Corporate Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to Increasing Women's Leadership and Participation in Peace and Security and Humanitarian Response

Headquarter and Country Case Studies

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HEADQUARTER AND GLOBAL CASE STUDY*

Acronyms

CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAW	Division for the Advancement of Women
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRF	Development Results Framework
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
IANGWE	United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality
IGSO	Intergovernmental Support Office
INCAF	International Network on Conflict and Fragility
INSTRAW	United Nations International Training and Research Institute for the Advancement of Women
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NAP	National Action Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NGOWG	NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security
OSAGI	Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PBSO	Peacebuilding Support Office
PSC	Peace and Security Cluster
RBM	Results-Based Management
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
SSR	Security Sector Reform
SWAP	System-Wide Action Plan
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women

1.   Introduction

The evaluation case study of UN Women's contribution to increasing women's leadership and participation in peace and security and humanitarian response at the headquarter and global level seeks to capture headquarter-level dynamics regarding the evolution and effectiveness of the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda. It focused on support provided by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and its predecessor entities to women's leadership and participation in relation to different relevant thematic areas of peacebuilding and in contexts of variable levels of conflict, post-conflict and fragility. Unlike the country case studies, this study did not focus on any particular programme or pre-selected set of activities.

The headquarter-level case study ensured that the evaluation exercise was not limited to the experience and effectiveness of UN Women's country offices in the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda. Rather, the evaluation aimed to capture the effectiveness and impact of this agenda at the different levels of its development and implementation – global as well as national – and in relation to the three dimensions of analysis that guide the evaluation process namely: the policy and normative dimension; the programmatic and operational dimension; and the organizational capacity dimension.

2.   Methodology

Fieldwork for the headquarter case study consisted of a 10-day visit to New York (United States of America) in December 2012. Interviews were held with 31 respondents from UN Women, other United Nations entities, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Member States. The same questionnaire was used for the headquarter case study as for the country case studies, but the emphasis on the policy and strategic dimension and the organizational issues relating to the thematic Peace and Security Cluster (PSC) and the corporate level were taken into account.

There were several challenges in preparing the headquarter- and global-level case study. First, the assessment of the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda was conducted during the transition to UN Women. The assessment of the evolution of the peace and security and humanitarian response work was therefore closely bound up in the complexities of this process, as were other thematic areas that now feature in the organization. As such, some of the factors that were identified as potentially affecting UN Women's effectiveness to fulfil its peace and security mandate were more the result of corporate-level issues and the transition experience than of the normative, programmatic and operational direction of UN Women and its predecessor entities in this thematic area. Inevitably, UN Women's effectiveness in developing the peace and security agenda is enmeshed in the transition process, and many of the associated challenges were likely to be echoed corporately and across the thematic work of the organization.

Second, some headquarter-level issues left a limited paper trail and documentation. The evaluator was therefore obliged to rely on interviews with different stakeholder groups and key interviewees to triangulate findings. However, the exercise required an assessment and judgement on the interviewees' alternative interpretations of the same processes, events and decisions which made this type of assessment susceptible to error and potentially unintended bias, and the caveat was noted. Where possible, the evaluator drew on the documentary sources that were made available or otherwise obtained.

The case study discusses the contextual factors which are relevant to understanding the work of UN Women at the headquarters level in relation to the peace and security and

humanitarian response agenda, including a review of the evolution of the women, peace and security agenda. Section 4 presents the findings, which include a consideration of the theory or theories of change UN Women uses to inform its headquarter engagement on women, peace and security, as well as findings in response to the evaluation questions matrix. Section 5 summarizes the findings, while Section 6 provides some forward-looking recommendations for UN Women's consideration.

Limitations to assessing UN Women's humanitarian response work

The case study terms of reference called for an assessment of UN Women's strategic position and coherence with respect to its contribution to humanitarian response and peace and security. Humanitarian response did not feature in the strategic objectives, organizational structures or operational activities of the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and is, therefore, a new area of work for UN Women. Goal 4 of UN Women's Strategic Plan Development Results Framework (DRF) defines UN Women's responsibilities as providing:

> Support to existing coordination mechanisms to generate a more effective United Nations system-wide humanitarian response to respond to the specific needs of women and girls will also be a focus of UN Women, working with partner agencies, including the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and membership of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (UN Women, 2011b).

Engagement in humanitarian emergencies is also mentioned in some of the outcomes. However, the DRF 2011-2013 does not provide any indicators regarding either humanitarian response or humanitarian action (UN Women, 2011b).

In 2012, UN Women established a Humanitarian Unit and the recruitment process was actively underway to build up its capacity and expertise. It was critical to note the importance of enhancing UN Women's support to humanitarian response and humanitarian action more generally and, as such, this deserves a forward-looking assessment of its own. Strong reservations were expressed during the inception phase about the possibility of robust findings and recommendations in this evaluation. It was decided to include humanitarian response as a formative element to lay out a baseline for future work, and on the premise that case studies might shed some light on the limited experience of UN Women and its predecessor entities in providing support during humanitarian emergencies. The limited documentary evidence and data from fieldwork available, confirmed these earlier concerns. As a result, a complete assessment of UN Women's humanitarian action work during the period under evaluation was not possible.

3. UN Women's peace and security and humanitarian response agenda

As noted in the desk study, UN Women's peace and security and humanitarian response agenda evolved along three different but interconnected tracks.

First, developments in the wider women, peace and security normative agenda constitute the core of UN Women's peace and security work which are represented in the United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 and related resolutions, and reflected across a range of United Nations, UN Women and predecessor entities' activities and initiatives. These resolutions are the key component of the strategic content of the United Nations' policy for women in peacebuilding processes and conflict-affected states and provide the normative content of women, peace and security work. They also provide the frame for action and monitoring of results concerning a gender-responsive perspective in United Nations-wide

work on peace and security. In addition, the PSC monitors actions across the United Nations' wider peacebuilding architecture in relation to the Seven-Point Action Plan on Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding. UN Women's role in crafting the Plan is discussed further below. The key point to note here is the expanded presence of UN Women in United Nations-wide contributions to peacebuilding processes.

Second, the evolution of the strategic planning and programming work which underpins the peace and security agenda at the global, regional and national level (formerly through UNIFEM and other predecessor entities, and currently through UN Women) reveals its growing prominence, as reflected in UN Women's strategic plans and associated DRFs and management results frameworks (MRFs) (UN Women, 2011a, b and c; UNIFEM, 2007), as well as the UNIFEM Thematic Strategy Paper (UNIFEM, 2008).

Third, the transition process to consolidate UN Women included important changes to the mandate and organizational development of the new entity, to ensure improved coherence between normative and operational/programming work of UN Women (A/64/588). A thematic division of labour now distinguishes the peace and security work as a new thematic cluster.

The starting point for UN Women's strategic direction on women, peace and security is the Platform for Action, which dates back to the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995. Among the 12 areas of critical concern identified at the Conference, women and armed conflict emerged as a thematic area connecting peace with gender equality and women in power and decision-making. The mandate for gender equality and women's empowerment is based on the Charter of the United Nations and the equal rights of men and women. Work on gender equality within the United Nations has subsequently been guided by key milestone developments: the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1997/2; and other internationally agreed development goals as contained in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the 2005 World Summit, and United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960.

Prior to the establishment of UN Women, the women, peace and security agenda was distributed across UNIFEM, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) and the United Nations International Training and Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), but they lacked a system-wide coordination role. In merging these entities and developing a new mandate, UN Women will be better placed and organizationally more coherent to meet its normative support, coordination role and operational objectives. It continues to play a catalytic role, but its mandate is now described as follows:

> Grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the composite entity will work for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; the empowerment of women; and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security. Placing women's rights at the centre of all its efforts, the composite entity will lead and coordinate United Nations system efforts to ensure that commitments on gender equality and gender mainstreaming translate into action throughout the world. It will provide strong and coherent leadership in support of Member States' priorities and efforts, building effective partnerships with civil society and other relevant actors (United Nations, 2010a, A/64/588, para. 5).

The new organizational structure gives UN Women a leading role in supporting the implementation of global norms and standards on gender equality and women, peace and security which is to be achieved through effective intergovernmental engagement, an enhanced coordination role within the United Nations system and catalytic operational presence at the regional and country levels. The new composite entity is also called upon to ensure closer linkages between the normative agenda and operational engagement.

Relevant United Nations policy for the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda

UN Women and its predecessor entities played a central role in advancing the global normative agenda and shaping United Nations policy and engagement on women, peace and security, in particular in response to the activism of national and international women's civil society organizations (CSOs) and movements. In the period covered by the evaluation there were some important milestones at the global level regarding normative changes and progress in implementing resolution 1325 and related resolutions. These milestones occurred simultaneously with the transition to UN Women, and in which UN Women and its predecessor entities played a strategic role.

Three of the key milestones in the period under evaluation include: the adoption of additional resolutions which follow on from resolution 1325; the System-Wide Action Plan (SWAP) and the development of 26 Indicators on the implementation of resolution 1325; and the development of the Seven-Point Action Plan on Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding.

Adoption of the United Nations Security Council resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960

Before 2008, implementation of resolution 1325 was slow and had little impact on the ground. At the same time it was generally agreed that it had fundamentally altered the visibility and global awareness of how women experience conflict, and the importance of their role in peacebuilding and post-conflict situations.[1] A UNIFEM study published in 2010 (and revised in 2012) revealed that women had been included as signatories in only 2.4 per cent of peace agreements since 1992 (UN Women, 2012f). There has, however, been an important transformation in global policy and discourse, and international commitments over the last decade regarding the need to address the specific ways in which conflict and post-conflict situations affect women, and to enhance women's participation in all aspect of post-conflict peacebuilding processes.

Prior to 2008 there had been efforts to adopt a successive resolution to resolution 1325, including around and following its five-year anniversary of resolution in 2005, but there was insufficient political momentum at that time. For example, in 2006 the United Kingdom attempted to table a resolution on sexual violence (Swaine, 2010). By 2008, UNIFEM spearheaded a successful effort to change the Security Council's approach to sexual violence against women in conflict, from seeing it solely as a humanitarian concern to recognising it as a tactic of warfare, and therefore a security problem requiring not just services, but also a security and political response. The result was resolution 1820 which was presented by the United States with strong backing from other Member States (notably the United Kingdom and Nordic countries).

The renewed engagement to resolution 1325 since 2008 has resulted from a combination of factors. First, the ten-year anniversary represented an opportunity to reinvigorate women, peace and security at the global level. Second, the accelerated momentum was strongly

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[1] See Barnes (2011) for a review of the history of implementation of resolution 1325. Swaine (2010) provides an analysis of the different debates on the merits and weaknesses of resolution 1325 and related resolutions.

related to strong leadership on sexual violence from some members of the United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict Group.[2] Third, Member States holding the Security Council presidency were interested to facilitate and broker a change in the international visibility of issues relating to resolution 1325, in particular women's participation. Fourth, the continuing activism and pressure from women's organizations contributed to maintaining the momentum around resolution 1325's ten-year anniversary. Finally, there was a commensurate degree of strategic positioning and more proactive advocacy by individual members and sections of UNIFEM and OSAGI, who took advantage of these spaces and opportunities for engagement, and shaped new opportunities for intergovernmental and inter-agency coordination engagement. These efforts were undertaken in the context of major budget constraints (especially for OSAGI, which had no budget line for the implementation of resolution 1325). From this resulted the later resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960.

- Resolution 1820 (2008) emphasized sexual violence as a matter for the Security Council to consider further and succeeded in drawing attention to the issue. It was also seen as expressing the voice of affected women. Swaine (2010) noted that the focus was more on women as victims rather than as agents of change, and suggests that this may have been because the process by which the resolution came about was more of a top-down and closed-door process than one emerging from the wider consultation that had preceded the adoption of resolution 1325. Paragraph 3 of resolution 1820 demands that 'the views expressed by women of affected local communities' be taken into account.

- Resolutions 1888 and 1889 (2009) were adopted under the Security Council Presidency of the United States and Vietnam respectively, within a week of each other. Resolution 1888 focused more on accountability for the implementation of resolution 1820, while resolution 1888 called for the appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) to represent and advance the United Nations' work on sexual violence in conflict. Repeated calls this to happen in relation to resolution 1325 had never been realised. The emphasis of resolution 1888 is on protection.

- Resolution 1889 placed a renewed emphasis on women's participation and agency. It asked the Secretary-General to produce a set of indicators for the Security Council to monitor progress in implementing resolution 1325. The Technical Working Group on Global Indicators was created to develop the indicators and present a shortlist to the Secretary-General within six months. The resolution also called for a report by the Secretary-General on women's participation in peacebuilding which was finally published in 2010. It set in train negotiations across the United Nations peacebuilding architecture to ensure increased attention to gender issues in a range of post-conflict planning and spending areas and was the basis of the Seven-Point Action Plan on Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding (discussed below).

- Resolution 1960 (2010) mandated new institutional tools to address impunity for sexual violence in conflict and issues of accountability. Specifically, it called for

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[2] The United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict group is a group of 13 United Nations entities brought together in 2007 by UNIFEM, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The group conducted scenario-based training of peacekeepers and published, *Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence An Analytical Inventory of Peacekeeping Practice* (UNIFEM/DPKO 2010), and the Secretary-General's report, *Women's Participation in Peacebuilding* (United Nations, 2010b).

the naming and shaming of perpetrators of such violence, and empowered the new SRSG on conflict-related sexual violence to agree action plans with parties in armed conflict to prevent it.

Parallel to the resolutions, and as a result of action agreed within these, monitoring and accountability systems on resolutions 1325 and women, peace and security were put in place.

Women, Peace and Security SWAPs

To improve United Nations coherence in the area of women, peace and security, there have been two SWAPs on resolution 1325, (2004–2007 and 2008–2009). Both were coordinated through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANGWE) Task Force on Women, Peace and Security. At the request of the Secretary-General, the 2008–2009 SWAP was 'reconceptualised as a result-based programming and monitoring and reporting tool' on the implementation of resolution 1325 to improve accountability.

The 2008–2009 SWAP compiled submissions from 32 United Nations entities on: their planned activities in five thematic areas (prevention, participation, protection, relief and recovery, and normative); their expected achievements; and how they were to be measured (based on a pro-forma submission template that included a results-based management [RBM] framework). Reviews of the first SWAP in 2006 and 2007 revealed an increased commitment to implementation, and improved coordination, planning and programming within the United Nations system (S/2006/770, 2006,; S/2007/567, 2007; and S/2008/622, 2008). An evaluation of the 2008–2009 SWAP found that it had improved coordination somewhat and made progress on RBM in the work of the United Nations on resolution 1325 (OSAGI, 2010). However, it also highlighted some fundamental shortcomings, in particular that the SWAP was over-ambitious and under-resourced and that it was unclear as to whether it was a coordination mechanism, a strategic planning tool or both. The evaluators described the SWAP as 'more a list of activities than a planning tool with […] thematic areas ill-defined and no monitoring and evaluation framework in place'. There was little evidence that the SWAP improved concrete and measureable outcomes at country level or that it had improved accountability for resolution 1325.

