the Strategic Plan.

Evaluations also cited the need for improvement of indicators which in some instances lacked relevance or were largely activity-based. The evaluation of the regional and country-level Funds and multi-country programmes noted challenges in systematically collating, analysing and reporting on data across projects and countries and the need for a more appropriate mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators and data.

Whilst the collection of baseline data is essential for measuring change over time as a basis for comparison, one third of programmes were assessed as having either no or limited baseline data against which to measure achievement of programme results. For example, the mid-term evaluation of the Pacific Regional EVAW Facility Fund concluded that the inability of most grantees to design and conduct a baseline was a significant challenge for UN Women and that efforts to improve baselines and results-based monitoring, evaluation, and reporting will mean a long process of skills building and technical assistance to grantees.

A positive example of baseline data being used to provide credible and reliable data and evidence for results was the programme on home-based workers in Pakistan where a thorough baseline survey was completed in the first year of project implementation. The baseline data enabled the Implementing Partner to develop an in-depth understanding of the needs of the rights holders early on and to effectively measure and assess progress through the implementation of the project.

A particularly interesting finding across programmes with mid-term evaluations was that they were assessed to be more effective, relevant, efficient and sustainable due to the fact that they addressed and adjusted to challenges raised by evaluations. For example, the evaluation of the China Gender Facility for Research and Advocacy, which assessed the programme outcomes as largely met, noted that the recommendations of the 2007 evaluation were followed. The success of the SIWPSAIN programme, where all five outcome indicators were met, was strengthened through the conduct of a mid-term evaluation.

BOX 9: FEATURED LESSON LEARNED: COLLECTING BASELINE DATA EARLY IN ORDER TO MEASURE AND ASSESS CHANGE

GENDER EQUALITY AND POLITICAL GOVERNANCE PROJECT IN THE PACIFIC

Under the GEPG project in the Pacific, the baseline surveys were carried out well into the implementation of the programme so the outputs were not linked to the survey results and even with the completion of the surveys the results were not used as a basis for reviewing the output indicators. This made tracking progress challenging but it also resulted in a waste of financial resources when the results of three commissioned studies were not used.

SUSTAINABILITY

FINDING 15: Significant results are possible in a short time frame, but sustainability requires longer-term investment, a good exit strategy and strong engagement of target groups in project design and implementation.

*Based on reports: 2, 11, 12, 14, 24, 25

Whilst some evaluations noted the likelihood of programme results being sustained, the majority emphasised the need for financial and technical support to sustain momentum and build on achieved results. For example, even in instances where programme results had the potential to be sustained through laws, policies and individuals, evaluations found that without clear mechanisms for implementation and financing, institutionalisation would be limited and that putting in place such mechanisms usually requires longer-term programmes.

Sustainability strategies, including exit strategies, were often included in the design of projects but often not implemented due to limited timeframes or contextual changes. Mid-term evaluations of programmes provided an opportunity to review and reassess the relevance of sustainability plans and to provide recommendations to adjust. In instances where such evaluations were conducted, final evaluations concluded that interventions had a higher likelihood of sustainability.

A number of evaluations found that the more attention devoted to engagement of target groups in project design and implementation, the stronger the likelihood of sustained impacts. For example, evaluations of the regional CEDAW-SEAP programme, the SIWPSAIN programme in Nepal, the GRRSP in Nepal and EVAW Special Fund in Afghanistan found that bottom-up and participatory planning process, which involved relevant stakeholders from the beginning of the project, both in design and implementation of programmes, significantly increased ownership of the stakeholders and resulted in greater sustainability of results. Evaluations also concluded that partnerships among stakeholders with resource commitment increases ownership to results thereby also leading to sustainability.

Sustainability of programmes was most adversely affected by low political and financial commitment of governments, the political context, short project duration and turnover of government staff. For example, in Afghanistan, the evaluation noted that sustainability of the EVAW Special Fund will depend on how the government handles the current controversy around the EVAW Law.

The ongoing rotation and movement of staff within government departments, ministries, and CSOs was also identified by a number of evaluations as a major challenge in maintaining momentum in activities and ensuring sustainability, as it often leads to an ongoing resource requirements for capacity development among stakeholders.

FINDING 16: Investment in strategic partners, empowerment approaches and establishment of networks and structures ensured greater institutionalisation of capacity development results and increased ownership of programme objectives.

*Based on reports: 10, 13, 14, 18, 20, 23

Evaluations highlighted a number of instances where partnerships with national institutions were used to build and sustain capacity to advance GEEW. For example, under the regional CEDAW-SEAP programme, UN Women's regional partner, the International Women's' Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific, undertook training of National Human Rights Institutions in the region, over an ongoing basis which contributed to their understanding of women's human rights issues and CEDAW. As mentioned previously, partnerships with legal training centres in the programme countries, including the Viet Nam Judicial Academy, also ensured institutionalisation of capacity development efforts and greater sustainability. Under the Gender and Climate Change project, the decision to engage the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies as the research partner increased national capacity for gender-sensitive research and ensured greater ownership of the research findings.

BOX 10: FEATURED GOOD PRACTICE: EFFECTIVENESS OF EMPOWERMENT APPROACHES IN THE PHILIPPINES AND TIMOR-LESTE

REGIONAL PROGRAMME ON CEDAW-SEAP

UN Women Philippines supported local NGOs to facilitate the CEDAW Shadow Report writing process, working directly with marginalised groups of peasant women, migrant women, indigenous women and women with disabilities. The women learned about CEDAW in a three-day training programme that taught them how to draw on their life experiences to generate data. Rather than relying on a small group of consultants or researchers, the marginalised women themselves took control over the data gathering and writing process. This method proved to be empowering for the participants, helping to expand the capacities of marginalised women to participate in CEDAW reporting as a means of claiming their rights.

In Timor-Leste, Rede Feto, a network on women/gender NGOs, took the lead responsibility for producing the NGO Shadow Report in 2015. UN Women offered technical support, hiring an international consultant based in Dili to work with the network. However, due to unforeseen family circumstances, the consultant had to leave Dili and was only able to provide support electronically. This left Rede Feto to manage the process more independently. While acknowledging that there was a steep learning curve for the network, the proximate removal of the consultant had the unanticipated impact of instilling greater ownership of national actors over the report and its contents. For the first time in Timor-Leste, the Shadow Report was written by the stakeholders themselves. Sense of pride and ownership was further bolstered by the inclusion of many items from the report in the COBs, offering a strong impetus for propelling forward further actions.

Investment in local bodies and structures was also seen to support greater sustainability and institutional change. For example, under the Anti-Trafficking programme in India, the evaluation concluded that the efforts of the implementing partners to establish Self-Help Group (SHG) networks and vigilance committees were likely to be sustained programme completion. Similar findings were made by the evaluation of the "Empowering Women in Rural and Informal Settings through Capacity Development" project in India where the combined approach of creating a cadre of agyavaan or women leaders and the establishment of cooperatives in Almora and trade committees in Jodhpur were seen as effective strategies towards building sustainability. A number of evaluations underlined the value and effectiveness of empowerment approaches in ensuring greater ownership and sustainability of programme results but also in fostering confidence, participation and leadership of national and local stakeholders in advancing and articulating their rights.

Interventions that supported organisations already focused and invested on issues relevant to programmes also bolstered ownership and ensured sustainability of programme results. For example, the evaluation of the programme on empowerment of widows in South Asia found that, as a short-term programme, it was strategically wise to support a tested model of organisation and leadership development of widows and single women that was based on the Implementing Partners' strengths and long-standing experience working on these issues in their respective countries and contexts. Because the Implementing Partners in India and Nepal had pre-existing comprehensive strategies for the development of widows and single women's coalitions and for empowering them and developing leaders from amongst them, UN Women support thus helped to strengthen and expand their ongoing activities.

Engaging with 'change agents' and institutional partners who are well-positioned to contribute to a gender responsive and enabling environment was also assessed to be an effective approach for sustaining programme results. For example, the evaluation of the regional programme with ASEAN found that the motivation and dynamism of individual ASEAN representatives proved to be one of the most significant positive factors influencing sustainability of the Project and that many of the representatives dedicated considerable personal resources from their offices and have obtained national government support for the commission work that they are undertaking.

FINDING 17: Given current resource constraints across the Asia-Pacific region, especially in Middle Income Countries, designing sustainable and longer-term interventions will require more strategic approaches such as diversified and pooled funding, joint programming and fundamental shifts in the design and delivery of regional and country-level Funds.

*Based on reports: 3, 9, 16, 22, 27

In a region like the Asia Pacific, with a high concentration of Middle Income Countries and waning donor support for multilateral funding, ensuring the continuity of funding to institutionalise and sustain programming results is becoming an increasing challenge for UN Women. Whilst many evaluations highlighted the importance of longer-term programming, the design and delivery of programmes with multiple phases and focuses will become less feasible. Instead, the need to design multi-faceted and cross thematic programmes aligned with UN Women country programmes and national development outcomes will be required in order to pool resources, maximise synergies and position interventions more strategically. The use of Country Programme Evaluations in the region could therefore provide important strategic guidance to Country Offices on how to best position their work, ensure an integrated programming approach and maximise synergies with other key partners.

The need to re-think the purpose, structure and modalities of Funds coordinated by UN Women MCOs and COs in the region was also highlighted across evaluation reports. Whilst most reports found that there has been cumulative sustainability of grantee results, there is an increasing need to connect these interventions to higher level strategic and policy interventions of UN Women and other development actors.

"OUTCOMES OF MOST CHINA GENDER FUND PROJECTS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN SUSTAINED IN SOME FORM TO VARYING DEGREES AND CONTINUE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN BOTH BREADTH (E.G. GEOGRAPHIC SPACE) AND DEPTH (E.G. CONTINUED "DRILLING DOWN", SUCH AS EVOLVING FROM LAWS TO REGULATIONS). HOWEVER, MOST STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED ARE CLEARLY COGNIZANT OF THE FACT THAT THERE IS MUCH MORE TO BE DONE TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON WHAT HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED THUS FAR. ALTHOUGH NOT ALL PROJECTS CAN BE EXPECTED TO BE SCALED UP, EVERY PROJECT CONTRIBUTES AN IMPORTANT PIECE OF KNOWLEDGE THAT PROVIDE USEFUL EVIDENCE BASE FOR CHINA'S POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION."