Monitoring progress on resolution 1325: The 26 indicators

In response to the renewed initiative outlined in subsequent resolutions, in 2010-2011 the OSAGI/UN Women Task Force on Women, Peace and Security developed a strategic framework to guide implementation of resolution 1325. In 2010, the Secretary-General presented a set of 26 indicators which currently represent the key measure for progress in implementing resolution 1325. In 2011, the Secretary-General presented the *United Nations Strategic Results Framework on Women, Peace and Security, 2011-2020* (United Nations, 2011b) and, with the creation of UN Women, the Task Force became a Standing Committee.

The 26 indicators were defined through a consultative process with United Nations entities, Member States, CSOs and other stakeholders, with the help of external consultants. Specific country experiences of national action plan (NAPS) for the implementation of resolution 1325 were taken into consideration, and over 2500 indicators were mapped and evaluated. The process was finalized through a technical fine-tuning that resulted in the 26 indictors.

The indicators were included in the *United Nations Strategic Results Framework* (United Nations, 2011b), which identified four thematic areas against which to monitor progress. It also outlined intermediate goals for 2014 and associated indicators which the Standing

Committee on Women, Peace and Security was responsible for evaluating.[3] The Security Council reviewed the indicators in October 2011, with UN Women leading their refinement.

The four pillars of the results framework include:

- Prevention: Of conflict and all forms of violence against women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations.

- Participation: Women participate equally with men, and gender equality is promoted in peace and security decision-making processes at local, national, regional and international levels.

- Protection: Women's and girls' rights are protected and promoted in peace and security decision-making processes at the local, national, regional and international levels.

- Relief and recovery: Women's and girls' specific relief needs are met and women's capacities to act as agents in relief and recovery are reinforced in conflict and post-conflict situations.

The 26 indicators are mapped against these four pillars and different United Nations, including UN Women, are ascribed lead roles. Various United Nations entities report on 40 per cent of indicators, the United Nations reports on 30 per cent indicators at the country level and Member States can voluntarily report on up to 33 per cent. In addition, the strategic results framework developed a number of outcomes and outputs against the four pillars. UN Women leads on a number of these, in coordination with other United Nations entities (United Nations, 2011b).

Finally, a number of respondents repeatedly indicated that the annual *Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security,* presented at the Open Debate in the Security Council on resolution 1325, was a useful source of information and reporting on progress. Prior to 2011, it was perceived as a more descriptive document reporting on information provided by relevant stakeholders. Since then it has reported on the indicators, and is said to be used (and perceived by others to be used) more strategically both to advance the normative agenda and as an analytical tool.

The Secretary-General's Seven-Point Action Plan on Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding

The Secretary-General's *Seven-Point Action Plan on Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding* emphasized promoting women's access to leadership and participation in various activities and decision-making positions, in relation to the range of thematic areas of work relevant to peace and security and humanitarian response. In relation to this, UN Women established a partnership with the Peacebuilding Commission and its Secretariat, the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), to ensure that gender issues are addressed in peacebuilding plans and in the allocations of the Peacebuilding Fund. The Policy Committee designated UN Women a lead role in supporting coordination and monitoring of the Seven-Point Action Plan.

The role of UN Women and its predecessor entities in creating the conditions which enabled these landmark measures to come into being cannot be overemphasized. The effectiveness of their efforts was also reflected in some of the strategic alliances that were forged at critical points in the period under consideration, with some pioneering Member States and with other United Nations entities and specialized agencies. There were also disagreements among

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[3] The PeaceWomen Project (www.peacewomen.org) is also monitoring progress towards the 2014 targets. In addition, the important work – and role – of women's movements, and concretely of the NGO Working Group (NGOWG) on Women, Peace and Security (see, for example, Taylor et al. 2012), plays a key role in tracking country reporting.

predecessor entities about the direction and pace of these changes. Some were concerned about the level of buy-in among Member States which was perceived as being less than ideal. Others considered that there was a historical and political opportunity to accelerate the pace of change vis-à-vis implementation of resolution 1325, including by scaling up monitoring systems through, for example, the 26 indicators. In the end, the collective effort of predecessor entities in the period under evaluation contributed to the accelerated pace of progress in advancing women, peace and security.

Interviewees from different stakeholder groups described the period before and after the ten-year anniversary of resolution 1325 as a time of quantum leaps taken to reframe and reenergise the women, peace and security agenda. There was resistance from some quarters, but it was also a period during which the predecessor entities positioned themselves strategically to cement old alliances and build new ones. Respondents reiterated the importance of the transition to UN Women in contributing to increasing the pace of change.

Critically, as part of this process, UN Women effectively pushed for the inclusion of a funding threshold of 15 per cent for projects to be allocated to women's empowerment and women's concerns in post-conflict rebuilding efforts. Although progress on this remained disappointing, a quantifiable funding commitment against which the United Nations system could be monitored was at least established.

Developments of the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda

Against this wider policy and system agenda, the intended programmatic and operational work of UN Women and its predecessor entities was captured in strategic plans and concrete programmes which were developed at the national, regional (and subregional) and global level. Programming also included joint programming with other United Nations entities.

Peace and security-related interventions have featured in the work of UN Women and its predecessor entities in different ways over the years. With the exception of Haiti, these interventions did not include humanitarian response.

Strategic plans

UNIFEM's Strategic Plan 2008–2011 integrated peace and security issues within its three broad thematic areas of work, namely: enhancing women's economic security and rights; reducing the prevalence of violence against women and HIV/AIDS; and advancing gender justice in democratic governance.

Support to women in peace and security and humanitarian response was one of five goals in UN Women's Strategic Plan 2011–2013 and Goal 4 of the DRF (framed as support to women's leadership in peace, security and humanitarian response).

The OSAGI and DAW Strategic Frameworks 2008–2009 and 2010–2011 defined the goals of both entities, which were to be measured mostly against quantifiable indicators such as the number of NAPs and strategies prepared by Member States, and regional and subregional organizations. DAW, however, did not work on women, peace and security.

Organizationally, the change from UNIFEM to UN Women resulted in four new thematic clusters: ending violence against women; peace and security; economic empowerment; and leadership and governance. Its predecessor entities were not organized thematically. Thematic areas which currently feature in the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda were already planned and undertaken in UNIFEM's programmatic work under conflict-prevention and peacebuilding (UNIFEM, 2008a).

Programmatic content

Programmatic content was developed at the national, regional, and global level, and in joint programming while global programming is developed at headquarter level.

The creation of UN Women was intended to devolve much decision-making on programming content to the emerging regional architecture at the regional and country level, in line with the move towards a redistribution of resources and competencies.

Headquarters should continue to 'be able to carry out its higher-level oversight functions and provide guidance and support to regional offices [….]. As part of its oversight and guidance functions, headquarters will also strengthen its capacity to provide corporate guidance on strategic planning and RBM' (UN Women, 2012d). The intention is for headquarters to be a knowledge hub and research centre, to provide guidance and tools and technical advice in the different thematic areas of peace and security and humanitarian response, and to position UN Women as the global leader in the development and articulation of policy on gender equality. It appeared that the detail of this corporate capacity to provide guidance on programming and strategic planning was still being rolled out.

Research

There was a strong sense that the knowledge base and production of evidence-based research in UNIFEM and the other predecessor entities were severely under-resourced in the past. INSTRAW had the most explicit mandate to provide knowledge management and coordinate research but it was severely understaffed and, in 2009, only had nine members of staff to coordinate knowledge (UNIFEM, 2009). Their tasks nominally included action-oriented research that lead to gender-responsive policies, programmes and projects at all levels; knowledge management to increase understanding and support decision-making and actions on gender and women's issues; capacity development of relevant stakeholders to address and effectively integrate gender issues in all policies, programmes and projects; and institutional development to shape a financially sustainable institution which was innovative, applied good governance and worked in partnership with other relevant United nations entities.

In practice, INSTRAW had to leverage strategic partnerships in order to meet its objectives, such as with the Democratic Control of Armed Forces to produce outputs on security sector reform (SSR) including a number of key publications and guidance notes on gender-responsive SSR which constituted key references in this area.[4]

In UN Women, the task of undertaking research to guide its work lies at headquarters. UN Women is expected to '[u]ndertake new and consolidate existing research and analytical work and act as a hub/centre of knowledge and experience on gender equality and women's empowerment' (A/64/588, 2010a). The thematic clusters are responsible for this task, but it was unclear where the overall responsibility for knowledge management (as opposed to knowledge production) lies in UN Women.

The internal publication UN Women Peace and Security Monthly Update is a rich source of information on UN Women's involvement in peace and security, including high-level engagement.

The thematic clusters are mandated to develop evidence-based policy guidance to support programming which is reiterated in the new regional architecture document (UN Women, 2012d). The emphasis on evidence-based knowledge was hugely commendable, but effective knowledge management remains underdeveloped (including in terms of how it will be

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[4] http://www.peacewomen.org/peacewomen_and_the_un/un-implementation/research-and-training-institutes/entity/24/united-nations-international-research-and-training-institute-for-the-advancement-of-women-un-instraw#. A key example is Bastick and Valasek (2008).

coordinated at headquarter level, and across headquarter, regional and country-levels) and a challenge. A number of interviewees also raised concerns about the risk of both replication and 'silo-isation' across thematic areas. For instance, it will be important to establish a clear line of communication on research regarding post-conflict governance and the thematic cluster on leadership and political participation.

Organizational developments

The process of consolidating the new entity was still evolving at the time of the evaluation. For this case study the key issues to note related to the direction of intergovernmental engagement and inter-agency coordination and the new thematic organization of UN Women.

Organizationally, intergovernmental engagement and coordination functions were tasked to OSAGI and DAW. Now they formally sit in the Intergovernmental Support and Strategic Partnership Bureau and, in particular, the Intergovernmental Support Office (IGSO). Policy and programming work is located in the Policy Division within the Policy and Programme Bureau. The Bureau also houses the Peace and Security Section (PSS) (now separate from the Leadership and Governance Section), and the Programme Support Division, which is organized by regions and holds the Fund for Gender Equality, the UN Trust Fund to end Violence against Women and the Institutional Development Unit.

While the consolidation process was yet to be completed, the boundaries between different tasks and how they were allocated were unclear. At headquarter level this included the question of the boundaries between thematic clusters, and therefore the need for close engagement and coordination across these to avoid replication of efforts and 'silo-isation'. Intergovernmental engagement and inter-agency coordination roles were also still being defined, with the former sitting formally with the IGSO. In practice, however, the PSC performs much political work in peace and security and humanitarian response and is undertaking intergovernmental work through its daily engagement and advisory work with Member States and other intergovernmental bodies. It was also tasked with preparing the Secretary-General's report to the Security Council on women, peace and security. The PSC also has key coordination tasks, such as chairing the Inter-agency Group on Peace and Security (previously chaired by OSAGI). However, it was reported in interviews that coordination roles were still not clearly defined and, at the time of the evaluation, the coordination strategy had not yet been completed. Finally, there was a need for greater clarity and systems on knowledge management, and on where the responsibility for achieving this lies.

4.   Findings

Theory of change: leadership and participation

Not one signal theory of change was featured in the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda, be it in general or in relation to how best to support the leadership and participation of women. The importance of leadership and participation was largely taken as a given. As noted in the desk study, there was consensus both on the *intrinsic* value of enhanced levels of participation and leadership capabilities of women across the components of the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda; and on the *instrumental* value of participation and leadership for women, the degree to which these contribute to advancing peace as well as gender equality goals in the contexts where the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda is relevant. The evaluation took as given the intrinsic and instrumental value of support to women's leadership and participation. What is considered

was the underlying thinking and logic underpinning recommendations on policy and action on how best to support women's leadership and participation in peace and security work.

It was possible to identify different expressions of underlying theories of change in the range of policy, strategy and knowledge outputs of UN Women and its predecessor entities at headquarter level. Theories of change varied in terms of how explicitly the processes of change resulting from the actions of UN Women were described and justified. There were some explicit narratives about the assumed causal connections between inputs aimed at increasing women's participation, outputs and progress towards intended outcomes and goals. To varying degrees, there were also implicit assumptions about what type of action leads to transformative change. However, in many cases the degrees of change described in headquarter policy and strategy documents were at too high a level of abstraction to include a great deal of detail. By contrast, theories of change were more developed in research outputs.

Thus, there was great variation in how explicitly theories of change were articulated in relation to the best way to provide practical support for women's participation and leadership in peace and security and humanitarian response. There was variation both across type of activity and output, and also between the work conducted at headquarter, regional and country levels in relation to the Security Council resolutions and to the different themes and sub-themes which make up the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda.[5] Moreover, there was still only limited knowledge about the differences made by women when they participate and lead in peace and security work, in part because there were too few (documented) cases. Finally, the importance of context specificity was critical in shaping the consequences of enhanced women's voice for peace and security outcomes (as reflected in PSC knowledge outputs, discussed further below).

Headquarter activities and outputs were grouped and briefly reviewed along three types of activities, engagement and associated outputs to examine the range of narratives on transformative change in peace and security and humanitarian response with a focus on women's leadership and participation. The three types of activities were:

1 The theories of change implicit in the resolutions, and associated activities and actions, as well as the thinking which underpinned the strategic planning of UN Women and its predecessor entities.

2 The evolution in the knowledge base and research which underpinned the work of UN Women and its predecessor entities in peace and security.

3 The thinking behind the politically strategic but more ad hoc and adaptive work of intergovernmental and inter-agency engagement undertaken by individuals and sections of UN Women and its predecessor entities to achieve progress on women, peace and security.

The sources drawn upon here included UN Women documents, external documents, academic research and interviews.

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[5] The lack of clear and concrete theories of change was also reflected in the broader field of gender and peacebuilding and state-building. See, for instance, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) Policy Guidance on State-building (OECD-DAC, 2010) or the World Development Report on Conflict (World Bank, 2011).

Theories of change in the resolutions, monitoring frameworks and associated action plans, and in UN Women's strategic thinking

Women, peace and security resolutions

As the implementation and monitoring mechanisms and actions associated with the resolutions evolved, there was to varying degrees a narrative of causal change regarding the importance of enhancing women's participation in the women, peace and security agenda. The resolutions largely rested on the starting point that women's participation in peace and security work was important in furthering transformative change which would improve the lives of women on the ground, address their particular experiences of conflict, advance gender equality goals, and support the achievement of peace and security. Recommended actions were intended to provide guidance on how to support this, to signal the necessary mechanisms to monitor progress, and to better capture shortcomings in the implementation of the resolutions' goals, including in relation to supporting women's leadership and participation.

Resolution 1325 was undoubtedly the landmark moment for the women, peace and security agenda which firmly called on the international agenda the call to increase women's participation in decision-making for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict. At the core of this resolution, which continues to be the centrepiece of the women, peace and security agenda, was the recognition that women's participation at different levels and stages of peacebuilding, conflict-resolution and peace processes were instrumental to enhancing gender equality and addressing women's specific needs and experiences of conflict. Resolution 1889 furthered this notion and was also echoed in the other associated resolutions.

Implementation of the resolutions remained slow but certain actions have evolved at the global and national level, which in turn constitute concrete and observable measures of progress. The Seven-Point Action Plan, NAPs and the 26 indicators (eight of which fall within the participation pillar) were perhaps the most relevant examples (and spaces) of action where implementation of the spirit of resolution 1325 was monitored. They reflected the underlying assumption about the importance of and correlation between the increased participation of women, and better outcomes in relation to prevention, protection and recovery and gender equality more broadly. They also indicated some actions to further the agenda and the underlying theories of change regarding these actions are examined below.[6]

The development of NAPs constitutes both an indicator of progress and a valuable action in itself (see UN Women's Strategic Plan 2011–2013). Since UN Women is mandated to support NAPs to implement resolution 1325, there was no issue about whether to support their development. Rather, what mattered was to reflect on how, in concrete ways, NAPs and their implementation could be most effectively supported to achieve the intended outcomes – and thus the robustness of underlying theories of change. The evidence base on NAPs remains limited.[7] While in most national contexts, women's organizations and gender specialists have driven their development, the NAPs did not necessarily enable leadership and participation of women in broader policy and planning processes in relation to peace and security issues. There is, therefore, a need for a closer analysis of country-specific experiences, including to consider whether NAPs risk further 'silo-ing' and keeping the gender equality agenda in the periphery of gender ministries but with little meaningful impact

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[6] See UN Women (2012a), notably the chapter on tracking implementation, for a discussion of the results logic underpinning the indicators. The Seven-Point Action Plan is explained and justified in the Secretary-General's report on participation.

[7] The chapters in Barnes and Olonisakin (2011) were an important contribution to assessing the impact of resolution 1325 on the ground. See also Swaine (2010) for a critical perspective of progress on resolution 1325 and a special focus on the NAPs.

on power and resource allocation in other ministries, or whether they may become merely a box-ticking exercise that satisfies the international community, but with little transformative impact on the lives of women. UN Women should be encouraged to critically observe and reflect on the value added of concrete experiences of resolution 1325 NAPs, in terms of how they could be more effective given the context-specific political conditions and what factors explain their effectiveness or limitations, as a means to expand the knowledge base to monitor progress on resolution 1325.

Monitoring/implementation frameworks

The 26 indicators provided a useful quantitative measure to monitor progress by different types of stakeholder (UN Women, other United Nations entities and Member States), despite the eight indicators under the participation pillar appearing to be little more than counting exercises. However, such quantitative data are important with the strategic value of the indicators system lying precisely in what the data reveals about different stakeholders' commitment and conduct, including over time. For instance, stakeholders (both international and national) can be assessed both on what they chose and chose not to report, creating a basis for information to be tracked over time through which reputational costs for poor/non reporting or failure to make progress can be generated.

Moreover, the indicators established a database against which progress against the four pillars could be assessed in relation to each other. For example, it was possible to determine whether there were more favourable indicators or whether progress on participation correlated positively with progress in other pillars (prevention, protection and relief/recovery). This is notwithstanding the limitations of what quantitative results frameworks can say, for example, about the quality of women's participation and leadership or the more substantive aspects of transformation that are sought.

The Seven-Point Action Plan also contains a narrative of causal connections between participation of women, the application of gender analysis and the achievement gender-responsive impact in peace and security work. The focus of attention was on what the United Nations system could do better, and the development of seven action points by which to monitor its conduct in enhancing women's participation.

The Secretary-General's report on *Women's Participation in Peacebuilding,* which was presented to the Security Council, discussed the seven action points (United Nations, 2010b), drawing on evidence and analysis of history and current practice. The report reiterated the intrinsic and instrumental value of enhancing women's participation. It also set out explicit measures the United Nations system was to undertake to ensure not just an increase in numbers, the meaningful consultation with women in peacebuilding and post-conflict planning and financial resources to support participation as a means to achieve a lasting impact in advancing gender equality goals. The report pointed to the socio-political complexity of the processes and context, and stressed the need for caution regarding linear or simple assumptions such as women in decision-making positions necessarily applying a gender perspective or prioritie gender equality goals and that the weight of structural conditions are reflected in entrenched gender biases in social norms and formal legislation. Notwithstanding these caveats, the report proposed specific actions which go beyond quantitative indicators of change.

Strategic Plans

UN Women's Strategic Plan 2011–2013 set out a results chain in the DRF with respect to Goal 4 on its peace and security and humanitarian response agenda. The outcomes were articulated in terms of incorporating gender equality goals. Indicators and targets were

variably framed in numerical form (e.g. ensuring that women constitute 20 per cent of mediators, negotiators and technical experts in peace negotiations administered by UN Women by 2015). In terms of indicative outputs, such as the enhanced capacity of gender advocates to influence peace talks, post-conflict planning processes and so on, indicators were generally quantitative, such as the proportion of conflict-affected or post-conflict countries in which gender equality advocates had enhanced capacity to participate and influence. However, there was little indication of what this meant in practice, and how transformative change to achieve more women's leadership and participation could be more meaningfully achieved. The underlying theory of change was thus poorly articulated in relation to how women's participation and leadership could be best supported in practice across the different thematic areas of the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda.

OSAGI and DAW's Strategic Plans 2008–2009 and 2010–2011 and UN Women's Strategic Plan 2011–2013 set out goals and indicators for intergovernmental work and inter-agency coordination regarding progress in peace and security and resolution 1325. The former were mostly defined in quantitative terms and said little about how progress was to be achieved. However, evaluations of OSAGI and DAW noted the importance of their accumulated deep understanding of the United Nations environment, which made their intergovernmental work effective in building up relations with Member States. Their mandate had included preparing reports on behalf of the Secretary-General and servicing the Security Council during the Open Debate, a role now filled by the PSC.

However, it was in the nature of global strategic plans that underlying theories of change remained quite general and descriptive, rather than analytically fully developed both because of the breadth of the issues and range of potential actions, and because they were high-level documents.

On policy and strategy processes, issues regarding underlying causal assumptions about change were noted. One concern was that meeting numerical targets was not enough in itself (even if these targets were intrinsically and instrumentally important, as noted above) to achieve more fundamental change. While the indicators and Strategic Plans had an implicit narrative of focusing on the qualitative aspects of women's participation in peace and security, how this was to be achieved in practice was not followed through. Also, in the limited literature on progress on resolution 1325 there was a reminder of the importance of context specificity and the need to take into account the more complex socio-political realities of gender relations, including how they cut across class, ethnicity and the political economy of conflict and post-conflict processes of reconstruction, peacebuilding and eventually state-building (Swaine, 2010; Barnes, 2011; United Nations, 2010b). This suggested that guidance on supporting women's leadership and participation needed to include measures to engage with the political economy of each context in order to identify entry-points for action.

At the same time, as was noted in interviews, the limitations of the implementation and monitoring processes agreed in the resolutions reflected that these were themselves the product of deeply political and contested processes among a range of stakeholders, where active resistance to gender equality goals remains entrenched among a number of Member States. For instance, in the Open Debate and the Secretary-General's annual report to the Security Council on resolution 1325, some Member States expressed resistance to the indicators and even disregard for their value (see, for instance, the statement by the Federation of Russia in the 2012 Open Debate).[8] The normative support function of UN

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[8] http://peacewomen.org/assets/file/russia_wps2012.pdf

Women on the implementation of women, peace and security is a deeply political enterprise, which inevitably involves encountering resistance to the implementation of internationally agreed norms and standards.

Thus, in assessing the theories of change featured in the implementation and monitoring actions and mechanisms associated with resolution 1325, it was important to take into account the political realities and sensitivities of peace and security work and the resistance of some Members States to the women, peace and security agenda. What mattered most, therefore, was the effectiveness of the daily political work of the PSC on the women, peace and security agenda and engagement with the wider United Nations pillar on peace and security. However, much of this work took place behind the scenes and through informal and undocumented exchanges and conversations with intergovernmental actors and other United Nations entities which meant that such intergovernmental and coordination work did not feature in formal results frameworks or log-frames.

Global policy and strategic documents were inherently limited because they reflected politically negotiated outcomes (such as the resolutions and monitoring/accountability actions) because the peace and security agenda is thematically very wide and guidance at the global level is necessarily general (as in the case of Strategic Plans). As a result, underlying theories of change were susceptible both to the constraints of needing to reflect consensual positions rather robust logical reasoning, and it also meant that this level of engagement was far removed from operational implementation in country. In terms of the implicit theories of change underpinning the political daily work of UN Women and its predecessor entities, it was inevitable that these were not planned or made explicit from the outset, in part because of the highly politically sensitive nature of the issues.

Notwithstanding, while the importance of women's participation was reiterated in all these policies, frameworks and processes, the specifics of how best to support leadership and participation remained under-theorized in the implicit theories of change. In particular, there was limited consideration of what constitutes women's leadership capacities in the contexts where the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda was relevant, and how these needed to be nurtured and supported. The importance of empowerment and agency was thus implicitly taken as given – as outcome and process – but with relatively limited reflection or indication on how they could be best supported and enhanced.

Knowledge documents and guidance for programming

In contrast, more nuanced and politically informed analysis and guidance on how to achieve change featured much more strongly in the emerging body of evidence-based knowledge outputs and policy/programming guidance produced by UN Women and its predecessor entities. A brief review of a selection of such documents signalled the importance and merit of building an evidence base on causes of change, and the value of context-specific (gender and conflict) analysis and assessment of factors which enable or constrain progress on women, peace and security and gender equality goals in conflict, post-conflict or fragile settings.

The (implicit) theories of change and recommendations about how best to support women's participation (and, to a much lesser extent, leadership) and with what effect, featured in the outputs and were more nuanced. They were less articulated in logic and results chains and more through analytical narratives drawing on evidence about how transformation takes place, what actions can contribute to this and the factors explaining effectiveness. It was important to note that there was no single analytical format. Knowledge resources included reports, guidance notes, explanations of mechanisms of monitoring and accountability in

place and e-learning courses on national and regional implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. It was hard to judge uptake, but it was reported in interviews that over 6000 people have undertaken e-learning courses.

Appendix 1 lists (and summarizes) a selection of knowledge outputs which illustrate the breadth of documents that featured among the knowledge production of UN Women and its predecessor entities. They were not selected on the basis of their influence (which could not be determined in the scope of the evaluation), rather they were intended as examples of both evidence-based and analytically robust outputs. Some also featured in the UN Women *Sourcebook on Women, Peace and Security* (UN Women, 2012a).

In addition, the range of documents supported and produced by INSTRAW prior to the creation of UN Women were an established source of knowledge on some peace and security issues.[9] For instance, outputs on gender-responsive reform of the security sector constituted an important body of knowledge, including on how best to support efforts to increase women's voice and participation in security and justice sectors. Such knowledge production has historically been severely under-resourced.

Critically, the emerging body of knowledge outputs from predecessor entities and UN Women constituted a valuable resource for informing theory-driven and evidence-based recommendations for policy and programming because it looked more closely at how specific actions could contribute to strengthening women's participation (and leadership). Notably it also took further the need to engage with the political economy complexities of context-specific processes of conflict, post-conflict, fragility and so forth. Some of the outputs exemplify the importance of ensuring that gender analysis and conflict analysis inform, in much more strategic ways, the choices for context-specific action, identifying opportunities, and engaging with the strategic actors whose commitment and support is relevant to achieving more substantive change regarding gender equality goals and addressing the specific experiences of women in conflict.

The value of this knowledge production, which was rigorous and evidence-based, cannot be over-emphasized, in particular how it directly informed the development of theories of change within programming and strategic work at regional and country office levels. UN Women will need to address the important question of ensuring visibility and uptake of these knowledge outputs outside the United Nations, and guidance on how they can inform the work of country offices. From the interviews, it was unclear as to whether there was a project to take forward knowledge management in the entity, where it will or how it will be coordinated. The thematic clusters seemed to have a role in this, but a wider knowledge-management platform at the corporate level is also important, in particular to give support to the thematic clusters. As noted in the document on regional architecture and in interviews at headquarter and country level, this organizational issue seemed to remain underdeveloped .

Politically strategic work undertaken by individuals and sections of UN Women and its predecessor entities

In terms of implicit theories of change informing UN Women and its predecessor entities' work *in practice*, there was value in recording the politically strategic work undertaken by individuals and sections within UN Women to advance its normative and policy goals. Such work included day-to-day politically intuitive practices at headquarter level which constituted much of how change was advanced, as well as nurturing strategic partnerships and alliances

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[9] http://www.peacewomen.org/peacewomen_and_the_un/un-implementation/research-and-training-institutes/entity/24/united-nations-international-research-and-training-institute-for-the-advancement-of-women-un-instraw#

by identifying opportunities, including engaging with Member States, which arose because of the domestic political context, changes in embassy staff or particular crisis moments.

Underpinning this were implicit theories of change about what type of actions can help to make progress on women, peace and security and on the thematic areas of the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda.

An example to note was the planning and work in the run up to the Wilton Park Conference on the role for military peacekeepers (UNIFEM, 2008b; and interviews). Here, the preparation and subsequent follow-up work included prefacing the meeting with a review of experiences of protection strategies in peace-keeping operations, in the Analytical Inventory *of Peacekeeping Practice* (UNIFEM/ Department of Peacekeeping Operations [DPKO], 2010), combined with a series of conversations, meetings, and intergovernmental and inter-agency engagement, and providing a space for engaging with military and security actors involved in peace-keeping regarding the relevance of the following issues (selected by way of example):

- The importance of creating a mind shift among military staff from seeing sexual and gender-based violence as an inevitable consequence of war or conflict to recognising it as both a security problem requiring a security and tactical response, and a political problem requiring a political response;

- The development of concrete protection measures that could more strategically and creatively draw on a peacekeeping presence to create safer environments for women, including by listening to what women perceive as the greatest threats and risks on a day-to-day basis;

- Increasing the number of uniformed women personnel;

- The value of empowering local women by engaging with them and facilitating the space for women's voice and engagement in public decision-making; and

- Achieving concrete impact on the wording of resolution 1820.

The conference represented an example of how building strategic partnerships – even where there is initial resistance – can lead to important shifts in thinking and approaches, and new alliances with different stakeholders (in this case military personnel in peacekeeping forces) that can most effectively result in change.

In this more informal, and less documented, role of brokering and facilitating dialogue and political engagement of UN Women, the evaluation found differing views on process issues, i.e. on what actions were most likely to result in progress on the women, peace and security goals and on resolution 1325. For instance, some respondents suggested that the 26 indicators were premature in view of the degree of political resistance among Member States. Within the United Nations system, despite strong support for the creation of an accountability tool, there was some concern about the potential bureaucratic overload that could result. Overall, most respondents saw this as an important step forward for the implementation of resolution 1325 because it created the possibility of establishing a baseline for monitoring and accountability, and a database of specific and verifiable information provided by different stakeholders.