- Evaluation of the China Gender Fund

Re-thinking the modes of engagement of regional and country coordinated Funds was also highlighted as a necessary priority in order to reflect and build on accumulated experience and respond to the reality of reduced funding in the region. For example, the evaluation of the China Gender Fund recommended that longer-term, the Fund should consider transitioning to an inclusive platform for incubating gender-related organizations where responsibility for training, communicating outcomes and even governance gradually devolves to the community itself. In order to achieve this, the evaluation recommended that the responsibility for training should progressively shift from Fund staff to former grantees and partnering organizations and that the Fund should enlist external partners to provide training, including professional service providers committed to fulfilling their corporate social responsibility and universities. Other Fund evaluations highlighted the need for increased networking and knowledge exchange between grantees and communication of grantee results. The evaluation of the Pacific Fund recommended that UN Women consider what is needed for the Fund to operate at an optimal level and that 'right-sizing' and 'right-focusing' of the Fund will offer a high return on investment.

Fund evaluations universally raised the challenge of waning funding sources and the need for diversification and pooling of funding, as opposed to reliance on one donor. The need to attract non-traditional sources of funding (such as private sector contributions) was also raised by evaluations. For example, the evaluation of the China Gender Fund, recommended that the Fund should build on its effective partnership with Proya Cosmetics by partnering with and mobilising resources from Chinese private sector enterprises and philanthropic foundations. In Afghanistan the use of a pooled funding mechanism for the EVAW Commission project ensured a consistent approach with donors and reduced transaction costs for both the donor and the recipients.

IMPACT

FINDING 18: Cross-cutting interventions across multiple thematic areas improved the scale of impact of interventions in the region.

*Based on reports: 2, 3, 6, 7, 11, 14, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28

Addressing underlying issues of GEEW and acknowledging intersectionality requires a holistic approach reinforced by strong linkages across thematic areas. In order to have impact, policy interventions to advance GEEW require strong political commitment across multiple government actors and allocation of funds. Programmes with the greatest impact included interventions designed to address the complexity and multifaceted nature of inequality and marginalisation that cut across the different themes of UN Women's work. For example, many of the programme interventions successful in contributing to social norm change focused on economically empowering women in order to equip them with the confidence and social positioning to participate in decision-making processes and bodies. Under the SIWPSAN project in Nepal, interventions contributed towards the social and economic empowerment of conflict affected women and former women combatants through the provision of enterprise development training which helped position the women to take leadership positions in local organisations.

A number of interventions concluded that interventions aimed at improving policy and legal frameworks were most successful when they included strategies to support gender-responsive budgeting and planning as a means to ensure effective implementation.

BOX 11: FEATURED GOOD PRACTICE: BENEFITS OF POOLED FUNDING IN TRANSITION CONTEXTS

EVAW COMMISSION PROJECT IN AFGHANISTAN

Pooled funding mechanisms can provide more predictable, flexible and timely funding to yield better results for beneficiaries. They also reduce dependency from one sole donor. If a donor decides to reduce or stop donations in a pooled funding mechanism, it will not affect the project as hard as it would in a single funding mechanism. Given the short timeframe of the financial support for WPCs through the EVAW Commission Project, the use of a pooled funding mechanism helped reduce the negative impact of volatile funding flows.

For donors, pooled funding mechanisms increases security for investments by adopting a collective approach to risk. Moreover, pooled funding allows organisations to implement more ambitious projects with creased coordination, more transparency and accountability.

For a culturally sensitive topic such as the EVAW Law implementation, pooled funding proved to be successful. The EVAW Special Fund supported WPCs, which ensured a consistent approach with donors, enabled project autonomy and increased successful implementation, despite existing opposition.

FINDING 19: To increase impact, there is a need for longer-term programming and greater strategic positioning and partnerships in order to ensure that results are felt at multiple layers.

*Based on reports: 5, 6, 7, 12, 23, 26, 28

The majority of programme interventions in the region had a duration of less than three years; therefore most evaluations concluded that whilst progress was made towards programme goals, it was too early to assess impact. Generally, short term interventions had intangible impacts, mostly evident in terms of enhanced capacities and increased knowledge and awareness of rights holders and duty bearers.

Whilst a significant number of programme interventions were effective in affecting policy-level change, such results did not always constitute impact if policies or plans were not fully implemented within the timespan and resources of the programme. For example, in Nepal, over a two and a half year period, the PEACE project helped duty bearers to improve their understanding of GEEW issues and more importantly the importance of the National Action Plan (NAP) and their roles/duties in its implementation. Whilst 10 line ministries were able to come up with their sectoral plans incorporating NAP activities and some were able to design and begin implementation of NAP-related projects, the impact of the plan and projects in translating into concrete changes and improvements of the lives of women will only become evident after the lifespan of the programme.

In cases where short-term interventions were assessed as having direct or intangible impact, this was often due to how programmes were designed. For example, programmes that acknowledged the complexity of GEEW and designed multi-faceted interventions generally had greater impact. An example of this was the SIWPSAIN programme in Nepal (highlighted as a good practice in Box 12).

Where programmes resulted in evidence of rights holders being able to enjoy their rights and duty bearers having the ability to comply with their obligations, this was often due to sustained interventions at national and local levels. This often included strategies to empower and engage women at the local level to articulate and advocate for their rights, and national-level interventions supporting the reform of policies.

A positive example of change in capacity of rights holders and duty bearers was the project on migrant workers in Nepal which resulted in the registration and licensing of 400 agents of recruiting agencies who were previously working without any formal status. For rights holders, the project resulted in a sharp increase in women taking permits to go to foreign labour migration through formal channels, receiving financial support, appealing for legal aid and claiming for compensation.

Programme impact was also assessed more highly for interventions linked with wider development priorities and country-level programmes and strategies (of UN Women and the UNCT) and which maximised synergies of other actors in order to bolster results. An illustration of this was the programme "Sustaining the gains of foreign labour migration through the protection of migrant workers' rights" in Nepal which was designed for a specific duration but implemented in a programmatic manner that built on UN Women's country investment in migrant rights over a 17 year timeframe. The evaluation attributed the programme's impact to the fact that it was able to bring all key stakeholders together under one ambit to work and address the foreign labour migration issues.

BOX 12: FEATURED GOOD PRACTICE: AFFECTING CHANGE AT THE INDIVIDUAL, HOUSEHOLD AND COMMUNITY LEVEL

SIWPSAIN PROGRAMME IN NEPAL

Through a three-pronged approach sustained over a four-year period, the SIWPSAIN programme was able to achieve simultaneous change at multiple levels. At the **individual level**, there was significant change in knowledge and awareness of home-workers regarding their rights, services of duty bearers and where to go when their rights are violated. There was also increased mobility of women from their homes to the community. The women also gained capacity in speaking confidently at home and putting forth their voices and doing business and supporting in household expenses. They gained increased prestige at home as well as in community and people and agencies began listening to them. Individually they were found empowered significantly.

There was a change at the knowledge level of **household members** on gender equality and women empowerment. Male members of house have understood the importance of empowerment of family members--women. They allow women to go out for training or other tasks which was not the case before. It was reported that there was reduced domestic violence. There was distribution of domestic chorus between men and women and also that the family treats son and daughter more equally than before in education. The family members perceived their household image increased as a result of empowerment of women.

At the **community level**, there was increased participation of CAW and former women combatants in local organisations such as consumers' group, mothers' group, cooperatives, community-based organsations, school management committee, health group, food security group, women's group, micro finance group, and agriculture group. Women's participation in these groups translated into greater acceptance of former women combatants with members of the community purchasing the goods and services from their shops. The CAW and former women combatants also developed the habit of saving and taking loans from saving and credit groups/cooperatives in most of the cases.

The CEDAW-SEAP programme provides another example of this approach whereby diverse partners forged strategic partnerships and alliances at regional, national and local levels that maximised the impact of women's human rights and GEEW interventions at each level.

Most evaluations concluded that work on GEEW requires consistent investment and the ability to work over the longer term. For example, the programme on home-based workers in Pakistan, which was implemented over two phases, demonstrated how longer term investments can lead to the maximisation of results. Because the impact of programmes can only be realistically assessed over time, evaluations also highlighted the importance of impact assessments in order to measure and assess changes that take place after the completion of programmes.

KEY INSIGHTS:
THEMATIC AREAS

This section provides an analysis of strategies, good practice and lessons learned in advancing UN Women's thematic areas in the Asia-Pacific region. As in the previous section, analysis within this section is based on the findings, conclusions and recommendations from the evaluation reports of 30 programmes implemented in the region.

Key questions addressed in this section include:

- What strategies and approaches were used by UN Women to advance work across the different thematic areas? Which ones were assessed to be the most and least effective?

- What are the main lessons learned from the projects and what are the good practices that have the potential to be scaled up or replicated across the region?

LEADERSHIP AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

*Based on reports: 2, 8

Within the limited scope of the two programmes relating to this thematic area, the general focus of interventions was on: increasing overall participation of women in politics at national and local levels (including through advocacy for constitutional and legal amendments); bolstering women's capacity to raise issues related to their needs and priorities; and strengthening the gender responsive of political structures, mechanisms and processes.

The programmes differed quite significantly in their approaches and results. The Gender Equality and Political Governance Project (GEPG) in the Pacific region focused largely on building public support for women's participation in political governance through community-based training and awareness-raising and the introduction of temporary special measures. Although the programme aspired to increase the gender responsiveness of political institutions and processes, its focus on individual verses institutional capacity development investments limited results in this regard.

The Making Politics Work with Women (MP3W) project in Nepal had a more systematic and institutional approach that focused on positioning women to directly influence political parties through incorporating gender equality principles in the election manifestos of political parties and nominating women to different committees within the political parties and to stand in the elections.

The key project beneficiaries and target groups engaged under this thematic area were rural women, government institutions, civil society, men and media.

What Strategies Worked and Why?

◉ Engaging a broad range of influential actors at the community level including media and male advocates

Both evaluations, highlighted the importance of broad engagement with stakeholders who yield clout and influence, particularly at the community level, in supporting women's political participation.

An important result of the MP3W project was an increase in gender-responsive media coverage and publication of news articles on women's political participation, gender equality and human rights. Such positive coverage was found to be successful in increasing awareness of the general public on GEEW issues and in garnering greater community level awareness of and support for women's political participation.

Engagement with men was also an important component of both projects and assessed as an effective strategy in creating an enabling environment for women's participation. As a result of the BRIDGE training provided through the GEPG project, there was an increased number of men at all levels of government willing and capable of advocating for women's increased participation in decision-making within the government and local communities.

◉ Using bottom-up community-driven approaches focused on garnering community and family support for women's enhanced participation in politics and decision-making processes political participation

Both evaluations concluded that in advancing women's political participation, it is at the local level that the greatest gains can be made. For example, the evaluation of the Gender Equality and Political Governance Project (GEPG) found that focusing on participation in local level governance often allows for progression of women's leadership and greater inclusion of women at all decision making levels.

The establishment and strengthening of community-level networks, such as the Women's Political Watch Groups in Nepal also helped to facilitate and capacitate women to participate in community decision making bodies and processes. The evaluation found that because these groups were limited to Kathmandu and two other districts (out of 75 districts in Nepal) they did not however have an impact on participation at the national level and significant scaling up of the project (including in terms of resources and timeframe) would have been needed to achieve this aim.

◉ Strengthening partnerships with political parties through advocacy and capacity building initiatives to mainstream gender equality issues into the party systems and processes

The MP3W project was assessed highly in terms of its ability to ensure that political parties are responsive to gender issues and have capacity for gender-sensitive policies, rules and procedure formulation. Under the project, efforts to raise awareness about women's participation in political and peace processes, UN Security Council Resolution 1325, violence against women, gender equality and electoral processes, and women's human rights helped to incorporate gender equality principles in the election manifestos of all major political parties.

The women's political watch groups established under the project also played a key role in demanding accountability to gender equality from political parties and candidates/legislators.

◉ Supporting women's economic empowerment of women as a pre-condition for participation in politics and decision-making and leveraging economic participation to support political participation

Evaluations of economic empowerment programmes in India and Pakistan cited how interventions that supported women to become self-sufficient through the provision of financial support or income generational skills often led to greater equality gains for women at home and in the community. Some programmes provided evidence how increased income resulted in greater skills and confidence of women and facilitated their increased involvement in decision-making bodies at the local level. In this regard, women's economic empowerment can serve as an important catalyst to support and enable their increased political participation.

Lessons Learned

- **Increasing women's political participation requires a significant investment in building institutional capacity in order to ensure that structures, mechanisms and processes are gender-responsive**. Although the BRIDGE trainings conducted under the GEPG project helped to increase knowledge of electoral processes and their implications on gender equality in Pacific Island countries, they did not lead to increased participation of women in political governance. Rather than focusing on individual capacity changes only, it is important to support institutional-level capacity development aimed at supporting change in the structures of relevant government stakeholders, political parties and electoral commissions.

- **Addressing structural barriers to women's meaningful political and public participation is essential**. Projects designed address the main obstacles to women's participation in decision-making such as their limited mobility, lack of skills and income were assessed as more effective and sustainable.

- **Training investments need to target individuals with political clout who are able to influence their own organisations or political parties** and to provide a catalytic role to advance gender quality in governance issues through party structures and systems.

- **Systems and resources need to be in place to create national impact**. The evaluation of the MP3W project found that the Women's Political Watch Groups (WPWG) lacked financial resources to continue programmes and build linkages with central-level political parties, Village and District Development Committees, and the national gender machinery for sustainability. Whilst the performance of the WPWGs was found to be better in the districts than in Kathmandu, the project participants there were too few in numbers to create national impact

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

*Based on reports: 7, 13, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 35

A number of programmes addressed women's economic empowerment either directly as the focus of the programme or indirectly as an intervention to support other objectives such as women's increased political participation or their recovery from conflict and disaster. The overall focus of economic empowerment interventions was on positioning women to claim their rights and entitlements. Projects sought to address women's poor working conditions, barriers to economic participation and their lack of productive assets.

Rural women, including socially and economically vulnerable groups such as low-income women, conflict affected women, women living with HIV/AIDS, informal workers and indigenous women were specifically targeted by a significant number of programmes.

What Strategies Worked and Why?

⦿ Creating support networks for home-based workers and other economically marginalized groups

Experience from economic empowerment programmes shows that Self Help Groups (SHG) can be effective in creating a sense of solidarity among women, demanding the rights of members and supporting women's increased confidence and leadership.

- Results from the "Empowering Programme in Rural and Informal Settings through Capacity Development" showed that SHGs enabled women to secure a reliable and safe line of credit in addition to increasing their women's mobility and self-confidence. For example, such groups enabled women to interact more with the village headman and to effectively raise issues of concern.

"AFTER THE SKILL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING, WE WERE ORGANISED IN A SELF-HELP GROUP." BEFORE THE PROJECT WE WERE ALONE AND DIDN'T REALISE OUR COLLECTIVE STRENGTH."

- Beneficiary of the GRRSP project

- Under the programme "Empowerment of Windows and their Coalitions", the evaluation found that participation in coalition activities provided women with a space to voice their concerns. This, along with the leadership training, built their confidence to speak out in other platforms, especially when dealing with government officials, to avail their rights. Participation in coalition meetings and activities also helped to break mobility related barriers faced by single women. In Udaipur, Nepal and Sri Lanka, women noted that they were better equipped, both psychologically and knowledge-wise to exercise their freedom with regard to mobility and to influence decisions affecting their daily lives.

⊚ Addressing barriers to economic empowerment such as community norms around mobility and participation of women in public spaces, lack of economic resources and skills

In their design and implementation, many projects effectively addressed barriers that women and girls face that limit their economic empowerment and participation in the public sphere. These include lack of access to finance, a dearth of business skills training, limited access to mentors and to networks of peers, a lack of mobility, minimal market linkages, and societal pressure and cultural norms. In both rural and urban areas, women are often disallowed to work outside their homes, have issues of mobility, and respect/status that reinforce gender disparities.

- The experience of the programme on home-based workers in Pakistan demonstrated that constraints faced by women home-based workers such as societal norms and pressures, mobility blockages due to cultural and social barriers and other crosscutting challenges continue to persist and require long term resolution. As a response to this challenge, the programme tackled women's empowerment at different levels during the course of the project. For example, some Implementing Partners found workable solutions to address mobility issue by providing pick and drop services to women to encourage them to join skill learning and development centers.

- UN Women's Anti-Human Trafficking programme in India sought to address the underlying factors that lead to women and girl's vulnerability to becoming trafficked and exploited. It identified unsafe migration as one of the major channels through which women and girls tend to get trafficked and hence tried to put in place livelihood and income enhancement activities to provide women and girls under economic duress with alternatives to migration.

- In India, the experience of the "Empowering Women in Rural and Informal Settings through Capacity Development" programme showed that where interventions were less able to target and address barriers to economic empowerment, their results were less. For example, in Almora, women reported greater benefits on various fronts (including better management of earnings and savings, increased knowledge about the production process and greater confidence to negotiate rates) than their counterparts in Jodhpur where significant social and cultural barriers limited progress and results. In Jodhpur, the most significant gains reported by women were increased knowledge about government schemes.

○ Combining awareness-raising of women's human rights with economic empowerment interventions

The evaluation of the "Empowerment of Widows and their Coalitions" programme found that the approach of integrating right- based training courses linked with entrepreneurship development, and technical and vocational skills, equipment and tools support, was an instrumental tool for economic empowerment. Under the programme, agricultural and livestock productivity enhancement and other benefit schemes synchronised with the above interventions to create a spiralling effect for the marginalized women in a much better way than standalone activities.

The home-based workers programme in Pakistan worked with Implementing Partners on innovative approaches and models to ensure that women would directly benefit from interventions aimed at increasing income generating opportunities and improving their knowledge and awareness on their rights.

○ Partnering with other UN agencies that have strong technical expertise and experience in leading and designing migration, labour and livelihoods interventions

Significant results were achieved under the GRRSP programme by harnessing the technical expertise of different UN agencies. UN Women supported capacity development through awareness raising and counselling, FAO helped with the production of goods, and ILO supported entrepreneurship and technical and vocational skills training courses that generated confidence in wage earning and self-employment while promoting fair wages and income.

- During implementation of the regional EWMWA project on women migrant workers, UN Women's partnership with ILO and IOM enabled it to capitalize on their entry points for promoting gender issues in migration and governance in the project countries.

- Under the "Empowerment of Widows and their Coalitions" programme where there were successful interventions to support women's entrepreneurship development through agricultural and livestock productivity enhancement and other benefit schemes, the evaluation concluded that, if there had been a single UN organisation, it would not have been so effective and only part of the beneficiary needs would have been met.

- The evaluation of the Anti-Human Trafficking programme in India identified gaps in UN Women's expertise related to livelihood and vocational training, local governance systems and labour laws and rights. It was concluded that use of joint missions with UNDP, ILO and UNDP would enable UN Women to benefit from the technical expertise of these agencies in order to achieve a greater impact.

○ Increasing women's economic participation to support greater influence and decision-making power at home and in their communities

Most evaluations found that interventions to advance women's economic empowerment often increased political and social empowerment, especially at home and at the community level. The theory behind this change was that providing women with access to income (through livelihoods support and entrepreneurial training) often supported their increased confidence and mobility to participate in worker' federations, chambers of commerce. This participation in turn created opportunities for women to voice their needs and make demands on the government (thereby addressing cultural and social norms and barriers to women's political and economic participation).

- As a result of the SIWPSAIN programme, women's social status at home and in the community was increased as a result of interventions to support their economic empowerment.

- Under the project on home-based workers in Pakistan, organizing in groups gave the women home-based workers identity, courage and confidence to negotiate for better rates, improved collective bargaining skills and strengthened women home-based worker's cooperatives and unions.

- Through the Gender and Climate Change project in Bangladesh, increased earnings of women (as a result of livelihood support they received through the programme) led to reduction of poverty and helped them to become more prepared for disasters incidents which led to reduction in their vulnerability to climate change impacts. Women's access to viable livelihood options also positioned them to play a significant role in decision making of the household issues as well as in disaster preparedness and management. Since the women have received different trainings on disaster management and viable livelihood options and have become self-sufficient with the financial support they received under the project, it is reflected in their roles played in home and outside as well. Their voice is no more suppressed under the male voices of the family. Their decisions are in fact valued by their husband and in laws. They have gained the strength to raise their voice against any injustice done to them and are able to fight for their own rights and dignity.