There were different opinions within UN Women on what the normative support function should entail which had implications for the role of intergovernmental support. One position was that intergovernmental work would see UN Women taking a more *proactive approach* to driving the implementation of the women, peace and security resolutions by creating enabling

conditions, incentives and accountability mechanisms to encourage stakeholders to meet normative commitments reflected in the women, peace and security agenda. The other position saw intergovernmental work as involving a neutral facilitation of progress in the implementation of women, peace and security – at the pace set by Member States, whose commitment ultimately would decide the possibility of progress. The former position acknowledged the deeply political nature of intergovernmental work, and as such required proactive, politically strategic engagement. The latter assumed that UN Women was a neutral player, tasked with facilitating and supporting Members States' progress on women, peace and security. Although these differences of views do not currently seem to be problematic, they are worth signalling because UN Women may need to reflect on the future direction of intergovernmental work. In interviews outside UN Women, the merits of a politically proactive approach to intergovernmental engagement were noted as having contributed to giving impetus and visibility to the women, peace and security agenda in the period under evaluation.

It is, therefore, important to note that much international engagement and action takes place outside the formal strategic plans and action plans set out in internationally agreed commitments. In practice, progress in enhancing women's participation and leadership in women, peace and security is the result of myriad informal exchanges, networks, brokering of conversations, facilitation of spaces for dialogue and exchange of ideas among strategic stakeholders. In large measure this constitutes the intergovernmental and coordination role of UN Women and its predecessor entities.

In a world of international interventions in conflict, post-conflict and development, this element rarely, if at all, features in results frameworks, planning or formally articulated theories of change. Yet they constitute critical areas of action and interaction which can contribute meaningfully to changing mindsets, attitudes and fostering commitment to policy and normative goals which merit further reflection, including for identifying lessons on what works.

Conclusions on theories of change

In policy and strategy documents, theories of change regarding the role of participation and leadership of women, and specifically how best to advance the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda, are underdeveloped. The instrumental value especially of participation is taken as a given (documents make markedly less reference made to leadership) – and this assumption is not at issue in this evaluation. There is, however, far less explicit narrative on *how* best to support this. There is also variation across the thematic areas of peace and security and humanitarian response, so that for instance supporting participation in transitional justice is clearly not the same as – and serves different purposes from – supporting women's participation in post-conflict governance.

In the monitoring and implementation of action points (e.g. the 26 indicators or the Seven-Point action plan) there was an (inevitable) emphasis on numbers in tracking support to women's participation and progress on resolution 1325. Such a focus was not problematic for this type of framework, and the PSC work explicitly focused on the quality of content, for instance of peace agreements. However, theories of change on how to translate the content, for example of peace agreements to implementation on the ground, and monitoring such implementation remain underdeveloped partly because of the lack of available evidence on what works. Moreover, context specificity matters greatly in determining what are likely to be viable entry-points

As noted in the desk study, there was unlikely to be a single theory of change regarding how women's participation and leadership could best be supported, and how this in turn contributed to other goals (other than in very general terms) because the range of themes and sub-themes which constituted the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda was too diverse. This was, in some respects, reflected in the DRF of UN Women's Strategic Plan 2011–2013.

Supporting progress on women's participation and leadership roles was a deeply political undertaking, both for what it signifies in terms of contesting gender relations and advancing gender equality goals, and for the progress in achieving women's agency and empowerment (and the impact of this on other peace and security and humanitarian response goals). To be meaningful, work in this area cannot be 'sanitized' and reduced to a check-list, but requires politically strategic action.

Many of the knowledge and guidance outputs from UN Women and its predecessor entities pointed to the complexity of the intended transformation processes they supported, and the need for politically strategic and contextually appropriate programming and action. They included highly relevant insights on the importance of taking account of political economy factors. However, more could be done, including through improved knowledge management, to make visible the analytical approaches informing these knowledge outputs. They could also more purposefully inform the theories of change in operational work regarding what effective action/support might look like in enhancing women's participation and leadership in the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda.

Such insights also feature in the day-to-day practice of UN Women staff at headquarter level. The important role of brokering strategic alliances and partnerships, facilitating dialogue, creating space for formal and informal conversations among different stakeholders in order to shift attitudes, and change the course of political and international agendas, contribute to substantive progress and are critical to achieving progress on advancing normative commitments of the women, peace and security agenda. Somewhat inevitably these rarely featured in formal theories of change and results frameworks of either UN Women and of international development actors more generally, precisely because of the highly political nature of such interactions. However, the central importance of such work should not be lost.

Finally, in unveiling these processes differences of opinion within UN Women about approaches to intergovernmental work, and the implicit theory of change on how best to achieve progress on resolution 1325 and other resolutions at the headquarter level, were observed. Such differences of opinion, which highlighted a more politically proactive approach, versus a more 'facilitating' role, were not necessarily problematic for the entity, but were worth noting in terms of tracking over time what works best to achieve progress on the normative support function on women, peace and security, and how UN Women choses to position itself moving forward.

Findings to Evaluation Questions

Dimension 1: UN Women's policy and strategic direction

In what ways did UN Women influence policies and practice (within the United Nations system and key external agencies) in relation to women's political participation and leadership in peace and security?

Impact
Partnership and coordination

Results/achievements/impact

UN Women and its predecessor entities had many different kinds of policy impacts to enhance women's leadership and participation in peace and security work. A selection of examples is listed below, although it should be stressed that, in addition to the more visible outputs such as the 26 indicators or the new Security Council resolutions, the more day-to-day political work through intergovernmental engagement or coordination efforts were equally important despite being less visible or measurable in results frameworks. For example, these included efforts to ensure the correct wording was used in the renewal of mandates to secure funding for gender-responsive commitments in Untied Nations missions, or facilitation of political exchanges which lead to progressive changes in policy, discourse, attitudes, mindsets and ultimately practice of a wide range of stakeholders.

Examples of policy impacts contributions:

- Constant monitoring of country-specific resolutions and mandate renewals, and engagement with Security Council members to encourage adequate attention to gender equality, justice, leadership and participation issues in its instructions to the United Nations for conflict resolution and recovery in specific situations;

- Influence in the design and putting into practice of actions on Security Council resolution implementation and monitoring, such as the SWAP, the 26 indicators, the Seven-Point Action Plan and increased numbers and development of NAPs. The 26 indicators were noted as an important quantitative mechanism for establishing baselines and charting progress. Monitoring mechanisms were still being developed but initial data were now reported in the Secretary-General annual report to the Open Debate (United Nations, 2012). Importantly, this was the only set of indicators that the Security Council has ever accepted; and

- UN Women and its predecessor entities played a strategic role in influencing global policy on peacebuilding to ensure that gender analysis featured more prominently across different sub-thematic areas of policy. As a result:[10]

  o Policy on gender-responsive security and justice sector reform and corresponding action has evolved in the last decade, and UN Women and its predecessor entities played a key role in this through engagement and follow-up action, including working with key partners in the United nations system. Examples include UN Women's work with DPKO and UNDP to develop a system-wide policy on gender and SSR (e.g. with support in Haiti, Liberia Timor-Leste and Uganda). In turn, this was informed by the experiences of the 'From Communities to Global Security Institutions' programme, although they are not directly linked. UN Women was also instrumental in driving

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[10] See also Hendra (2011) and UN Women (2012c).

United Nations-wide responses to sexual violence in conflict, and was founding member of the United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, a core driver of resolution 1820 and a leader on justice responses to conflict–related sexual violence. UN Women led pre-deployment training for peacekeepers on preventing conflict–related sexual violence and also drafted the United Nations *Integrated Technical Guidance Note on Gender-Responsive Security Sector Reform*, which was adopted as United Nations-wide policy to ensure women's needs and capacities in the United Nations support to SSR.[11]

o The Joint Strategy on Gender and Mediation was developed through increased collaboration with the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), which was an important achievement regarding UN Women's influence in United Nations-wide systems. Specifically, this three-year strategy aimed to identify and prepare qualified female mediators, increase the availability and quality of gender expertise in mediation processes, and enhance women's participation in peace processes.

o There was a stronger commitment to women's participation in peacebuilding through its partnership with the Peacebuilding Commission and the PBSO. As a result, there was greater effort to ensure that gender issues were integrated into peacebuilding plans, as well as in how the peacebuilding fund is allocated.

o Support to NAPs including through engagement with Members States and CSOs remained an important role for UN Women.

o Strategic engagement on transitional justice and work on the rule of law included collaborative engagement with UNDP. UN Women and its predecessor entities were engaged in supporting the integration of gender-sensitive measures in transitional justice processes, including in truth commissions (such as UNIFEM's support to the Sierra Leone Truth Commission). More recently the Secretary-General made a commitment to ensure that all Commissions of Inquiry and related investigative bodies established by the United Nations and United Nations-supported truth commissions would have 'dedicated gender expertise and access to specific sexual violence investigative capacity, drawing in the support of UN Women'. UN Women subsequently deployed gender experts and gender-based crimes investigators to support a number of United Nations Commissions of Inquiry (e.g. in Guinea-Conakry, Côte d'Ivoire, Libya and Syria) (Valji, 2012).

o Advocacy work and support to women's movements remained important, including support to women's participation in international donor and other engagement conferences.

Member States, United Nations entities and bodies, as well as non-UN Women respondents, acknowledged a greater visibility of the strategic and intellectual leadership of UN Women on peace and security and humanitarian response at headquarter and global levels.

Weaknesses and challenges

At the same time, some United Nations entities were sceptical about what difference UN

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[11] http://unssr.unlb.org/

Women's new role will make in practice, which was manifested in a 'wait and see' approach as to whether it can meet expectations to sustainably maintain change in influencing global policy and practice.

Resolution 1325 was not mentioned in UN Women's founding mandate and it was unclear whether this represented a missed opportunity or a deliberate decision. Some respondents noted that work on women, peace and security was implicitly included in the new mandate, in view of the degree to which the prior mandates of predecessor entities have been amalgamated into the new composite entity.

The political resistance to elements of women, peace and security and the effective implementation of the resolutions should not be underestimated. Proactive intergovernmental engagement and coordination work at headquarters will be important in responding to this. However, this needs to be closely connected to political processes in-country, and therefore in-country UN Women engagement through its expanded mandate to engage with Member States governments is important. Ongoing work with other United Nations entities may require the development of specific agreements. In the case of its relationship with DPKO, some respondents suggested UN Women formalize an agreement on how country-level coordination should proceed where there are peacekeeping missions.

Gaps in technical expertise on some thematic and sub-thematic areas of the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda were reported. Notably, what UN Women could contribute to humanitarian work was unclear, in particular because most UN Women staff (with some exceptions) had no expertise in humanitarian action and response. It was suggested in a few interviews that UN Women was not equipped to be a humanitarian actor and should not aspire to such a role. UN Women could instead contribute to informing humanitarian action on how to be more effective in integrating gender-sensitive approaches which take account of women's experiences and needs in crises and humanitarian contexts. In 2012, UN Women established a Humanitarian Unit and proactive recruitment was underway to fill the capacity gap.

Factors explaining impact/effectiveness

The technical expertise on women, peace and security and profound knowledge of the United Nations environment reflected in the intergovernmental and coordination roles of UN Women and its predecessor entities were acknowledged (OIOS, 2011; OSAGI, 2010; interviews). Despite resource constraints UN Women's predecessor entities contributed to sustained engagement with relevant intergovernmental bodies and inter-agency forums.

The transition to UN Women and its renewed mandate provided an opportunity to reinvigorate policy work on women, peace and security. It has led to increased levels of seniority in key positions, which in turn has resulted in UN Women being taken more seriously on women, peace and security issues by senior staff in other United Nations entities. For instance, since it was established, UN Women's Executive Director has chaired IANGWE meetings. It was also noted that increased seniority in country offices will improve inter-agency coordination (OSAGI, 2010; interviews).

The UN Women's Executive Director role of Under-Secretary-General has also given the entity more visibility and political influence in the United Nations system. The importance of this achievement in the negotiations leading up to its establishment should not be underestimated and respondents noted its relevance in ensuring a more effective UN Women presence and agenda-setting power in the Security Council. The Executive Director of UN Women also sits on the Secretary-General's senior management team and participates in weekly Policy Committee meetings, an important decision-making body in which a number of entities participate under one representative. UN Women is not represented by any other entity and is

the 14th member of this Committee. The Executive Director's presence on the Policy Committee indicates the importance the Secretary-General assigns to gender issues in all of the United Nations' work. It also gives UN Women both greater visibility and more immediate accessibility to political missions which, in addition to the Executive Director's personal credibility, resulted in concrete achievements, such as briefing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) who subsequently created the post of senior gender adviser.

The effectiveness of intergovernmental work predated the creation of UN Women, and reflected the strategic mobilization of UN Women's predecessor entities to use the anniversary of resolution 1325 to push for progress in women, peace and security work. For instance, the intergovernmental work of UN Women and its predecessor entities to support the active engagement of those Members States who, in the period under evaluation, committed to accelerating progress on women, peace and security, was perceived as critical in tabling new resolutions and action points. In particular, OSAGI initiated the creation of a High-Level Political Committee for the ten-year anniversary. Moreover, the careful political work undertaken recently with Member States achieved some major advances (such as to obtain support for the 26 indicators).

There was also a marked shift in the direction of coordination efforts – notwithstanding some resistance and scepticism regarding UN Women's new role and mandate in other parts of the United Nations. The change in inter-agency relations was in part attributed to UN Women's mandate and its new presence at the decision-making table. However, in relation to women, peace and security old partnerships were already reenergised and new alliances forged. Here, efforts to engage senior-level management paid off. For instance, working with DPA contributed to increased efforts to more effectively support the participation of women in peacemaking and peace agreements processes. There was also reportedly a closer synergy with DPKO, UNDP, UNFPA and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The work of the PSC team was also recognized as valuable in securing the commitment of strategic members of other United Nations entities, including the degree to which its knowledge outputs contributed to the intellectual and actionable development of the peace and security agenda, and the value of certain individuals in achieving this commitment should not be underestimated. The challenge for UN Women will be how to institutionalize further the strategic and intellectual capacities in the PSC, noted by stakeholders in coordination work as important qualities in peace and security work.

Constraining factors

There were also a number of constraining factors which limited the effectiveness of headquarter work on women, peace and security.

Resource and mandate constraints were limited the capacity of UN Women's predecessor entities to achieve progress on women, peace and security through high-level political work, notwithstanding their key contributions to the drafting of resolutions and earlier efforts to galvanize progress through, for example, SWAPs (OIOS, 2009; OIOS, 2011; OSAGI, 2010; interviews).

How sustainable were the efforts and results of UN Women's policy influencing/engagement?

Sustainability

The intergovernmental and coordination work of UN Women and its predecessor entities contributed to the political sustainability of the women, peace and security agenda, even if progress over the ten years of resolution 1325 was reportedly uneven. Globally there was a discursive shift in the last decade regarding the need to take account of women's experiences in

conflict and their contribution to post-conflict processes of change due, in large measure, to the technical expertise and political skills in working through the politics of the United Nations system and the Security Council which was attributed to UN Women and its predecessor entities (OIOS, 2011; OSAGI, 2010; interviews).

Some reported concerns included, the remaining sense of fragility regarding the gains made in relation to resolution 1325 and the women, peace and security agenda. It was not clear how far the commitment to the agenda was institutionalized beyond UN Women and United Nations entities, notably in terms of the degree of Member States' 'ownership' regarding levels of substantive commitment (and not just lip service) to the spirit of resolution 1325. Second, even in other parts of the United Nations system there was a perceived tendency in some entities to put junior people in gender advisory roles (although no concrete examples were cited) (OSAGI, 2010). Reportedly this is changing as women, peace and security work is gaining prominence.

How effective was UN Women in its policy engagement at different levels, including global regional and national?

Effectiveness and coverage
Partnership and coordination

During the period under evaluation, strategic partnerships were forged at the global level which reflected both a long-term build up of partnerships and a more recent strategic positioning of the PSC to newer alliances, key international actors, and participation in influential policy debates and fora.

Inter-agency coordination

The quality of work and dedication of the PSC among other entities was widely recognized. It contributed to securing a degree of commitment and inter-agency support for the peace and security agenda, in some cases leading to a change in the relationship.

Some United Nations entities expressed concern about what the new mandate would mean in terms of UN Women's expectations about its inter-agency coordination role on women, peace and security, and implications for operational work. Other entities see UN Women's role as remaining essentially catalytic and of providing technical expertise. UN Women needs to be clearer on this issue to avoid the duplication of efforts. It was also unclear how UN Women's monitoring of how women, peace and security features in United Nations-wide peace and security work will evolve through its coordination role .

It was also still unclear how deeply embedded 'ownership' was among other United Nations entities for some of the women, peace and security agenda. For instance, respondents confirmed the importance of and commitment to resolution 1325, but there was some reticence regarding the bureaucratic viability of the indicators. Some saw it as yet another reporting task rather than a measure which will lead to a change in attitudes and conduct in other entities. However, this remains to be seen.

Intergovernmental work at headquarters

As previously noted, UN Women, in its work with Member States, the Secretary-General and the Security Council has had an impact on shaping policy. However, there was less evidence of influential engagement with other international debates, fora and policy discussions, for instance on state-building. UN Women had a limited presence in debates and discussions in the OECD International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF) on the development of state-building outputs and associated processes, which are lacking in robust gender perspectives, although it did comment on INCAF's recent work on integrating gender perspectives in state-

building. Exchanges with the World Bank seem underdeveloped, despite its globally strategic work on conflict and fragility. Engagement with the new fragility hub, the Global Centre on Conflict, Fragility and Development, in Nairobi is underway. Finally, UN Women seemed under-represented in work regarding the International Dialogue and *New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States,* as confirmed through interviews, although there was some engagement through UN Women's membership of the Programme Coordination Group. UN Women made specific inputs including suggestions on gender-sensitive indicators across the five New Deal areas, it sponsored *Cordaid* to hold a number of national consultations with women on the New Deal and it supported CSOs to engage with Minsters of Finance in South Sudan and Liberia to discuss New Deal issues. Given the importance of nurturing ownership for women, peace and security agenda among Member States, this was a potential opportunity for outreach in countries where UN Women's input could have strategic value.

The state-building agenda is relatively recent, which was important because some of the wider debates on working in fragile and conflict-affected situations are happening in these fora, and UN Women has an opportunity to have considerably more impact than currently seems to be the case. Other United Nations entities (such as UNDP) appear to have a regular presence in these fora, and UN Women could contribute to inspiring more effective gender-responsive strategies in an international agenda where it remains fundamentally underdeveloped.

Regional-level intergovernmental work is expected to play an important role in UN Women's normative support function. There was progress with the European Union and NATO, but more work is to be done with the African Union, the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Organization of American States. Regional offices are expected to be instrumental in nurturing such relationships.

Women's civil society organizations

In interviews at headquarter and country level, stakeholders expressed the need for UN Women to not lose sight of UNIFEM's historic legacy of working with grassroots organizations. There was a concern that, in becoming a United Nations entity, UN Women would lose its distinctive capacity to work more closely and flexibly with beneficiary groups on the ground than perhaps characterises other United Nations entities' work.

Notwithstanding, work with women's groups remains important. The close collaboration with NGOWG was perceived as strategic, to both maximise outreach and coverage and facilitate the voice of women at headquarter and global levels. A new NGO coalition was added, on the basis of UN Women's lobbying, to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. Moreover, the Committee on Women, Peace and Security engages with the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders following the PSC's efforts to diversify and enrich the range of NGOs contributing to strategic discussions on advancing the women, peace and security agenda.

To what extent does the current policy/strategic direction reflect the lessons learned from policy engagement on peace and security and humanitarian response since 2008 and how fit for purpose was it for the new UN Women mandate?

Relevance and coherence

The transition process in itself reflected a decision based on the need to elevate the status of the entity in order to integrate gender equality goals in United Nations business more meaningfully.

The reorganization of UN Women drew on a range of evaluation and assessment documents and processes. First, the *Field Capacity Assessment* was conducted as part of the UN Women Executive Director's *Vision and 100 Day Action Plan.* The *Plan* was prepared to inform the

transition process of the nature of field presence; the needs and capacities of country-level staff; and the imperative to build better systems to connect normative and policy work with operations (although this remains underdeveloped). Second, evaluations of its predecessor entities informed some of the decisions on how to merge functions (e.g. intergovernmental and coordination) and the division of labour in UN Women (some of which remains quite fluid and incomplete), (OSAGI, 2010; OIOS, 2011).

More importantly for this evaluation, the thematic reorganization gave due visibility to the peace and security agenda, bringing UN Women into line with a wider international agenda which has increasingly focused attention on fragile and conflict-affected situations, where the need to enhance promoting gender equality is especially pressing.

Dimension 2: UN Women's policies, programming and operations

To what extent did UN Women programmes achieve the expected results? What explained variations?

Effectiveness
Impact

Although this question was especially relevant for the country fieldwork, there were some notable observations in relation to headquarters.

Thematic clusters had a direct role in shaping the content of global programming, to which they were supposed to provide guidance and support. The PSC endeavoured to systematize its work on providing intellectual leadership of peace and security work, focusing on evidence-based research, and the development of tools and guidance in the range of thematic areas that the agenda encompassed (some outputs are noted above). There was also a system of prioritization and planning in place, which enabled the PSC to prioritize, work through and systematize research and knowledge production across the range of themes and sub-themes contained in the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda. Some areas were more developed than others, especially in relation to research on how better to support leadership and participation of women within the different sub-themes.

Knowledge outputs were reportedly of a high standard, and potentially a very rich source for supporting programming content and capacity, although uptake could be more effective in conflict-affected settings.

To what extent was UN Women able to translate global policy/strategies in programmatic work?

Effectiveness
Relevance and coherence

As noted, the thematic work of the PSC was recognized as cutting edge and based on rigorous quantitative and qualitative research methods. Knowledge outputs were mostly premised on the need to work with the specificities of context and not to adopt blueprint approaches. However, there were concerns about how this knowledge and strategic vision can more effectively inform programmatic work in peace and security.

Part of the challenge related to UN Women more widely. There was a perceived lack of clarity on whether the systems currently being developed through the new regional architecture would better link normative/policy work and operations. Transition processes inevitably generate uncertainty. However, the new architecture was not perceived to intuitively suggest a clear flow

of communication and exchange between headquarter thematic areas and programming processes at the regional and country level.

Stakeholder groups were concerned about how to address (if not necessarily resolve) the issue of blurred boundaries across the thematic content of the different clusters. For instance, the question was raised as to when the Governance and Leadership Section should step in to lead on democratic governance once post-conflict governance becomes more normalised . Well-intended efforts to establish a thematic division of labour inevitably run up against the messy realities of country-level politics. It will be important, however, to ensure good communication systems across themes at headquarter level in order to avoid replication and 'silo-isation' across what are intrinsically connected processes, including in how guidance and support is provided to country offices. Resource and capacity constraints are a relevant issue here.

To what extent were UN Women programmes tailored to the specific socio-political and cultural and economic context in which they operated? How was this translated into programme design and planning?

Relevance and coherence
Sustainability

These questions were especially relevant for country-level fieldwork. A key role for the PSC cluster would be to provide analytical guidance on how best to strategize country-level programming in ways that better integrate contextual analysis (including conflict, political and gender analysis) in design, implementation and monitoring. Analysis already featured in headquarter-level knowledge outputs which take account of the complexity of political economy factors that enable opportunities for change and effective engagement of UN Women, should become valuable resources for regional or country programme staff.

Analytical guidance should deliberately aim to inform how theories of change are developed for programming at country office level.

How effective was UN Women at identifying and using key opportunities and partnerships at country level?

Partnership and coordination
Effectiveness and coverage

The question was relevant for country case studies.

How effective were UN Women programmes at fostering/strengthening national ownership through country engagement of intended outcomes regarding improved leadership and participation of women in relevant peace and security and humanitarian response intervention/process?

Effectiveness
Partnership and coordination

The question was relevant for country case studies.

How innovative was UN Women in its programmatic approaches and what lessons were learned that can be replicated in different contexts?

Relevance and coherence
Sustainability

The PSC was recommended for some innovative ways of working. The creative strategic

positioning of the peace and security agenda with a range of relevant global stakeholders, and using informal networks and conversations, combined with formal fora of policy and debate to manoeuvre key objectives into position, was regarded as effective at headquarter level in peace and security work. In some cases this involved working with more unlikely actors (e.g. the military) to achieve practical change in how operations work on the ground provided more effective protection and prevention measures.

Working flexibly to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances and volatile situations was also important in conflict settings. UN Women and UNIFEM demonstrated how to be adaptive in responding to crisis from a gender-responsive perspective.

The role of accompaniment and the provision of technical expertise on specific policy issues to support Member States and other United Nations entities in moments of crisis was important, for instance in the work of DPA or the PBSO. It was suggested that this could be a valuable area of growth in UN Women's work. On the ground, UN Women has been advising United Nations-wide work and response in crisis settings (for example, recently in Mali).[12]

Dimension 3: UN Women's organizational capacities, resources and structures

How adequate were UN Women's human and financial resources to effectively engage in conflict-affected countries?

Effectiveness and coverage

At the headquarter level UN Women was recognized as 'punching above its weight' on peace and security issues, despite important resource constraints and that the peace and security agenda received the smallest allocation of core funds.

How fit for purpose was UN Women in terms of the technical skills of its staff and its broader capacity to fulfil its mandate?

Relevance and coherence

At headquarter level, the high quality of technical skills and thematic expertise among UN Women's predecessor entities and the PSC, in relation to the evolving peace and security and humanitarian response agenda were acknowledged. Moreover, in interviews, political skills at headquarters were noted as critical to achieving results.

It remains unclear how effectively these capacities and skills were being institutionalized at the country level. The PSC could play a role in informing how capacity development on analytical, thematic and political skills can be scaled up in peace and security and humanitarian response in other levels of UN Women.

How effective was UN Women at coordinating gender-related work across United Nations entities and other key partners?

Partnership and coordination
Sustainability

Among other entities there was a friendly but 'wait and see' perspective as they observe the evolution of UN Women. Respondents confirmed that UN Women participated in most of the peace and security fora in the United Nations, and played a strategic and leadership role in chairing the IANGWE.

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[12] http://www.unwomen.org/2013/01/un-women-executive-director-calls-for-inclusive-peace-process-and-immediate-stop-to-human-rights-abuses-against-women-in-ongoing-conflict-in-mali/

At the time of the field mission, there were concerns about the linkages and systems to connect intergovernmental work at headquarter level with similar work in regional offices who were considered to need support in their intergovernmental work with Member States. Given the need for sensitivity and a deep understanding of regional politics, this was especially important with respect to conflict situations. Furthermore, this work will rely heavily on the regional offices' ability to build up strategic networks and partners with relevant regional stakeholders.

How effectively did UN Women manage risks in its operations? What strategies worked best?

Effectiveness and coverage

It was not clear how risk was managed which was perceived as a problem by other entities. It also remained an underdeveloped area during the transition process. Given the nature of the contexts of peace and security and humanitarian response work, it will be important to develop better risk-management systems as it is not enough simply to identify risk.

How fit for purpose were UN Women's M&E and reporting systems? Did they adequately capture lessons learned on results and impact?

Effectiveness and coverage
Relevance and coherence

Past evaluations and overall interviews suggested that UN Women and its predecessor entities lacked effective M&E systems.

In conflict settings, which tend to be politically fluid and volatile, there were particular challenges in monitoring progress and results.

Summary of findings

During the period of the evaluation (2008–2012), UN Women and its predecessor entities played a key role in accelerating the pace of change regarding progress in the implementation and visibility of the women, peace and security agenda – notwithstanding the very slow progress in the previous eight years. This reflects a combination of factors, including a renewed drive to support progress on resolution 1325 by a number of stakeholders.[13]

The transition to UN Women and its new mandate created new space for more effective political work and intergovernmental engagement at headquarter level. UN Women enjoys a significantly elevated political stature both in its coordination role within the United Nations system and in relation to intergovernmental actors which has not only helped revitalise the women, peace and security agenda, but has also enhanced political access to Member State representatives at the global level.[14] UN Women and its predecessor entities at headquarters have effectively used this to achieve progress on the monitoring and implementation of resolution 1325 in global policy.

Coordination work in the area of women, peace and security in the period under evaluation saw a shift in intensity, resulting in newer, closer and more synergistic partnerships with other United Nations entities whose engagement was important for progress on peace and security goals. Some of these were new alliances with strategically important and weighty actors in conflict and post-conflict settings (i.e. DPKO, DPA, PBSO and the Office of the

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[13] Including key Member States, women's organizations, and individuals and sections within former UNIFEM and other predecessor entities, as well as the opportunity of the ten-year anniversary and the creation of the new composite entity.
[14] The country-level fieldwork assesses access to government in-country.

High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR]). Their improved commitment to and support for better integrating the peace and security agenda of UN Women could potentially result in a transformative shift in some of the United Nations-wide peacekeeping and political work of peacebuilding, where gender perspectives, and the participation and leadership of women tended to be a low priority. Progress remains slow in practice, but the importance of women's participation and leadership in shaping peacebuilding outcomes, for instance, is now more visibly on the agenda. The importance of this discursive shift should not be underrated.

There was considerable evidence of the effectiveness of strategic positioning by the PSC and UN Women's predecessor entities to obtain concrete results in advancing progress on resolutions 1325, associated resolutions, and concrete monitoring and accountability mechanisms – building on the experience of the SWAP, and also making the most of opportunities as these have arisen (e.g. the drive from key Member States in support of resolution 1325, the ten-year anniversary; the mobilization on the ground and transnationally of women's organizations).