BOX 13: FEATURED GOOD PRACTICE: SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY EMPOWERING HOME-BASED WORKERS IN PAKISTAN

Under the programme "Towards Gender Equality: Women's Economic Empowerment: Home-based Workers" in Pakistan, women home-based workers were socially and economically empowered with increased visibility and voice. In Hyderabad and Khushab, for example, the creation of women home-based worker cooperatives gave the women recognition in their neighbourhoods; membership in worker federations and women's chambers of commerce and in some cases, even attending conferences gave them the opportunity to voice their needs; and group awareness sessions gave them the knowledge and confidence they needed about themselves and their work. Some women home based workers also participated in the public sphere within their communities, villages, markets and at the district level as members of the District Action Committees.

A visible and important result of the programme was the increased capacity of the rights holders to make effective demands of government at their immediate local level to resolve their community issues. Sensitizing and working with men; social mobilization of women home based workers; organizing them in groups, and continued market exposure visits are some of the several strategies employed that increased women home based workers visibility.

"PEOPLE IN THE VILLAGE RESPECT THOSE WHO HAVE MONEY, WHO CAN SPEAK AND PUT AGENDA STRONGLY. SINCE WE HAVE EARNED MONEY, WE CAN SPEAK AND PUT AGENDA STRONGLY, THE VILLAGERS DO RESPECT US NOW. WE ARE DIFFERENT NOW THAN BEFORE".

- Beneficiary, SWIPSAIN Programme

- A major impact of the GRRSP project has been on how it has enabled different groups of beneficiaries to work together. Development of self-confidence, relevant skills, self- employment and income generating opportunities are other major impacts of the project. Women in different groups also noted that the relationship between women and men has changed.

"PREVIOUSLY WE HAD VERY LITTLE CHANCE TO SPEAK TO EACH OTHER OPENLY WITH CONFIDENCE. WE USED TO BE AFRAID OF NEW IDEAS AND USING THEM FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE FAMILY BECAUSE WE THOUGHT OUR IDEAS WERE NO GOOD. WE THOUGHT THAT WHATEVER NEW WORK DONE IN THE FAMILY WAS THE ROLE OF OUR HUSBANDS AND MALE FAMILY MEMBERS. BUT THE SITUATION HAS TOTALLY CHANGED IN OUR FAMILY NOW. WE SHARE IDEAS, AND HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THEM AND WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE THEM A SUCCESS."

Project Beneficiary, GRRSP Project

◉ Engaging the private sector to support women's economic participation through training and capacity building partnerships

The evaluation of the project "Towards Gender Equality: Women's Economic Empowerment: Home-based Workers", noted the value of Implementing Partners' engagement with the private sector, in particular linkages with private sector training institutes such as the Leather Product Development Institute and Leather Field Pvt. Limited or with companies able to use services or unfinished products of home-based workers.

BOX 14: FEATURED GOOD PRACTICE: EVIDENCE-BASED LEGAL REFORM TO ADVANCE THE RIGHTS OF HOME-BASED WORKERS IN PAKISTAN

In Pakistan, under the Home-based Workers programme, government plans and policies all recognized the existence of women in the informal sector, but failed to respond to the dilemmas of the workers in this sector or its shortcomings, and also did not promote or institute measures to have the sector's contribution documented in a disaggregated manner by sex, nature of work, incomes and areas. The Home-based Workers programme played an integral role in pushing this agenda forward by supporting collection of data on women home-based workers through the Labour and Human Resource Department surveys and working consistently on the home-based worker policies and laws in Sindh and Punjab.

◉ Consistent evidence-based advocacy focused on the implementation of legislation and policies for legal protection

A major achievement of Home-based Workers programme in Pakistan was the consistent advocacy on issues related to women home-based workers by the partners and UN Women. This included the development and implementation of policies and legislation for legal protection of all home based workers. For example, sustained advocacy led to substantial fund allocation by the Punjab Government to establish skill centres for women home based workers in three districts of Punjab. Another achievement was availability of data for approximately 30,000 women home based-workers and legislative changes that enabled a district labour officer to register ten cooperatives with the Government of the Punjab.

The regional EWMWA project was also assessed highly in terms of its ability to incorporate the women migrant workers' gender rights agenda into policy formulation at the ministerial level (in particular, in Viet Nam and Cambodia). The programme contributed to developing a sex-disaggregated data base system to inform relevant ministries on policies and regulations that are needed for effective migration governance in specific labour markets.

Lessons Learned

- **Designing and implementing livelihood and employment generation initiatives requires deep technical knowledge and experience**. In instances where UN Women was able to partner with relevant UN agencies such as the ILO, and FAO, impressive results were achieved in a short period.

- **Special provisions are required for farmers at subsistence level**. As many marginalized women, such as conflict affected women, are farming at subsistence level, their risk bearing capacity is low and they are in a vulnerable situation. In such instances, they should not be provided with micro-finance loans but be given direct support until they progress from this low risk-bearing situation.

- **Income-generation and livelihoods interventions are most empowering when they support women's engagement in productive sectors beyond the domestic sphere**. Home-based livelihoods for vulnerable women can reinforce gender norms about 'women appropriate' work and whilst they may increase women's income they may not further their empowerment.

- **Livelihood and income enhancement initiatives usually have a gestation period of more than three to four years**. Initiatives that were less than this yielded limited results in creating employment and livelihoods for women.

- **Livelihood and income-generation initiatives have a much greater likelihood of success when they are designed to tackle and address underlying barriers to women's economic participation and empowerment**. Programmes that were able to address factors that hinder women's economic participation, such as limited mobility or lack of access to income, had greater impact in empowering women.

- **Adequate market linkages are essential to make skill acquisition meaningful and worthwhile.** Investments in skill upgrading and training need to be complemented with opportunities to access markets in order to ensure sustained access to income.

- **Seasonality need to be considered when planning for agriculture related trainings**. When starting a project, timing of the agricultural activities must be considered in order to avoid delaying project activities until the following season.

ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

*Based on reports: 14, 15, 21, 22, 23, 25, 27

Of the 30 programmes included within the scope of this analysis, three included a specific focus on Ending Violence against Women and Girls (EVAWG), two were Funds designed to support EVAW (including the Pacific Regional EVAW Fund and the EVAW Special Fund in Afghanistan) and the others were broader programmes that addressed EVAW in a cross-cutting manner.

The focus of interventions related to this thematic area included support for implementation of laws and policies; support for the development, implementation and monitoring of national action plans on EVAWG; and multi-donor funds providing small grants to CSOs implementing community-based EVAW initiatives

What Strategies Worked and Why?

◉ Developing and adapting tools, methodologies and strategies on EVAW and sharing knowledge for maximum impact, application and learning

UN Women has accumulated vast experience and knowledge through its global efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls. As a result, efforts to harness and share successful models and tools have proven to be a highly effective strategy for advancing work on EVAW.

The evaluation of the regional programme on EVAW concluded that UN Women's decision to leverage existing knowledge products, advocacy materials, and evidenced-based approaches on EVAW, while defining the nature of support provided to each country, was at the forefront of the Programme's efforts and success. Drawing upon existing knowledge products, advocacy materials, and evidence-based approaches which were assessed for their effectiveness and impact undoubtedly contributed to the effectiveness of the work accomplished under the Programme. Through this approach, UN Women prioritised regional innovations and content and this prioritization helped in obtaining the formal buy-in of relevant partners and stakeholders, and ensured that the support provided was in line with the prevailing socio-cultural context in each country.

Under the programme, UN Women also actively worked to develop channels for South-South Exchange and collaboration in the region by creating knowledge sharing platforms for the four countries.

◉ Supporting community leadership for social norm change

Implementation of EVAWG laws is often hindered by deeply embedded patriarchal cultural values, social attitudes, and unequal gender power relations which contribute to VAWG and continue to be used to condone VAWG. An important programme response has therefore been in supporting increased community leadership and social mobilisation to reject and prevent VAWG.

In Lao PDR, UN Women helped the government to develop two tools for mobilizing the community to EVAWG. The tools are complementary in that one is school-based and engages adolescents who are the future of the country, and the other aims to engage parents and community elders who are currently the decision-makers and leaders in the society. UN Women also supported the development and piloting of a community dialogue tool that was grounded in international best practices and proven models and content; however, the timeframe allocated for the actual pilot was inadequate.

The evaluation of the Pacific EVAW Fund emphasised the importance of moving away from short-term, ad hoc sensitisation and awareness-raising activities and towards more comprehensive, longer-term prevention efforts that are grounded in communities and that work systematically to change unequal power relations between women and men.

BOX 15: FEATURED GOOD PRACTICE: A RIGHTS-BASE AND GOVERNANCE APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN TO PREVENT VAW IN CAMBODIA

Developed with strong support from UN women, the second NAPVAW acknowledged VAW/G as a human rights issue in line with international definitions, and a manifestation of unequal power between men and women. Its five strategic priorities are comprehensive and the document has set a standard for the region. The formulation process, in which drafting was undertaken through a series of participatory consultations of governmental and non-governmental actors, was ground-breaking for Cambodia in adopting a participatory and inclusive approach. Not only did the process help to improve the Government's approach to policymaking on EVAW, it also demonstrated how national policy can and should be developed in Cambodia. The process has rightly been acknowledged at regional and global levels as EVAW policy formulation best practice.

◉ Instituting systems to engage target groups in programme design, and feedback systems to learn from target groups or beneficiaries about the impact of awareness-raising and prevention programmes

A number of evaluations noted that effective EVAW programming requires a more comprehensive and coordinated framework in which all stakeholders, including victims and survivors themselves (as a human rights-based approach requires), identify and prioritise issues and strategies, mobilise needed resources, and develop relevant laws, policies and procedures.

The experience of the regional EVAW programme in applying participatory processes to engage governments as active partners in selecting and developing technical tools and methodologies to be piloted in their respective countries helped to ensure that the interventions piloted by governments could be scaled-up.

In Cambodia, the development of the second National Action Plan to Prevent VAW was found to be innovative and ground-breaking in its focus on rights-based initiatives to overcome perceived short-comings in governance. There was no measureable difference between the different categories of informant and UN Women's approach, that gender equality cannot be achieved without good governance that is human rights-based and gender-responsive, contributed significantly to inclusiveness of the development process.

Contrary to such approaches, the evaluation of the EVAW Special Fund in Afghanistan found that grant recipients did not always implement their projects in a manner that strengthened the right of participation of target groups as agents of change. Instead, target groups were often treated as relatively passive 'audiences' to reach and 'beneficiaries' that receive services. The evaluation found that this was particularly apparent in awareness-raising and/or protection projects under the Fund, where project approaches were typically fully pre-defined and extended to target groups, rather than engaging target groups in defining the content and direction of the projects. For instance, protective services for women at-risk of and survivors or VAW were often established and offered with little input from the women that access these protective services, including their input into the quality of psycho-social support services and type of economic empowerment needed.

◉ Increasing government commitment to enhance resources for EVAWG

Under the regional EVAW programme, the use of costing studies in generating sound estimates for the costs of providing various essential services to VAWG survivors was found by the evaluation to be an effective intervention to support policy and advocacy work on EVAW.

• In Indonesia, costing studies conducted in two provinces provided estimates that highlighted the fact that the quality and quantity of VAWG services were not up to par, and highlighted gaps in service delivery that needed to be addressed. In response the government began using findings from the costing studies to advocate for a nationwide costing study.

- In Lao PDR, findings and recommendations from the costing study were used to engage with line ministries responsible for the provision of various essential services. Many of the line ministries initiated internal processes for improving the quantity and quality of services provided to VAWG survivors and senior officials from the Ministry of Finance committed to reviewing the study's findings when they work on the next national budget.

- In Timor-Leste, the costing study provided the government with sound estimates for the costs of providing various essential services to VAWG survivors, and the government has started using findings and recommendations from the costing study to budget and provide funds for the provision of services. There has also been a notable increase in the funds allocated to service providers and efforts to improve the quality and quantity of services for VAWG survivors. CSOs also used findings and recommendations from the costing study to prepare their budgets and engage in evidence-based lobbying and advocacy with the government.

Supporting the monitoring and evaluation of EVAWG laws and National Action Plans

Evidence from EVAWG programmes showed that although most countries had national EVAWG laws, policies and NAPs in place, they generally lacked the technical capacities needed to monitor and evaluate implementation.

As a result of the regional EVAW programme, governments in the programme countries have increased capacity to undertake assessments and monitor the implementation of national laws and action plans on EVAWG, to plan and provide essential services to VAWG survivors, and to mobilize communities to act against VAWG.

Designing programmes that recognise the scale and complexity of VAWG

The evaluation of the EVAWG programme in Cambodia attributed the programme's success to the fact that, in its design, it acknowledged the complexities of EVAWG. The programme was guided by the understanding that there are different forms of violence against women – physical, psychological, sexual and economic and that violence is often driven by a combination of factors at the individual, relationship, community and societal level. The programme also recognised that some women face additional risks by virtue of their membership of particular disadvantaged groups, including women with disabilities, women living with HIV/AIDS, LBTI women, sex workers, entertainment workers, garment factory workers and other female employees, women who use drugs or whose partners use drugs, female prisoners, indigenous women and women from religious or ethnic minorities.

Lessons Learned

- **Achieving and measuring social norm change aimed at ending violence against women and girls takes time**. To adequately implement and evaluate impact and effectiveness requires a longer time-frame.

- **Whilst having comprehensive M&E frameworks is critical for supporting implementation of national action plans on EVAWG, in order to ensure greater ownership such plans should be clear, and user-friendly** so that they can be fully understood and applied by non–M&E experts.

- **National police, who play a critical role in ensuing women's safety, have a key role to play in VAWG response and prevention.** An important avenue for increased engagement with national police is Police Academies in order to ensure that training of recruits and in-service training is delivered in accordance with commitments set out in national laws and action plans on EVAW.

- **Raised awareness is insufficient for changing behaviour**. Simple awareness-raising activities that are not reinforced and not linked to a broader response to EVAW will not have the desired, sustained impacts.

- **It is especially important when undertaking prevention work to ensure that protection and response services exist in the locations where these initiatives are taking place so that survivors who come forward can access these services**. This is particularly important in contexts where VAW response services are limited.

PEACE AND SECURITY AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION

*Based on reports: 6, 16, 17, 28, 29, 30

The overall focus of interventions under this thematic areas was on: enhancing national and local capacity to develop, implement and monitor action plans on UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820; supporting the economic and social empowerment of conflict-affected women and former women combatants and enhancing leadership and participation of women in key decision making structures.

There was only one programme focused on humanitarian response which focused on institutionalization of gender responsive planning for women and girls in disaster and crisis contexts, and protection of rights of women and girls and development of their leadership capacities.

What Strategies Worked and Why?

◉ Supporting conflict-affected women and their families to recover from psycho-social hardship

Under the GRRSP project in Nepal, the combination of economic recovery initiatives and psycho-social counselling was assessed as highly effective by the evaluation. Psycho-social counselling enabled them to recover from trauma whilst training in agriculture and livestock raising and development of entrepreneurial, technical and vocational skills with equipment and tools support, prepared them for business and enterprise start-up, wage earning and self-employment, enabling them to become economically self-reliant

The combined effect of these interventions brought economic and social empowerment for the conflict-affected women.

◉ Balanced engagement and equal treatment of conflict-affected women

Under the GRRSP project in Nepal, support to victims from both sides of the conflict helped put the past behind them and indirectly contributed to increased reconciliation. Although the conflict-affect women group members were directly involved in or affected by the armed conflict, either as combatants or victims of physical, sexual and mental violence, the project did not treat them differently. Women no longer saw themselves as combatants or victims, as they have become part of the community where development is more important for their wellbeing than continuing the mind-set of conflict. Project interventions therefore supported women to transition from victims to change makers.

◎ Supporting implementation of National Action Plans (NAPs) on UN Security Council Resolution 1324 at national and local levels

Under the SIWPSAIN programme, UN Women supported key ministries to develop guidelines to integrate NAP implementation into their respective plans and budgets. As a result of the guidelines, national partners are, to a greater extent, committed to the continuation, replication and scaling up of the NAP agenda. Local bodies have identified conflict-affected women and girls s as a new force in politics, peace and security and provided funds for their development through a 10 per cent budget allocation for women's development.

As a result of the PEACE project in Nepal, duty bearers gave greater priority to the NAP and developed a greater awareness of roles and duties in its implementation. Ten government line ministries incorporated NAP activities into their sectoral plans whilst others designed and implemented projects targeted to contribute to NAP implementation.

◎ Incorporating gender equity commitments in policies and institutional responses to natural disasters and complex emergencies

In Pakistan, as a result of the Women, Leadership and Social Reconstruction (WLSR) project, the Gender and Child Cells in Provincial and National Disaster Management Authorities increased the visibility of women and kept a spotlight on their concerns and interests in humanitarian crisis. It helped incorporate gender equity in humanitarian responses, including policies and guidelines, capacity building of government departments, particularly in the women's machineries.

◎ Engaging women and men through community hearings

Under the evaluation of WLSR project, community hearings were identified as a potent means of airing concerns of marginalized community members giving them voice and agency and enabling them to connect with elected representatives and district administration. Through the hearings, women were able to present their recommendations for improving disaster responses and DRM plans. This encouraged them to take their issues to the provincial level where policy decisions are made and power resides. This multi-step approach by WLSR succeeded in raising awareness of women's role, gave them visibility and developed their leadership capacity. Several of their recommendations were followed up with the relevant line departments.

Lessons Learned

- **Lack of recognition towards Conflict Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) survivors hampers survivors' ability to exercise their rights and gain access to reparations and other services**. Therefore, comprehensive and holistic service to support the CRSV victims is key including programmes with healthcare practitioners, health institutions, law enforcement agencies and government institutions in order to ensure that such cases are handled with sensitivity.

GOVERNANCE AND NATIONAL PLANNING

The focus of the two programmes under this thematic area was on: 1) advocacy, to engender the national budget processes and policies to reflect gender equality principles; 2) technical support, to ensure that priorities of women are reflected in sectoral budget allocations for national programmes and; 3) the promotion of knowledge and learning on gender responsive budgeting.

What Strategies Worked and Why?

◉ Using CEDAW commitments as a basis to guide work on GRB

In Timor-Leste, UN Women provided technical assistance to the Secretary of State for the Support and Socio-Economic Promotion of Women (SEM) in developing and disseminated (with tailored trainings) CEDAW-compliant sectoral gender mainstreaming checklists for government agencies to systematically integrate gender equality activities in government planning processes via 2014 Annual Action Plans. The guidelines provided ministries with sectoral information using CEDAW Concluding Observations and gender-sensitive data, including concrete recommendations per sector. SEM then used the checklist to review institutional action plans for compliance. Analysis of 2014 Annual Action Plans submitted to the Parliament for review indicated that 65 per cent of ministries (11 out of 17) and 14 per cent State Secretariats (3 out of 22) included gender equality provisions and actions in their plans. In 2015, 52 per cent of state institutions included GE commitments in their Annual Action Plans, and 61 per cent of state institutions included recommendations from the CEDAW committee in their 2016 plans. Commitments included budgetary provisions for implementation for a range of targeted activities including: implementation of national action plans on gender based violence and women, peace and security (Ministry of Justice); development of a gender marker and implementation of an affirmative action plan to reach 35 per cent women in decision-making (Ministry of Finance); and adult literacy and school transportation program that targets women/girls (Ministry of Education).

◉ Foregrounding gender audits

The long-standing experience of India with GRB programming and the results from the 2015 evaluation of its GRB programme underlined that Gender Audits, whilst an integral component of GRB processes and an effective tool to assess the extent of gender mainstreaming, have been a missing link in the GRB. The basic entry point tool used by the governments in their GRB is the Gender Budget Statement (GBS). But it is always important and essential to check whether the budgetary commitments in the form of the GBS are being realized or not and also whether what is reported, qualifies as a Gender Budget or not. This can be accomplished only through an auditing mechanism that can question irregularities in reporting in the GBS.

◉ Developing platforms for engagement of key GRB actors

As the GRB programme in India found, GRB work cannot be carried out in isolation. For effective GRB initiatives all the concerned sections - socially excluded communities and their organizations, CSOs, budget-groups, academicians, bureaucracy and politicians - need to come together and for that to happen functional platforms need to be created.

Lessons Learned

- **The timing of the project activities should be matched with the timeframe of the government's planning and budgeting processes** in order to ensure effectiveness of the project and measure the project result towards project outcome.