The importance of UN Women and its predecessors entities' role in brokering exchanges of views, facilitating dialogue, accompanying Member States and other players in the development of women, peace and security-related policy and the resolutions specifically, was especially valuable in terms of results and impact and thus should be nurtured at headquarter, regional and country office levels. This aspect of actionable strategic engagement needs to be better documented so that, among other things, it features in theories of change about what can contribute to progress towards intended outcomes. The politically difficult areas of work inherent in the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda made the importance of these political skills especially noteworthy.

Staff in UN Women and its predecessor entities were noted for their strong technical and thematic expertise and for advancing the view that policy and programming needed to draw on robust evidence and research. Knowledge outputs from both the predecessor entities and the PSC were potentially important sources of thematic analysis and practical guidance in women, peace and security work, but knowledge management remained underdeveloped in terms of how effectively it informed operational work.

Some weaknesses and challenges identified included:

- Dealing with conflict-affected states requires a politically 'savvy' approach to deal with sensitive issues, but there were different understandings of what this meant within UN Women (including at an individual level).

- UN Women and its predecessor entities' lessons on women, peace and security need to be taken forward to where the policy debates on peacebuilding and state-building are having impact on political processes at the country level, including in the work developed by INCAF, the World Bank, the International Dialogue and New Deal on fragility. UN Women was present in these fora but could engage more actively in the international state-building agenda, where gender perspectives remain severely underdeveloped.

- There was some progress at the regional level (e.g. with the European Union and NATO), but more work will be needed to consolidate existing partnerships with regional intergovernmental bodies (e.g. African Union, ECOWAS, ASEAN and OSCE). The new regional architecture provides for regional offices to be instrumental in this respect.

- Theories of change about how best to support women's leadership and participation remained underdeveloped. On specific sub-thematic areas (such as peacebuilding or transitional justice) there was a knowledge base which provided a rich source of analysis and evidence from which theories of change could be developed.

5. Recommendations

Normative and policy level

UN Women should reflect on the different understandings of what its intergovernmental role should be. Should it facilitate and support policy processes as a neutral actor, reflecting a range of views? Or should it acknowledge that effective support to women's leadership and participation in conflict, post-conflict and fragile settings is a deeply political endeavour? Supporting the implementation of global norms – as included in UN Women's normative support functions – cannot be a politically neutral process since the intended outcomes involve redefining power relations. UN Women should continue to operate in politically strategic ways to proactively advance normative goals while working to ensure ownership by Member States.

UN Women should continue to nurture strategic partnerships with key actors in peacebuilding and peacekeeping.

UN Women should aim to engage more proactively in wider international policy fora on peace and state-building and with relevant regional organizations. Gender perspectives are crucially underdeveloped in many of the spaces where policies are being shaped, and UN Women could make a strategic difference on the ground to women in post-conflict settings.

Programming

The intellectual and strategic leadership of UN Women, its predecessor entities and the PSC has been instrumental their achieving their own significantly greater visibility in the peace and security agenda. It will be important to better document lessons from this experience to identify what has worked and why as a means to inform future strategic planning.

Development of the knowledge base should be continued to support clearer theories of change on how to better support women's leadership and participation in women, peace and security in order to enhance women's role as agents of change across the different thematic areas of the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda.

Thematic knowledge outputs and expertise should be used to support the development of theories of change and modes of operation/programming at the country and regional level, in order to ensure greater coherence between the normative and operational mandates of UN Women.

For programming purposes, there is value in developing guidance on how to better integrate political, conflict and gender analysis into programming in ways that assess the complex political economy conditions and their implications for programme design and implementation. Such guidance should aim to provide more politically informed approaches to programming.

Organizational capacities

It will be critical to develop systems which enable more synergistic communication between the thematic cluster, other clusters and programming at regional and country office levels, including sharing of research, other knowledge products and providing technical advice. This

will be important to avoid both duplication of efforts and the 'silo-isation' of thematic areas that are likely to be interconnected in important ways.

Knowledge management remains underdeveloped and should be prioritized as a necessary tool to support policy and programming. It would seem that this is a corporate challenge beyond the thematic clusters.

Given the political nature of the normative support function of UN Women regarding the implementation of global norms on enhancing participation and leadership roles of women in women, peace and security, it will be important to build up political skills of UN Women staff at all levels of engagement.

It should be a priority to recruit personnel who can operate politically and flexibly to adapt to the volatility of conflict situations at all levels of the entity. Efforts should also be made to build up the thematic expertise in the women, peace and security themes and sub-themes at all levels, not only at headquarter level (currently strong on political skills and thematic expertise).

It will be important to integrate monitoring more effectively into programming so that it informs programmes as they evolve – and not as an afterthought when evaluation becomes a priority. A more robust approach to M&E than currently exists is required. Although it may be a corporate issue, M&E in conflict and post-conflict settings poses particular challenges for charting results and progress.

The unintended consequences of programming in conflict and post-conflict settings can be especially harmful to beneficiary groups. The 'do no harm' principle and better risk analysis should feature more meaningfully in UN Women's peace and security and humanitarian response work.

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Interviews

Organization	Function / Title
UN Women Asia-Pacific region in headquarter	Chief
UN Women Intergovernmental Support Division	Director
UN Women Coordination Division	Director
UN Women Coordination Division	Advisor
UN Women Executive Office	Special Assistant
UN Women Programme Division	Humanitarian Advisor
UN Women Africa region in headquarter	Chief
UN Women Five Peace and Security Cluster staff members	Staff Members
UN Women Malawi office	Country Representative
UN Women Programme Division	Deputy Director of Programme Division
UN Women Liberia Country Office	Country Representative
UN Women Policy and Programme Bureau	Deputy Executive Director – Policy and Programme Bureau
United Nations Department of Political Affairs /Europe	Director of Europe Division
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)	Executive Secretary
United Nations Children's Fund Peacebuilding and Recovery	Chief
United Nations Population Fund GBV	GBV Advisor
United Nations Development Programme/Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery (UNDP/BCPR)	Director: Governance & Rule of Law Teams
UNDP/BCPR	Deputy Director
Peacebuilding Support Office Policy Planning and Application	Chief
Non-governmental organization NGO Working Group	Coordinator
Member State European Union Mission to the United Nations	Advisor
Member State Colombia Mission to the	Minister of Legal Affairs

United Nations	
Member State Guatemala Mission to the United Nations	Advisor
Member State United States Mission to the United Nations	Advisor
Member State Canada Mission to the United Nations	Advisor
Member State Finland Mission to the United Nations	Gender lead
The International Dialogue Secretariat International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and State-building	Coordinator

Annex 1: Summaries of selected knowledge outputs

Valji's (2010) document on transitional justice provided substantive and practical guidance on gender-sensitive approaches to ensure that transitional justice mechanisms and processes take account of women's experience of conflict-related violence. It was based on a qualitative review of experiences of transitional justice to date, identifying lessons learned.

The guidance note by Goetz (2010) on different aspects of how to increase women's voice in peacebuilding made the distinction between process and substance issues, where the former was about identifying how things should can be done to increase the scope for women's voice, and the latter about the substantive issues of norm-changing (for instance, agreeing that SGBV should be seen as a prohibited act for which the perpetrators are accountable). An additional insight was the need to be constructive and concrete in relation to context-specific circumstances on how to enhance the prospects for women's voice and participation. For instance, the note suggested going beyond general propositions, such as 'women's views should not be ignored in preparations for a donor conference', and stressing that there should be concrete solutions regarding what steps are possible and desirable, such as setting up a consultative body of women from CSOs who can advise or participate in such processes and talks.

Goetz and Treiber (2006) developed policy guidance on how to better integrate conflict analysis to monitor the evolution of conflict situations and the associated risks for women. It proposed (drawing on the experience of pilot programmes in the Solomon Islands and Colombia) supporting conflict-monitoring capacities of women's grassroots organizations. The proposition that information about context-specific conditions was central to identifying and acting on risks associated with conflict for women in how support is provided was especially valuable.

Moser (2009) drew attention to the need to support women at the local and community level to work more strategically, working through the strategic use of stereotyped gender roles to empower women's scope for agency at the community level. Through this approach there is a more realistic and contextually grounded scope to shift attitudes on gender roles, make spaces safer including for the exchange of ideas and experiences among women and to facilitate conversations with the men in the community. Such an approach can also better inform strategies to diminish the risk of a backlash in response to change because different actors whose support is necessary are engaged.

Castillo-Diaz and Tordjiman (2010) reviewed the experience of women's presence in peacebuilding efforts and noted some of the most effective forms of ensuring that gender-responsive approaches had a lasting impact. Notably, ensuring that technical support on gender perspectives at key moments of peace agreements, norm and agenda-setting was especially effective in embedding rules into forward-looking processes. Again the review emphasized the importance of context specificity in determining what concrete opportunities and strategic choices were possible and how this could best be supported. Evidence strongly indicated that peace agreements which included a gender perspective were those where women were active and had voice, or effective mobilization in the lead-up to the process itself. Thus women's participation in peacebuilding iwass strategically important in achieving progress. Finally, the review provided practical ways in which women and women's groups can be supported to maximise impact.

Zahkharova's (2012) study on the implementation of NAPs delved into the political complexities of developing these in ways which were suited to specific contexts. It provided substantive and practical guidance to Member States regarding the development and

implementation of NAPs and policy strategies on women, peace and security. The guidelines also targeted civil society and regional and international stakeholders in raising awareness and implementation of the women, peace and security agenda.

Annex 2: Relevant inter-agency fora

Inter-Agency Fora (Committees, Groups, Networks, Mechanisms, etc.) at headquarter level related to peace and security in which UN Women was involved:

Group
o   High-Level Steering Committee on Women, Peace and Security
o   Executive Committee on Peace and Security
i.   Sub-Working Group on Mediation
ii.   Sub-Working Group on Democracy
o   Civilian Capacity Review
a.   Sub-Working Group on Gender
o   Senior Peacebuilding Group
o   Coordination Action and Small Arms Mechanism
o   Framework Team Meeting (Early Warning)
o   GenCap Steering Committee
o   Gender Indicators (convened by the United Nations Statistics Division)
o   IASC Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility.
i.   Sub-Working Group on Gender
o   Inter-Agency Task Force on Demobilization, Disarmament and Rehabilitation
i.   Sub-Working Group on Gender and HIV
o   Inter-Agency Task Force on Security Sector Reform
i.   Sub-Working Group on Gender
o   Four Inter-Agency Task Forces on Guinea, Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, Security Sector Reform and Tunisia (and region)
o   Inter-Agency Coordination Mechanism on Electoral Assistance
o   Integrated Mission Planning Process Working Group
o   Nine Integrated Mission Task Forces: United Nations Stabilization Missions in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the **Republic of Congo** (MONOSCO), **United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire** (ONUCI), United Nations Missions in the Sudan (UNMISS), Afghanistan (UNAMA), Kosovo (UNMIK), Liberia (UNMIL), Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and Darfur (UNAMID)
o   Six Interim Task Forces: Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Sierra Leone, Somalia
o   Pre-assessment pre-planning Working Group Libya
i.   Sub-Working Group on Social Services
ii.   Sub-Working Group on Political Process
iii.   Sub-Working Group on Security Apparatus
iv.   Sub-Working Group on Rule of Law
o   Post-Conflict Needs Assessment Advisory Group
o   Post Disaster Needs Assessment Focal Group
o   Peacebuilding Contact Group
o   Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group
o   Task Force on Children and Armed Conflict
o   United Nations Action on Sexual Violence in Conflict
o   United Nations Working Group on Public Administration in Post-conflict Environments
o   Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action

AFGHANISTAN

Country Case Study*

* The Afghanistan Country Case Study was conducted by ODI Evaluation Team member: Ashley Jackson

Acronyms

ANDS	Afghan National Development Strategy
APRP	Afghan Peace and Reintegration Programme
AWN	Afghan Women's Network
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
EPD	Equality for Peace and Democracy
EVAW	Elimination of Violence Against Women
EVAW SF	Afghanistan Elimination of Violence against Women Special Fund
GBV	Gender-based Violence
HPC	High Peace Council
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MP	Members of Parliament
NAP	National Action Plan
NAPWA	National Action Plan on Women in Afghanistan
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RCWP	Resource Centre for Women in Parliament
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
VAW	Violence Against Women
WHO	World Health Organization
WPB	Women as Peacebuilders
WPG	Women, Peace and Governance

1.   Introduction

Fieldwork for this case study was conducted in Kabul (Afghanistan) from 5-15 February 2013. Preparatory work and consultations were conducted prior to fieldwork, and several interviews that were not scheduled during the consultant's time in Afghanistan were conducted by phone or online subsequent to the field travel. This case study examined the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women's (UN Women) peace and security work, but also looked more broadly into areas of its portfolio which concerned aspects of violence against women (VAW) and governance work relevant to the peace and security agenda. In relation to the examination of UN Women's peace and security work, the case study also examined related operational and capacity issues as they arose and in agreement with the evaluation matrix areas of inquiry. The objective of the case study was to contribute to a wider assessment of UN Women's work in these areas, and assess how it supported women's leadership and participation in contexts of fragility or conflict.

2.   Methodology

Fieldwork was carried out by a member of the evaluation team in collaboration with a local researcher which contributed to ensuring triangulation, knowledge of the socio-political context and better coverage of the data.

During the fieldwork country-level strategy and programming with a focus on the peace, security and humanitarian response agenda were examined. More detailed observations of country office work in this area involved looking at a selection of interventions, which were decided with the country office and in consultation with the evaluation team leader.

Qualitative analysis which drew on a combination of documentary evidence provided by the country office, and other stakeholders and interviews was used during the fieldwork. The fieldwork ensured that the range of relevant stakeholders identified in the inception phase, and with the country office, were interviewed. Interviews were semi-structured to address the concrete evaluation questions, but also allowed for unstructured questions as appropriate for the interview, context and intervention/activity under observation. Interviews included both focus group and one-to-one interviews.

In line with the guidelines set out in the handbook by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), the country case evaluation team took measures to ensure the inclusion and participation of relevant stakeholders, taking care to identify issues of power relations. The context analysis and the stakeholder mapping that was developed took account of the context-specific balance of power between relevant groups. During the fieldwork, the team was mindful of the relationship between implementers and different stakeholders in interventions, and the role of the evaluation team.

Programmatic interventions were selected based on their relevance to the following key criteria:

- Geographical spread and key features of country contexts;

- Thematic focus (to ensure spread across the thematic categories considered relevant for peace and security and humanitarian response);

- Type of interventions; and

- Other practical considerations, such as length of programme interventions, data availability, interest expressed in the evaluation by the country office, timing for the case study and team country expertise.

On this base, two interventions were selected: Women as Peacebuilders (WPB) and the Afghanistan Elimination of Violence Against Women Special Fund (EVAW SF). WPB was selected because of the length of the programme, the types of interventions (in large part, but not exclusively, focused on advocacy and capacity-building) and the nature of partnerships (focused on government and civil society, as well as the direct link between programming and the women, peace and security agenda). The EVAW SF was also selected for the length of the programme, as well as the nature of its programming. The general nature VAW and the lack of adequate response systems were, and continue to be, linked to the conflict (although not explicitly). Other linking factors included the social fabric and the limited capacity and resources of national partners to prevent and respond to VAW. Whether they could considered as humanitarian response, as opposed to risk mitigation interventions, is a complicated question. However, emergency response mechanisms such as those supported by the EVAW SF, in a situation of endemic violence, are often indeed life-saving. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has consistently included VAW and similar programming for conflict-affected populations, as well as improving services for non-conflict affected populations, in its annual humanitarian appeals (OCHA, 2010; 2011; 2012a; 2013). The key focus in the examination of case studies was not to evaluate overall effectiveness, but rather to determine whether UN Women's policy influence, programming and operations reflected an appropriate fit to context conditions, needs and realities.

3. Country context

Afghanistan has been plagued by war and instability for the past three decades. From political upheaval that began in the late 1970s, Afghanistan descended into a pattern of conflict and chaos which has continued through to the present. On 7 October 2001, coalition troops were deployed to Afghanistan under the United States-led Operation Enduring Freedom. In December 2001, following the rapid fall of the Taliban government, a number of prominent Afghans met under the auspices of the United Nations in Bonn to form an interim government, the Afghan Interim Authority (AIA). The AIA had a six-month mandate which was followed by a two-year Transitional Authority and elections in 2004. The Bonn agreement also recommended the deployment of a United Nations-mandated international force to maintain security. On 22 December 2001, United Nations Security Council resolution 1386 authorized the creation and deployment of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter to 'assist the Afghan Interim Authority in the maintenance of security in Kabul and its surrounding areas'. The first troops under ISAF command were deployed in June 2002. After the fall of the Taliban government, diplomatic and aid agency presence (which had been extremely limited under the Taliban) dramatically increased to address humanitarian needs and begin post-war reconstruction efforts. On 28 March 2002, resolution 1401 established the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) to support 'focused recovery and reconstruction'. While there was relative stability following the collapse of the Taliban in 2001, security has remained fragile, and 2011 was marked a significant deterioration which affected all international actors, particularly the United Nations. Government control is tenuous in many areas of the country with the drawdown of ISAF combat troops continuing for the 2014 final deadline. Presidential, provincial and parliamentary elections are scheduled for 2014-2015, and will mark the end of the Karzai period of government. It is not clear what impact these factors will have on the country.

Governance

Afghanistan has historically lacked democratic institutions. At the national level, there is a parliament, a bi-cameral structure comprised of the *Meshrano Jirga* (the Upper House) and the *Wolesi Jirga* (the Lower House). At provincial level, governors are appointed and Provincial Councils are elected every four years. The development of political parties has been slow, especially those that can be considered pan-ethnic, and the composition of voting blocs in recent elections has largely fallen along ethnic lines. Government institutions at the subnational level remain weak and disconnected from the central government.

Presidential and Provincial Council elections were last held in 2009, while parliamentary elections were held in 2010. Although both elections were marred by widespread violence and fraud, urgently needed reforms to the electoral process and law (particularly the Independent Electoral Commission) have been slow-moving (Boone, 2010). The next round of Presidential and Provincial elections will be held in 2014, prior to the end of the security transition, while parliamentary elections are due to be held in 2015, following the end of the formal security transition process. Hamid Karzai, who has held power since 2002, is no longer eligible to run in the election and 2014 will be the first post-Taliban presidential election in which he will not stand.

Peace and security

Afghanistan's development continues to progress within a climate of heightened political instability and attacks by insurgents. The withdrawal of the NATO-led ISAF in 2014, which coincides with the next Presidential elections, has resulted in renewed fears of a larger conflict in the country or, as a compromise, power-sharing and growing social influence by conservative elements, including the Taliban. While the country was initially relatively secure following the fall of the Taliban, security began to markedly deteriorate in 2006. Armed conflict continues, with vast swathes of the country contested or beyond government control. The past two years have witnessed increasingly complex attacks launched by insurgents nationwide, and the continued targeting of government officials and activists. Internal displacement is increasing and civilian casualties from the conflict remain significant, with 7,559 civilian casualties recorded by the United Nations in 2012 (UNAMA Human Rights/ OHCHR, 2012).

Progress towards a political settlement remains a challenge in the absence of an active peace process. A High Peace Council (HPC) appointed by President Karzai in September 2010 to facilitate peace talks and lead national reconciliation has experienced major setbacks due to ongoing violence in various parts of the country and attacks against the Council's members. The Afghan Peace and Reintegration Programme (APRP) was created in 2010 in an attempt to reintegrate mid- and low-level fighters through financial incentives and training, but progress has fallen short of expectations (Derksen, 2011).

Nonetheless, ISAF troop-contributing countries have pledged to withdraw from combat roles and hand over lead responsibility for security by the end of 2014. The transition process is currently underway, with responsibility for security in nearly half of the country already handed over to Afghan security forces. In light of the drawdown of combat troops, the international community, including the United Nations system, donors and other international actors, is currently in the process of defining its role in support of the Afghan government and national partners. The uncertainty of transition has also translated into uncertainty for many of the humanitarian and development organizations presently in Afghanistan regarding what kinds of programming and support they will be able to implement and the extent of geographic access (IRN, 2012).

Women and conflict

Long-lasting conflict and upheaval have exacted a heavy toll on women and girls in Afghanistan. During the war with the Soviet Union and the subsequent civil war in the 1980s and 1990s, women faced significant hardships. Abduction of women, sexual violence and forced marriages markedly increased during the civil war. Rape of women and girls appears to have been condoned by militia leaders as a weapon of war, to further terrorise civilians as well as a way of 'rewarding' fighters. Many women fled during the conflict, often with their families, predominantly to Pakistan and Iran. However, in Pakistan in particular, women were often confined to domestic spaces and, especially for those from urban areas, faced greater restrictions than were placed upon them in Afghanistan (Khan, 2002). Access to healthcare, education and paid work is extremely limited, with most refugees living in abject poverty (Turton and Marsden, 2002).

Under Taliban rule, women and girls were subject to a strict set of rules based on an extremist interpretation of Shari'a law. Education for girls was all but abolished. Women were banned from work, aside from female health workers, and were not allowed to leave home without a male escort and a full-length *burqa*. The wars left tens of thousands of female-headed families, yet they were subject to the same laws and many were reliant on assistance from international agencies or reduced to begging on the streets. Access to healthcare facilities was also extremely limited: in Kabul, one poorly equipped, barely functioning hospital was open to the half-million women in the city; 87 per cent of women in Kabul reported decreased access to health services; 81 per cent reported a decline in their mental condition; and 42 per cent met the conditions for post-traumatic stress disorder (Physicians for Human Rights, 1998).

While many women and girls enjoyed relative security and renewed freedoms after the fall of the Taliban, restrictions on female mobility and denial of their rights to work, inheritance and land ownership, and pervasive violence against women and girls pose serious threats to women's realisation of their human potential. While reliable, up-to-date statistics still remain a challenge in Afghanistan, women are being increasingly caught up in the violence. While civilian casualties decreased a little in 2012, for the first time since 2006, the number of female victims increased by 20 per cent (UNAMA Human Rights/OHCHR, 2012b). The resurgence of the Taliban in many areas of the country has led to women and girls being increasingly subjected to threats and attacks for participating in public life or attending school. In the province of Laghman, two successive directors of the Department of Women's Affairs office were assassinated within the space of a year (Tolo News, 2012).

Gender relations

During the past decade, significant gains have been made for and by women and girls in Afghanistan. More girls are in school now than ever before in the country's history and more than a quarter of Afghanistan's parliamentarians are female. The Constitution grants equal rights to men and women and Afghanistan is a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The first combined initial and second periodic report was finalised and submitted to the CEDAW Committee in June 2011, and was scheduled to be reviewed in July 2013. The legal and policy framework protecting and empowering women has also expanded in recent years. The Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) includes gender as one of its cross-cutting themes. Other key policies and legal developments include the establishment of a National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) in 2007 (officially launched by President Karzai in 2009).

UN Women was instrumental in the development process[15] and the EVAW law, passed by presidential decree as a legal landmark, in 2009.

Yet such gains are limited, and the status of Afghan women remains amongst the lowest in the world, ranked 175 of 186 countries in the United Nations' 2012 Gender Inequality Index.[16] Afghanistan is a deeply conservative society, where female participation in public life has traditionally been extremely limited. Incremental progress on national policies and within Afghan institutions has often been achieved only after significant external pressure and amidst considerable internal obstacles, including lack of capacity, poor coordination and limited national and little internal political will. NAPWA has largely been unimplemented and the EVAW law remains largely unenforced (ActionAid, 2012; UNAMA Human Rights/OHCHR, 2011); 87 per cent of women report experiencing at least one form of domestic violence[17] and women who participate in public life do so at significant risk (UNAMA Human Rights/OHCHR, 2009; Crilly, 2012). Women have campaigned amidst threat and intimidation to gain their parliamentary seats and other elected positions (Nelson, 2009).

Women's economic activities, although a significant contributor to local economies through such activities as carpet-weaving and post-harvest processing, are rarely remunerated at fair market prices. Production and marketing are generally done with the support of a middleman, with women often not receiving equitable remuneration and with little recourse. Equally constraining has been the exclusion of women from local decision-making bodies (*shuras* and *jirgas*), although the inclusion of women on Community Development Councils through the National Solidarity Programme has helped remedy this exclusion in some instances at the village level (Beath et al.,2012).

There are worrying signs that the modest advances made after the fall of the Taliban are receding. Many Afghan and international human rights activists worry that this progress will be quickly erased once international troops leave (Abi-Habib, 2013). The government's increasingly conservative stance on the role of women is another cause of concern, including President Karzai's recent public statement in support of the Ulema Council which instructed women not to travel unchaperoned or mix with men in education or work (Vogt, 2012). There has also reportedly been a sharp rise in violent attacks on women in Afghanistan over the past year, particularly an increase in so-called 'honour killings' (Harooni, 2012). Many women are increasingly worried about their own security, and the implications of any political settlement on their rights and safety.

Aid environment

Since 2001, donors have given over $30 billion[18] in development and humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, and the volume of aid has risen each year since 2001 – making Afghanistan the largest recipient of overseas development assistance in the world. Assistance has undoubtedly improved life for Afghans and built the capacity of Afghan institutions. In 2001, under the Taliban, less than one million children attended school, almost none of them girls. Today, over five million children attend school, more than a third of whom are girls, and women comprise one in four of Afghanistan's teachers. The Basic Package of Health Services, a national programme managed by the Ministry of Health and implemented by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), has expanded health coverage significantly. Mortality

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[15] Gender Review Report Royal Norwegian Embassy Afghanistan.
[16] See United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Human Development Indicators, GII: Gender Inequality Index. Available from http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/68606.html.
[17] Further information on the UN Women website. Available from http://www.unifem.org/worldwide/asia_pacific/.
[18] Unless otherwise indicated, currency refers to United States dollar.

rates for children under five have fallen by 40 per cent and infant mortality has decreased by 30 per cent (World Bank, n.d.). More than one in three pregnant women receive antenatal care, compared to just 16 per cent in 2003. Economic growth has been strong, if uneven and largely driven by aid, although the impact this has had on alleviating poverty is unclear.

Progress is however limited and fragile. Afghanistan remains one of the least developed countries and is among the ten poorest countries in the world as per the 2012 Human Development Report. An estimated 42 per cent of the population live on less than $1 a day, 68 per cent have no sustained access to improved water sources and almost 95 per cent are without access to improved sanitation. Despite success in expanding healthcare, an estimated 5.4 million Afghans lack access to health services, 4.4 million of whom are female (OCHA, 2012b). An estimated nine million Afghans (nearly a third of the population) live in poverty (World Bank, n.d.). Afghanistan also experienced its eighth drought in 11 years in 2011. There are also significant concerns about aid waste and corruption. Afghanistan ranks 174 out of 176 countries on Transparency International's 2012 Corruption Perception Index, compared to 117 out of 158 countries in 2005.[19]

Key stakeholders, partners and donors

UN Women, and UNIFEM before it, partners with the Afghan government historically focused on the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), although it has sought to build partnerships with other key ministries including the Ministries of Justice, Public Health, Finance, Foreign Affairs, Hajj and Religious Affairs, Labour and Social Affairs, and Information and Culture. Key donors include the Nordic countries (Finland, Norway and Sweden), as well as Belgium, France, Italy, Iceland, Japan and the Netherlands. Within the United Nations, UN Women has close programmatic relationships with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO), and reports efforts to coordinate regularly with UNDP to avoid duplication of initiatives. Specifically on peace and security work, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) is a new but important partner on issues related to United Nations Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security, as well as the Ministry of Interior (MoI). UN Women has developed key relationships within the United Nations system, including with UNAMA (both with the Human Rights Unit and the UNAMA Gender Unit) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and coordinates with others through its chairing of the United Nations country team (UNCT) Gender Working Group. It was noted by other stakeholders that coordination could be strengthened. UN Women also works with a wide range of civil society organizations (CSOs) to support and build their capacity. These include implementing partners for programming as well as advocacy and research, and other strategic partnerships.

The EVAW SF works (predominantly though not exclusively) with Afghan NGOs present in provinces across the country. In its peace and security work, UN Women works with some implementing partners to conduct advocacy and awareness-raising (most prominently Equality for Peace and Democracy [EPD]). In terms of advocacy and political participation more generally, the Afghan Women's Network (AWN), an umbrella organization of over 100 women's rights organizations and over 5,000 individual members, is a key stakeholder and partner. It also works with the Research Institute for Women, Peace and Security (RIWPS) and individual activists.

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[19] For further information, see the Transparency International website.

4. UN Women strategy and activities in Afghanistan

Overview of country office and strategy

The Afghanistan office, one of UN Women's largest country presences, was established in 2002. UNIFEM initially focused on providing support to key government policies, legislation and programmes, as elaborated in UNIFEM's 2008–2011 programme strategy[20] (linked with a Southeast Asia regional strategy and aligned ultimately with UNIFEM's global Strategic Plan 2008–2011). The country programme strategy included support for and input into the creation and implementation of national strategy documents, including the ANDS and NAPWA, as well as supporting MoWA. It also provided substantial support in the area of women's access to justice, particularly VAW and women's economic empowerment.

In light of increased demands on the United Nations system to support the Afghan government as one, UN Women's corporate strategic process and the development of the Strategic Note and Annual Workplan 2012–2013 and the strengthening of UN Women's field presence, UN Women Afghanistan was in the process of strengthening its structure to better meet demands from national partners and the United Nations system as the transition to UN Women is consolidated.

The regional office for the Asia and Pacific region was established in 2012, and provides overall guidance and strategic guidance to country offices. Located in Bangkok (Thailand), the regional office is currently staffed in accordance with the new regional architecture approved by UN Women's Executive Board in November 2012. The strategy outlined, among other changes, the establishment of six regional offices and six multi-country offices. The Country Director of the Afghanistan country office now reports to the head of the Bangkok regional office (rather than directly to headquarters) which was a significant change. However, it was unclear what impact the new regional office would have on UN Women's operations in Afghanistan, including what technical support and policy advice it would provide.