- **Training and orientation programmes for stakeholders must be held before the budget allocation meetings** so that they can make informed interventions. For example, training on gender responsive budget must be conducted before actual budget allocation work is carried out so that trained and aware participants can make the needful interventions such as prioritization of programme activities.

- **GRB has not been used to its potential to address the specific exclusions faced by women from disadvantaged sections of the population or women who face multiple levels of discrimination**. By using an intersectionality framework, GRB initiatives can ensure that public policies take into account intra-group diversity, recognize individuals who are at the intersections of different inequalities, and accordingly remove such inequalities through targeted planning and complimentary budgetary allocations.

- **Building the capacities of the CSOs in GRB requires that a proper programme of training be instituted in UN Women**. UN Women's experience and technical knowhow in GRB could be best utilized if formal training programmes (of three to six months) are arranged in collaboration with a competent partner organization.

- **Training programmes need to be accompanied by hands-on analysis where the CSOs can apply the GRB tools for their target groups**. Letting CSOs carry out such activities and providing them due support is the appropriate strategy.

- **GRB is a continuous area of engagement** for UN Women but when external support is solicited through project-funding (especially to support human resources) then obvious difficulties emerge.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following conclusions and recommendations are based on the findings of this report. Recommendations will be reviewed by members of the Evaluation Reference Group who will have the opportunity to provide further input and feedback. Recommendations are targeted towards UN Women management and staff in the Asia-Pacific region.

RELEVANCE

UN Women interventions in the region have had a high level of relevance in terms of addressing the needs of rights holders and duty bearers and aligning with national and organisational priorities. The highest instances of relevance were seen where there has been deep understanding of the context, solid gender analysis and partnership-based modes of programme design.

UN Women's strategy to sustain and build partnerships with a range of duty bearers and rights holders has contributed towards the effectiveness of its interventions. Engagement with rights holders at the local level has been particularly strategic as it has given a voice and platform to an increased number of groups who are marginalised, vulnerable and operating in a restricted context.

The dual focus on engagement at the policy and grassroots level applied across a number of programmes has enabled UN Women to give visibility to the needs of women, particularly those who are marginalised and vulnerable, and to connect their priorities with important policy initiatives and developments. Whilst it is resource-intensive to engage emerging civil society organisations, this work must continue and increased linkages need to be made between UN Women's community-based projects at the micro level and strategic policy work at the macro level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ensure that future programmes apply partnership-based models of programme design that are partner/stakeholder-driven and are based on solid analysis and evidence in order to ensure relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and adherence with a human rights-based approach. A particular focus should be on undertaking comprehensive gender analyses, baseline assessments and capacity assessments during the design phase of longer-term programmes in order to ensure that they are based on qualitative and quantitative analysis.

2. Explore ways to further diversify programmatic partnerships, particularly in relation to engagement with men, the judiciary, media, marginalized and vulnerable groups. In the context of the region, strategies to increase partnerships with the private sector are particularly relevant and necessary and UN Women should consider a process to harvest input from past private sector partners in order to identify future opportunities and the best modes for cooperation.

EFFECTIVENESS

Over the last five years, UN Women programme interventions have contributed to a diverse range of increasingly active, empowered and capable rights holders across the region and have provided an important platform for marginalised and vulnerable groups to articulate their needs and priorities. Such support will continue to be needed, particularly where there is a context of regressive policies and push-back on women's human rights.

In its future programming, it will be important for UN Women to further expand the reach of interventions (to benefit more substantial numbers of people) and expand the time frame of projects (to effectively address root causes of marginalization and inequality).

UN Women support should be more strategic in continuing to strengthen CSOs in movement building to create solidarity, facilitate coordination and networking, and undertake collective action to push for women's human rights and ensure they are at the forefront of government agendas. Supporting whole-of-government approaches will remain essential in increasing government accountability for GEEW commitments.

In order to increase the effectiveness of its programmes, strategic and holistic approaches are needed to better link programmes to broader development priorities and support further integration across thematic areas. This will become particularly necessary as demands for UN Women support and technical assistance increase with the implementation of Agenda 2030. UN Women should stay true to core mandate and empowerment principles by supporting and positing others to lead. Ensuring that UN Women programmes are designed to maximise synergies and harness the best technical expertise from UN partners will also remain critical in an increasingly resource-constrained environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. Deepen partnerships and coordination, including through increased joint programming, in order to leverage UN Women's comparative advantage, strengthen depth of expertise offered and maximise efficiency.

4. Continue building and leveraging platforms for South-South knowledge exchange in order to continue the process of learning and innovating in the space of gender equality. UN Women should further expand these platforms to include more countries from the region, more stakeholders from the participating countries, and more UN agencies. Regional and country-level Funds are in a unique position to access information and insights from a wide range of actors and activities across numerous, diverse countries.

5. Conduct a review of the Funds administered by offices within the region (including the China Gender Fund for Research and Advocacy, the China Gender Facility for Research and Advocacy Fund, the Pacific Regional EVAW Fund and the EVAW Special Fund in Afghanistan) and consider conducting a meta-analysis of project results in order to identify a more strategic and sustainable approach to how Funds are managed and implemented. Examine and draw upon existing evaluations of other funds outside the region as well as the experience of the global funds (the Fund for Gender Equality and the Trust Fund) in order to benefit from identified lessons learned and good practices.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY

As implementation of CEDAW remains a core focus of UN Women, it is critical that programmatic interventions align with and are designed to support implementation of the Concluding Observations as well as other recommendation from relevant human rights treaty bodies.

Although GEEW has been the focus of interventions in the region, it is equally important to ensure that the process of implementing programmes adheres to a gender-responsive and human rights-based approach. Capacitating partners and fund grantees to apply such an approach has been a challenge and increased investments are needed to further increase their knowledge and capacities in this regard.

In continued efforts to target marginalised and vulnerable groups, it will be important to look deeper at intersectionalities of inequalities when programmes and designed and implemented.

The Funds administered at the regional and country level should continue to examine how they can help grant recipients implement their projects in a manner that strengthens the right of participation among target groups as agents of change, informed participants, and valuable rights-holders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6. Ensure that future programmes are responsive to GEEW and human rights by identifying possible barriers to participation and designing tailored intervention strategies to maximize inclusion of target groups and stakeholders based on empowerment approaches. Increased attention is also needed to ensure that all future programmes are informed by, and designed to directly support, implementation of CEDAW Concluding Observations and other relevant human rights treaty bodies.

ORGANISATIONAL EFFICIENCY

When resources were pooled through joint programmes and collective funds, short-term projects were able to deliver more with less. Joint programmes and collaboration with UN actors have yielded impressive results based on their ability to leverage the necessary expertise and resources from relevant UN partners. Having multiple agencies involved also maximised synergies and reduced transaction costs.

The experience of programme implementation has shown that operational complexity often led to implementation delays particularly where capacities and timeframes are limited; therefore continued efforts are need to ensure that administrative processes and streamlined and efficient, particular against the backdrop of waning donor support in the region.

Increased efforts to support greater cooperation between implementing partners and to strengthen M&E systems, particularly in terms of collection and use of baseline data, will require increased investments but will yield important dividends in terms of being able to track and showcase results to donors and partners and enable broader organisational learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7. Ensure the development and further strengthening of M&E systems and plans (i.e. realistically commensurate with resources, capacities and requirements) at the start of programmes, and the allocation of necessary resources (human/financial) so that they can be fully implemented to maximise efficiency and effectiveness. Examine ways to ensure that monitoring data and information is used to support broader organizational learning.

8. Continue to examine ways to simplify and streamline internal administrative and operational procedures to avoid implementation delays and support flexibility in programme design and implementation.

SUSTAINABILITY

Although there was evidence across the evaluation reports that significant programme results were possible in a short time frame, sustainability of programme results continued to be adversely affected by low political and financial commitments of governments, the political context, short project duration and turnover of government staff. Mitigation of these challenges requires longer-term investment, a good exit strategy and strong engagement of partners and target groups in project design and implementation.

Given current resource constraints across the Asia-Pacific region, especially in Middle Income Countries, designing sustainable and longer-term interventions will require more strategic approaches such as diversified and pooled funding, joint programming and fundamental shifts in the design and delivery of the Funds administered at a regional and country level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

9. Ensure that future programmes contain clear exit strategies, designed with partners and stakeholders, that outline priority areas and strategies for continuation of results at the close of the programme.

10. Consider increased use of pooled funding in order to diversify finding sources, ensure a consistent approach with donors and ensure greater sustainability.

IMPACT

There is a need to expand the depth and reach of interventions in order to have a real impact in implementing gender quality commitments and addressing underlying causes of inequality and exclusion.

Addressing the root causes of inequality and marginalisation requires further scaling up of multidimensional approaches that maximise cross-thematic linkages. Such approaches require simultaneous engagement with rights holders at national and local levels and inclusion of diverse range of rights holders (including the most marginalised and vulnerable groups) combined with a whole-of-government approach in order to secure the necessary political and financial commitment to advance the implementation of policies, laws and normative commitments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

11. Country Offices should consider the conduct of Country Programme Evaluations. Such evaluations have been proven to support and inform MCOS/COs with more strategic and integrated programming and would position Country Offices well to systematically assess relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of programming in relation to UN Women's strategic position and partnerships in the country.

12. In order to maximise learning from evaluations, meta-analyses of evaluation reports should be conducted one year prior to the development of the regional and country-level Strategic Notes basis in order to support learning from, and utilization of, evaluations. Staff managing evaluations should ensure that lessons learned sections are included in all reports. For programmes with multiple phases or for those conducted over a period of five years or longer, impact evaluations should be conducted in order to analyse how programme interventions by UN Women have affected the lives of women and girls and contributed to addressing the underlying causes of inequality and marginalisation.

ANNEX A: EVALUATION REPORTS INCLUDED IN META-EVALUATION

No.	Completion Date	Evaluation Title	Evaluation Type	Thematic Area	Country	GERAAS Ratings
1	2011	Programme Evaluation of SAARC Gender Info Base of SAARC-UN Women South Asia Regional Office	Thematic Final Evaluation	Cross-cutting	South Asia	Very Good
2	2012	Evaluation of the Gender Equality and Political Governance Project (GEPG)	Final Programme Evaluation	DRFs 1 and 5 – Political Participation and Governance/ National Planning	Pacific	Excellent/ Very Good
3	2012	Evaluation of UN Women's Work on Gender Responsive Budgeting in India	Thematic Evaluation	DRF 5 – Governance and National Planning	India	Excellent/ Very Good
4	2012	Evaluation of UN Women Support To PWN+ On HIV and AIDS Projects in India	Final Programme Evaluation	Cross-cutting	India	Excellent/ Very Good
5	2012	Evaluation of China Gender Facility for Research and Advocacy	Mid-Term Programme Evaluation	Cross-cutting	China	Excellent/ Very Good
6	2012	Evaluation of the Partnership for Equality and Capacity Enhancement (PEACE): Towards Implementation of UNSCRs 1325 and 1820"Project	Final Programme Evaluation	DRF 4 – Women, Peace & Security	Nepal	Good
7	2013	Final Evaluation of the project "Sustaining the gains of foreign labour migration through the protection of migrant workers' rights in 2012	Final Evaluation Country-level	DRF 2 – Economic Empowerment	Nepal	Good
8	2013	Final Evaluation of the Making Politics Work with Women (MP3W) project	Final Programme Evaluation	DRF 1 – Political Participation	Nepal	Good
9	2013	External Evaluation Of The EVAW Commission Project	Final Programme	DRF 3 - EVAW	Afghanistan	Good
10	2014	Formative Evaluation of the Pacific Ending Violence Against Women (EVAW) Facility Fund	Programme Evaluation	DRF 3 - EVAW	Pacific	Very good
11	2014	Final evaluation of the project on regional mechanisms to protect the human rights of women and girls in South East Asia (ASEAN)	Final Evaluation- Programme Evaluation	DRF 6 – Global Norms & Standards	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific	Satisfactory
12	2014	Mid-Term Review of Regional Programme on Improving Women's Human Rights in South East Asia, CEDAW SEAP	Mid-Term Evaluation	DRF 6 - Global Norms & Standards	Pacific	Satisfactory
13	2014	'Empowering Women in Rural and Informal Settings Capacity Development' Final Evaluation Report	Final Programme Evaluation	DRF 2 – Economic E mpowerment	India	Very Good
14	2014	Final Evaluation UN Women's Anti Human Trafficking Programme	Final Programme Evaluation	DRF 3 – EVAW	India	Very Good
15	2015	Formative Evaluation of Elimination of Violence Against Women Special Fund	Mid-Term Programme Evaluation	DRF 3 – EVAW	Afghanistan	Good
16	2015	Mid-tem evaluatWEEE ion of Strengthening Implementation Country-level Agenda in Nepal (SIWPSAN) project of Women, Peace and Security	Mid-Term Evaluation	DRF 4 – Women, Peace & Security	Nepal	Good
17	2015	Final evaluation of Gender Responsive Recovery for Sustainable Peace (GRRSP) project	Final Programme Evaluation	DRF 4 – Women, Peace & Security	Nepal	Good
18	2015	Final evaluation of the project on "Empowerment of widows and their coalitions programme"	Final Programme Evaluation	DRF 2- Economic Empowerment	South Asia	Good
19	2015	Final Evaluation of the Ford funded Programme "Partnership with civil society and the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India to promote gender responsive planning, budgeting and auditing in select States"	Final Programme Evaluation	DRF 5 – Governance and National Planning	South Asia	Satisfactory
20	2016	Final evaluation of Gender and Climate Change Project	Final Project Evaluation	DRF 1, 3 & 5	Bangladesh	Satisfactory
21	2016	Final Evaluation of EVAW Programme	Final Programme Evaluation	DRF 3 – EVAW	Cambodia	Very Good
22	2016	Mid-term Evaluation of the China Gender Fund	Mid-Term Programme Evaluation	DRF 1, 2, 3 & 5	China	Good
23	2016	Final Evaluation of the Regional Programme on improving Women's Human Rights in South East Asia – CEDAW-SEAP	Final Evaluation Programme Evaluation	DRF 6 – Global Norms & Standards	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific	Good
24	2016	Final Evaluation of SDC-funded part of Regional Programme on Empowering Women Migrant Workers in Asia (Phase III EWMWA (2012-2015)	Final Evaluation Programme Evaluation	DRF 2- Economic Empowerment	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific	Good
25	2016	Endline Evaluation Report Leveraging Technical Tools, Evidence and Community Engagement to Advance the Implementation of Laws and Provision of Services to Women Experiencing Violence in South-East Asia	Final Evaluation Programme Evaluation	DRF 3 – EVAW	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific	Good

No.	Completion Date	Evaluation Title	Evaluation Type	Thematic Area	Country	GERAAS Ratings
26	2016	End of Term Evaluation of the Project "Towards Gender Equality Women's Economic Empowerment Home-based Workers, Phase II" (2012-2015)	Meta- Evaluation Programme Evaluation	DRF 2 – Economic Empowerment	Pakistan	Very Good
27	2016	Mid-term Evaluation of the Pacific Regional EVAW Facility Fund	Mid Term Evaluation Thematic Evaluation	DRF 3 – EVAW	Multi-Country Office for the Pacific (Fiji)	Satisfactory
28	2016	Final Evaluation of Strengthening Implementation of Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Nepal Project (SIWPSAIN)	Final Evaluation Country-level	DRF 4 – Women, Peace, Security	Nepal	Very Good
29	2016	Final Evaluation of the "Localizing Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Central Terai Districts of Nepal" (GPI-CT)	Joint Country-level Evaluation	DRF 4 – Women Peace and Security	Nepal	Satisfactory
30	2016	Women Leadership and Social Reconstruction Programme (July 2014 – June 2016)	Final Programme Evaluation	DRF 4 – Women, Peace, Security and Humanitarian Response	Pakistan	Good

ANNEX B: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Title: **Evaluation Consultant to review Evaluation Oversight System (GEOS), Meta-Evaluation and Meta-Analysis (GERAAS) of UN Women Asia and the Pacific in 2010-2015**

Location: Home-Based

Contract Duration: 3 months: 1 October – 31 December 2016

Contract Supervision: Regional Evaluation Specialist

Application Deadline: 23 September 2016

Background

UN Women is dedicated to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The mandate and functions of UN Women call for the promotion of organizational and UN system accountability on gender equality through evaluation, strengthening evaluation capacities and learning from evaluation, and developing systems to measure the results and impact of UN Women with its enhanced role at the country, regional and global levels.

The purpose and role of evaluation in UN Women is to contribute to learning on best ways to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, enhance UN Women's accountability, and inform decision-making. By providing evidence-based information, evaluation contributes to UN Women's role to generate knowledge on what works to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

Given the decentralized nature of the organization, the majority of the evaluations supported by UN Women are managed at a decentralized level. On average, in Asia and the Pacific region, 20 evaluations get carried out by UN Women Offices each year. Therefore, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific is giving increased emphasis to strengthening support for decentralized evaluations conducted by Multi-Country Offices (MCOs) and Country Offices (COs) in the region.

To address the organizational demands for enduring good quality and credible evaluations particularly at decentralized level, the UN Women's Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) has designed a Global Evaluation Oversight System (GEOS) and a Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS) driven by similar good practices enforced by other UN entities and consistent with the UNEG Norms and Standards. The system is serving as a key instrument to increase the application of sound approaches and methods to continuously improve the quality and credibility of evaluation methods and reports within UN Women. As part of this process, the IEO assesses the quality of the oversight system on a quarterly basis and corporate and decentralized evaluations on a yearly basis and made available assessment findings to senior managers, programme unites and the UN Women Executive Board.

In addition to the quality assessment of individual reports, the GERAAS system requires a meta-analysis of evaluations to capture the key insights from evaluation reports – rated satisfactory or above according to UN Women standards. This is required to develop constructive lessons for future system strengthening of programming, organizational effectiveness and the evaluation function. Whereas the meta-evaluation provides a rating of the quality of evaluation reports according to UN Women standards, meta-analysis synthesizes the key findings conclusions and recommendations for the body of evaluation reports that meet UN Women quality requirements.

UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific is seeking for a consultant to conduct a review on GEOS and a meta-evaluation and meta-analysis of the evaluation reports produced in the region during 2010-2015, using the GERAAS. The selected consultant will review the GEOS and the GERAAS reports, focusing on the evaluation reports produced by the Asia and the Pacific region, as well as reviewing the evaluation reports, to analyze trends, results, contributions, strengths and weaknesses across UN Women Asia and the Pacific region. It should also synthesize the recurrent findings, recommendations, conclusion and, and lessons learnt for all evaluation reports completed in the given years.

UN Women has the Regional Evaluation Strategy for Asia and the Pacific Region for 2014 -2017 and this review will contribute to reviewing the current Evaluation Strategy.

Duties and Responsibilities

- To examine the quality of the evaluation oversight system in Asia and the Pacific by providing a summary of the GEOS reports to the Senior Managers and staff in the region;
- To examine the quality of the past evaluation reports in Asia and the Pacific by providing a summary of the GERAAS reports to the Senior Managers and staff in the region;
- To analyze the impacts of the UN Women Asia and the Pacific's programmes/projects;
- To provide better understandings and insights into UN Women Asia and the Pacific's performance;
- To capture experiences and lessons learnt from the evaluations to enhance organizational learning and knowledge management.

Key questions

The review is guided by the following core questions:

Oversight system (GEOS):
- How is the situation of the human resources in the field of ME in the region?
- How is financial resources related to evaluation in the region? Any changes?
- How is evaluation coverage by country?
- How is the evaluation implementation rate?
- How is the evaluation quality? (this overlaps with the meta-evaluation below)
- Are Management Responses available in the GATE system? How are they managed?
- How are the implementation of the key action points in the GATE system?
- How are the use of the evaluations?
- How many people in the region have undertook the evaluation e-learning course? Is the number increasing?

Meta-evaluation (GERAAS):
- How many evaluations have been conducted by UN Women's Asia and the Pacific in 2010-2015?
- What are their thematic areas, evaluation types, and countries? Any trends?
- is there any missing evaluations in terms of thematic areas, types, and countries?
- How were they rated by the GERAAS? Any improvements in the last 5 years?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the evaluation reports?

Meta-analysis (GERAAS):
- What are the strengths that emerge from the evaluations of UN Women Asia and the Pacific's programmes/projects?
- Which types of efforts/strategies being implemented have shown high degrees of relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, efficiency and impact?
- What factors have contributed to this or inhibited success?
- Are there any patterns and lessons to be learnt regarding results produced by UN Women Asia and the Pacific's programmes in general?
- Are there findings and conclusions that point in the same direction?
- What strengths and challenges do the evaluations expose?
- What are lessons learnt?

Methodology

The evaluation will have **three phases/components:**

Phase 1 – Oversight system: Review the GEOS reports since 2013. The purpose of reviewing the oversight system is to analyze how UN Women Asia and the Pacific has been ensuring to produce quality evaluation reports. To produce quality evaluation reports, human and financial resources are inevitable, and this review should examine this. It is already knows that the low evaluation implementation rate is a challenge/weakness in UN Women. The review should summarize the implementation rate in the past and discuss the solutions. It should also examine the GATE system, especially the management responses and their implementations.

Part 2 - Meta-Evaluation - ME: Review the 30 evaluation reports produced from 2010 until 2015 (See Annex 1) that will be part of this exercise and undertake a meta-evaluation of these.

The purpose of the ME is to capture the quality of evaluation reports. This is required to develop constructive lessons for future systemic strengthening of evaluation, and to allow possible trend analysis to examine changes in the quality and credibility of evaluations managed by UN Women Asia and the Pacific. This phase is mainly designed to strengthen UN Women Asia and the Pacific's evaluation capacity by providing practical recommendations to improve future programmes and projects.
This will be done based on UN Women's past GERAAS reports and UNEG standards.

Phase 3 – Meta-Analysis - MA: Evaluation Reports that are found to be "satisfactory or above" (using GERAAS), will be selected to take part in the Meta-Analysis. The MA aggregates the recurrent findings, conclusions, lessons learned, good practices and recommendations that have

come out of the evaluations. The Meta-Analysis is poised to provide a basis to better understand UN Women Asia and the Pacific's programme interventions around the UNEG criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact). It also provides further analysis on the progress made against UN Women's organizational goals and priorities (and strategies).

The synthesis of this information will support the use of evaluation findings by UN Women Asia and the Pacific as well as stakeholders. It will also inform donors and other development partners about the effectiveness of the interventions supported by UN Women Asia and the Pacific in the last 5 years.

Usability will be ensured through different strategies, including tailoring of the deliverables to ensure that the results of the Oversight system, ME and MA are captured in a way that stimulates sharing and understanding of knowledge.

Expected Deliverables
The four main expected deliverables of the consultancy will be[27]:

1- Inception Report		
This report will be completed after initial desk review of program documents. It will be 7 pages maximum in length and will include: • Introduction • Background to the evaluation: objectives and overall approach of both phases of this exercise. • Identification of evaluation scope (see points above regarding reports to be included and excluded). • Description of evaluation methodology/methodological approach. • Work Plan with dates and deliverables.	Expected Duration: 1st week	Management Notes: • This report will be used as an initial point of agreement and understanding between the consultant and the Evaluation Manager (the Regional Evaluation Specialist) & Reference Groups. • Payment: 10% of total on approval of deliverable.
2- Oversight Report		
A 5-10 page Oversight report with findings based on GEOS reports.	Expected Duration: 2nd -6th weeks	Management Notes: • This will be reviewed by the Evaluation Manager (the Regional Evaluation Specialist). • Payment: 10% of total on approval of deliverable.

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[27] Please see Annex for additional information on reports. Please note that the UN Women Evaluation checklist for reports will be shared with the selected evaluation experts as will all other tools as per UN Women Evaluation Handbook. http://genderevaluation.unwomen.org/en

3- Meta-Evaluation Report		
An 8-10 page Meta-Evaluation report with findings and assessment based on UNEG and GERAAS standards, all ER will be qualified: [Very Good, Good, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory] and key concrete recommendations for FGE on evaluation and RBM will be provided. It will include: • Executive Summary (1 page) • Assessment/systematization of key strengths and weaknesses observed/identified and lessons learned and good practices emerging from the review of the 25 FGE evaluation reports. (5 pages) • A set of concrete recommendations for UN Women FGE to improve evaluation based on RBM programme management. (2-3 pages) • Annex: Scoring of the quality of the 25 ER using GERAAS tool (tailored to this assignment as needed) using the Quality Review Template (GERAAS Annex III) of each of the 25 reports.	Expected Duration: 2th -8th Weeks	Management Notes: • The final Meta-Evaluation report will go through a process of review and approval by the Reference Group. Once approved Phase 2 can begin with selected Evaluation Reports. • Payment: 40% of total on approval of deliverable.

4- Meta-Analysis Report		
This report will analyze and synthesize what are some of the findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned and best practices from selected programme evaluations undertaken worldwide. It will be a 25 page report that will help to paint a perspective of the achievement of UN Women Asia and the Pacific's programmes and projects vis-à-vis its organizational goals. The MA is poised to provide a basis to better understand UN Women Asia and the Pacific's interventions and achievement of its goal and outcomes. The content of the report will be discussed with the consultant in detail prior to the MA phase starting – after the ME is finalized and there is a clearer picture of what programme ER will be part of the MA. However, it is important to note that this report will include 4 knowledge pieces produced by the consultant: this can be, for example, 2-page document on strategies that work per Outcome or an analysis of trends per region, etc.	Expected Duration: 9th -11th Weeks	Management Notes: The final Meta-Analysis report will go through a process of review and approval. Final approval of findings will be done by the Regional Director. Payment: 40% of total on approval of deliverable.

Work Plan

	Weeks										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Inception Report	X										
Oversight System – Desk review		X	X								
ME Phase – Desk Review		X	X	X	X						
Draft ME Report submitted						X					
Validation of ME Report Final ME Report submitted.					X	X					
MA Phase - Desk Review		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Draft MA Report submitted									X		
Validation of MA Report										X	
Final MA Report submitted											X

Evaluation Management

Who: Actors and Accountability	What: Roles and Responsibilities
Reference Group	• Receive information throughout the entire evaluation process and participating in relevant meetings at strategic points during the evaluation. • Review key evaluation deliverables such as the Inception Report and Draft Final Report • Provide input on these evaluation deliverables as needed • Support dissemination of the findings and recommendations.
UN Women Evaluation Task Manager (Regional Evaluation Specialist)	▪ Ensure the quality of evaluation and management decisions to be made on time. Facilitate selection of the consulting firm ▪ Facilitate communication between the consultant and the reference group ▪ Monitor the process of review and provide guidance to the consultant ▪ Report any significant deviation from the evaluation plan ▪ Facilitate the preparation, conduct and report finalization. ▪ Facilitate a management response to all evaluation recommendations and ensure the implementation of committed actions in the management response ▪ Facilitate dissemination of initial and final evaluation findings to relevant stakeholders

Skills and Competencies

Position	Education	Professional Experience	Skills
Evaluation Consultant	A Masters or higher level degree in International Development or a similar field related to political and economic development, monitoring and evaluation, etc.	A minimum of 10 years relevant experience undertaking evaluations is required including proven practical professional experience in designing and conducting major evaluations. Substantive experience in evaluating similar development projects related to local development and political and economic empowerment of women. Substantive experience in evaluating projects and programmes with a strong gender focus is preferred. Excellent and proven knowledge of evaluation methodologies and approaches. Experience with meta-evaluation and meta-analysis of evaluation reports, preferably with UN agencies, is an asset. Proven experience in producing coherent, clear analytic reports and knowledge pieces is a requirement.	Excellent English writing and communication and analytical skills are required.

Evaluation ethics

Evaluations in the UN will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in both UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System and by the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. These documents will be attached to the contract. Evaluators are required to read the Norms and Standards and the guidelines and ensure a strict adherence to it, including establishing protocols to safeguard confidentiality of information obtained during the evaluation.

- Anonymity and confidentiality. The evaluation must respect the rights of individuals who provide information, ensuring their anonymity and confidentiality.
- Responsibility. The report must mention any dispute or difference of opinion that may have arisen among the consultants or between the consultant and the heads of the Programme in connection with the findings and/or recommendations. The team must corroborate all assertions, or disagreement with them noted.
- Integrity. The evaluator will be responsible for highlighting issues not specifically mentioned in the TOR, if this is needed to obtain a more complete analysis of the intervention.
- Independence. The consultant should ensure his or her independence from the intervention under review, and he or she must not be associated with its management or any element thereof.
- Incidents. If problems arise at any other stage of the evaluation, they must be reported immediately to the manager of the evaluation. If this is not done, the existence of such problems may in no case be used to justify the failure to obtain the results stipulated in these terms of reference.
- Validation of information. The consultant will be responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the information collected while preparing the reports and will be ultimately responsible for the information presented in the evaluation report.
- Intellectual property. In handling information sources, the consultant shall respect the intellectual property rights of the institutions and communities that are under review.
- Delivery of reports. If delivery of the reports is delayed, or in the event that the quality of the reports delivered is clearly lower than what was agreed, the penalties stipulated in these terms of reference will be applicable.

HOW TO APPLY
Interested candidates are requested to submit electronic application to apirada.khachonpan@unwomen.org and hr.bangkok@unwomen.org not later than **[date]**

Submission of Package
- CV
- Letter of Interest containing the statement on candidate's relevant experience
- Financial proposal. The financial proposal shall specify a total lump sum amount breaking down **proposed number of working days** and a daily professional fee.

All applications must include (as an attachment) the CV and the financial proposal. Applications without financial proposal will be treated as incomplete and will not be considered for further assessment.

Please note that only candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

ANNEX E: BIOGRAPHY OF EVALUATOR

Jo-Anne Bishop is a gender and human rights expert with senior leadership experience in results-based programme management and strategy review and development.

Jo-Anne has 15 years of experience supporting and advising governments, national institutions and intergovernmental organizations in the areas of human rights, gender equality, gender mainstreaming and non-discrimination in a number of countries including Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Liberia and Timor-Leste.

She has held senior positions as Head of Department for the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Director of the Canadian Governance Support Office in Afghanistan, Advisor to the Liberian Governance Commission and Advisor to the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality in Timor-Leste. Her experience also includes work with UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, IOM and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission to develop strategic plans and lead reviews and evaluations at a meta, global, regional and country-level.

In addition to serving as a team leader for a global evaluation of women's economic empowerment, Jo-Anne has led regional evaluations on gender responsive budgeting and recently conducted a review of the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) Evaluation Performance Indicator Reporting for the UN Evaluation Group. She also conducted a meta-evaluation and meta-analysis of the UN Women Fund for Gender Equality