Within the timeframe of the evaluation, UN Women in Afghanistan was focused on and organized around five key priority areas:

- Women, Peace and Governance *(WPG)*: Enhancing the participation of women in peace processes and increase the capacity of agencies to use resolution 1325 as a policy and programming framework. This includes building the capacity of female leaders (Members of Parliament [MPs] and members of Provincial Councils) to influence policymaking and legislative processes, and working closely with civil society to support advocacy for women's inclusion in key decision-making processes, and events such as international conferences.

- Elimination of Violence Against Women *(EVAW)*: Improving the capacity of formal institutions, NGOs and CSOs to address the preventive, remedial and developmental aspects of VAW.

- Gender and Justice: Integrating a gender perspective into all dimensions of justice so that; legal and judicial systems function and are gender-sensitive; discriminatory laws and policies are reformed; and laws acknowledge and protect the universal rights of women and men equally.

- Women Economic Security and Rights: Increasing the capacity of women to advocate effectively for opportunities to build sustainable economic assets.

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[20] Extended until 31 October 2012.

- Institutional Capacity Development Unit: Supporting other units within UN Women and externally (such as MoWA) to enhance their systems and capacities for gender equality and the inclusion of women.

UN Women's work is aligned with the government's overall goals and contributes to the priority areas of UN Women's Strategic Plan. UN Women chairs the UNCT Gender Working Group and the Gender Donor Coordination Group. UN Women is also an active member of UNCT strategic working groups, such as the Task Forces for Communications, Transition, Early Marriage and Gender-based Violence (GBV). UN Women also leads the Women, Peace and Security Working Group, which is open to all international and national organizations, including government agencies, working on women, peace and security in Afghanistan. UN Women co-chairs the Gender Mainstreaming Task Force with MoWA.

Description/analysis of selected programmes

Women as Peacebuilders

The WPB programme aims to 'strengthen women's participation in peace, security, and reconciliation processes by building the capacities of WPB and by providing technical assistance to international actors for the integration of resolution 1325 as a central framework for implementing security and stability goals' (UNIFEM, 2010. 3). The project provides both long-term and ad hoc support, primarily focused on advocacy.

The programme also facilitates and coordinates several key fora in Kabul, including providing administrative support and direction to the Women, Peace and Security Working Group (WPS WG). Established in 2010, the WPS WG includes the government, civil society, donors and international organizations, with the objective of supporting the implementation of resolution 1325 and other relevant resolutions. UN Women also ensures that the WPS WG coordinates with other relevant entities, including the Gender Donors Coordination Group, the Transitional Justice Working Group, the MoWA Gender Mainstreaming Task Force, the Gender-based Violence sub-cluster, the Civil Society Task Force for resolution 1325 and related conventions and HPC female members. It is also supporting the technical advisory group and MoFA, in partnership with the Government of Finland, to develop the national action plan (NAP) to support the implementation of resolution 1325.

It also supported women's involvement in several high-level events on peace and security dialogue, including the annual Peace Day, international conferences (such as the London Conference [2010], the Bonn Conference [2011] and the Tokyo Conference [2012]), as well as the 2010 National Consultative Peace Jirga and the 2011 Loya Jirga. In these activities and other advocacy, it provided support, funding and technical advice to AWN and its members to expand opportunities and strengthen the capacity of peace actors. As a result of this advocacy, women's participation and the inclusion of women's perspectives were important outcomes of the above mentioned conferences and other relevant events and processes. For example, women's representation increased to 25 per cent, the highest-ever participation of women in a traditional Jirga. It also supported the creation of Af-Pak dialogue between female activists in both countries, starting with Phase I of the project in 2008. However, recent security and other issues delayed further action on this dialogue.

 A key initiative was to provide support to women in parliament through the establishment of a Resource Centre for Women in Parliament (RCWP). Created in 2006 within the vicinity of the parliament building, the RCWP was moved in 2011 for security reasons to the *Shar-e-Naw* area of Kabul, and then more recently to a location within parliament. The resource centre is equipped with a modest library of books on relevant gender and political issues, six desktop computers, a printer, scanner, photocopier and other equipment. The RCWP's

publicly stated objective is to 'enhance the capacity, technical and institutional knowledge, and public communications skills of elected women officials so that they are better prepared to include women's voices and perspectives effectively in national development and reconstruction plans' (UN Women, 2011). At the time of the evaluation, it was supported on site by one UN Women staff member as a Gender Assistant. Another more senior national staff position, Gender Advisor, exists to support the RCWP, the Parliamentary Women's Commission and female MPs more generally. The position was vacant at the time of the field research while recruitment of the Gender Advisor to parliament was finalised on 20 March 2013.

Elimination of Violence Against Women Special Fund

The EVAW SF was administered by UN Women to support community-based response mechanisms and capacities to address VAW. The EVAW SF arose out of a series of discussions on a 2007 report issued by UNIFEM and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in cooperation with several CSOs (UN Women, 2011).[21] The EVAW SF was established in August 2007 and became operational in October 2007. It was formally launched by UNIFEM and EVAW SF donors on International Women's Day, 8 March 2008. With a central focus on strengthening the capacity of CSOs, it focused on three key areas of intervention: protection services, reintegration and psychosocial support; lobbying, advocacy and awareness-raising; and legal aid and access to justice. While not explicitly linked to peace and security issues, the endemic levels of VAW in Afghanistan were seen by several UNIFEM staff and external stakeholders as inextricably (though not exclusively) linked to the past three decades of conflict, which guided the decision to include it in this case study. According to UN Women's records, from 2008 to 2010 the EVAW SF supported 28 NGOs in 23 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces, reaching approximately two million beneficiaries at a cost of $2,738,064 through three calls for proposals. In 2010, it supported 12 NGOs in 17 provinces through a fourth call for proposals in which (11 million beneficiaries by BBC programmes) plus 119,957 beneficiaries the rest of 11 projects were reached.

During this period, EVAW SF focused on two core components. Component one focused on the three key areas of intervention noted above as well as operational research and comparative study for best practice of EVAW implementation. Interventions included awareness-raising with local populations and government officials (including judges, teachers, police officers and others). In 2011, support was also provided for family guiding centres (providing mediation and reintegration support) and four women's shelters run by Afghan NGOs in Kabul, Kapisa and Bamiyan provinces. Shelter support was evaluated by an external consultant in 2011.[22] Component two focused on strengthening institutional capacities which addressed EVAW through national and regional policy-making processes and mechanisms, including cross-sectoral activities involving other UNIFEM sections such as gender and justice and women's economic security and rights (UN Women, 2011).

In 2012, EVAW SF supported 13 NGO and government partners across 12 provinces (UN Women, 2012b). However, in June 2012, its strategic direction significantly shifted following the EVAW SF Advisory Board's revision of standard operating procedures. The revision determined two key changes: the inclusion of qualified government applicants and capacity assessments of implementing partners prior to grant allocation. The new strategic direction, formulated by assessments with stakeholders, also resulted in changes to the central objective and core components. The central objective of the EVAW SF at present is to 'catalyse

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[21] The consultant was not able to obtain the original report.
[22] Original report not available, but a summary of the shelter evaluation is provided in UN Women (2011).

significant growth in prevention and response mechanisms, and develop capabilities for bridging the gap between civil societies and government for implementation of EVAW laws at the community level and support services to victims of EVAW' (UN Women, 2011).

The programme recognizes that the EVAW SF rests within the context of the larger EVAW programme, which encompasses access to justice as well as protection and, as such, is now oriented around two core components: prevention of VAW and response to VAW. Prevention focuses on increasing public awareness of VAW (through implementation of the United Nations Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence Against Women Campaign and capacity-building of community leaders and service providers) and, at policy level, the development and implementation of a multi-sectoral national strategy and action plan for VAW prevention and EVAW law adaptation. Response activities are premised on the assumption that response to EVAW can only be effective through strengthening national institutional capacities. Therefore, aside from the shelter initiatives, EVAW activities also focus on developing a national GBV referral framework and the implementation of a national GBV referral system. The development of the GBV referral system is a joint programme with UNFPA and WHO, in collaboration with the Ministries of Public Health, Women's Affairs, Interior and Foreign Affairs. Response also includes the expansion of protection centres (shelters) for women and family guidance centres. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) throughout the UN Women country office received greater focus, with M&E action plans and checklists now developed, as well as a plan in place to contract third-party monitors, a financial audit and an external evaluation in 2013.

5.   Findings

Analysis of theories of change

In keeping with the objective of the evaluation exercise, the underlying theories of change underpinning programming and practice were considered. While the UN Women country office did not use the terminology 'theory of change', the concept was described to interviewees. The theory of change underlying interventions examined and the wider portfolio of projects appeared tenuous. Many staff interviewed could not provide one when asked and often saw projects as being donor-driven instead. Staff also felt that the lack of core funding and resultant project-based approach prevented a holistic theory of change underpinning UN Women's various interventions. This was reinforced by UNIFEM's project focus, but shifted with the restructuring of the Afghanistan country office to support a programmatic approach. During the process of developing the country programme a more detailed approach will be taken, in terms of contextual analysis as well as institutionalizing the results logic which underpins how change is expected to obtain, in order to ensure a relevant and coherent programme strategy.

The evaluation observed the need for better conflict analysis to inform programming and practice during interventions, in addition to the analysis done within the common country assessment process guiding the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), to ensure sustainable and strategic interventions. While situational analysis, which included conflict-related factors and an application of the 'do no harm' principle, was sometimes inherent to or evident in some project design, it was less developed, was not applied consistently across projects and did not always inform project implementation. In addition, there appeared to be a lack of sufficient M&E in many projects (including articulated logframes and other key tools), making it difficult to learn from interventions, measure effectiveness, and ensure sustainability and appropriateness. The focus of monitoring and documenting progress was frequently structured almost exclusively around

reporting required by donors which often resulted in project implementation being focused almost exclusively on the output level. The issue appeared to be in the process of being addressed, in particular through the recruitment of staff with M&E capacities, as well as updating of the Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Plan for the office. Senior country office staff also reported that a recent redesign of the country office's process for project/programme formulation to ensure a uniform approach, use of data and coherence with the its Strategic Note should address the other issues.

Support to government institutions has been seen as critical to effecting change. While the focus was primarily on MoWA, more recently UN Women sought to expand and strengthen partnerships with other ministries and government bodies. The intent behind this recognized MoWA's weak position vis-à-vis other ministries and the need to influence policy and programmes on peace and security through both direct engagement with these other ministries and through ongoing support to MoWA. There was also growing recognition, particularly in light of the uncertainty around conditions after 2014, of the need to expand engagement with civil society actors beyond implementing projects, and to work equally at the policy and advocacy levels.

At the project level, theories of change articulated in project documents were often vague or incomplete and staff often had difficulty articulating their own understandings of the assumptions and analysis underpinning the projects they were working on. However, as noted in the inception report, the absence of clear, explicit theories of change did not mean that interventions did not follow a logic of change derived from assumptions about how certain actions were intended to contribute to concrete results. Drawing on project documents and interviews, Figures 1 and 2 identify and articulate theories of change for WPB and the EVAW SF, respectively. Outputs, outcomes and strategic plan goals are directly summarised from the Development Results Framework (DRF) 2008–2011 (undated), where applicable, but primarily from the 2012–2013 (November 2012). Inputs and underlying assumptions were less apparent in project documents, so summaries of each were extrapolated from interviews with UN Women staff and various project documents.

Some UN Women staff felt strongly that UNAMA's presence and mandate both enabled and presented challenges UN Women's work. The perceived politicization of the gender agenda by UNAMA has at times undermined and even contradicted UN Women's efforts, by either pushing or downplaying issues within UN Women's mandate in order to realise a broader political agenda. As a result, WPG in particular has suffered, as UN Women was not recognized as the lead on resolution 1325 reporting, support to parliament or serving as the key advisor on EVAW law. The Gender Unit of UNAMA, which chaired the UNCT Gender Working Group during the UNIFEM years, was not willing to step aside fully in order for the newly formed UN Women exercise its mandate. However, the Country Representative worked to carve out space for UN Women, both within the UNCT and with UNAMA, resulting in improved coordination and recognition by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of UN Women's role. The process is ongoing and country office management should be vigilant in maintaining persistent pressure to ensure engagement.

Figure 1. Theory of Change: WPB

Inputs:
- Support to or leadership of key peace and security coordination fora.
- Funding and technical assistance to women's rights activists and organizations.
- Funding and technical assistance to various components of the Afghan government on peace and security issues.
- Technical support and capacity-building of women in government/female government employees.
- Convening of events to highlight women's concerns, with particular relevance to peace and security.

Outputs
- Women activists/MPs engage in consultations on resolution 1325, in Parliament and outside, as part of NAP processes.
- Opportunities created for advocates/scholars on women's rights in Islam to exchange information and opinions.
- MoFA has increased capacity to engender peacebuilding and coordinate inclusion/facilitate information sharing with decision-makers on resolution 1325.
- Gender advocates, youth and academia have increased capacity/opportunity to influence peacebuilding.
- Community leaders/advocates have increased capacity to support women's rights in peacebuilding processes at the community level.
- Ministries, parliamentarians and civil society have enhanced knowledge commitments and monitoring mechanisms for resolution 1325 and CEDAW.

Outcomes
- Legal frameworks protecting and promoting women's empowerment and gender equality are resilient and can be implemented.
- Afghanistan's gender equality commitments are integrated into the ongoing political and security transition processes, to ensure gender-responsiveness and female participation.

Strategic Plan Goals:
- UN Women Global Strategic Plan DRF
- Goal 1: Women's increased leadership and participation in the decisions that affect their lives.
- Goal 4: Women's leadership in peace and security.

Underlying assumptions:
- Government of Afghanistan, and other parties to the conflict are amenable towards or supportive of the inclusion of women in peace processes.
- UN Women has the capacity, credibility and expertise to support women's engagement in peace processes.
- Legal frameworks will be enforced or implemented.
- The Government of Afghanistan will adhere to its gender commitments.
- Female government employees/officials and activists require capacity of the nature UN Women is equipped to provide.
- The creation of a resolution 1325 NAP will lead to greater inclusion of women in peace and security issues.
- CSOs are able to credibly and inclusively represent women's interests in peace processes.
- CSOs have sufficient capacity to fulfill the roles (i.e. representation, coordination, consultation) with which they have been tasked.

Figure 2. Theory of Change: EVAW SF

Inputs
- Support to the implementation of the government's EVAW strategy and improving its capacity to collect and analyze data on VAW.
- Collaboration with government and UNFPA to strengthen VAW referral systems.
- Financial and technical support to government and NGOs in responding to VAW (i.e. shelters, protection centres).
- Financial and technical support to government and NGOs to prevent VAW, raise awareness among target groups on its drivers and consequences.

Outputs
- MoWA has increased capacity to implement/monitor shelter operations at national/subnational levels, in partnership with relevant ministries and CSOS.
- MoWA inter-ministerial data system for effective collection, analysis and publication of VAW incidence established.
- Coordinated United Nations/international support to review/reform the civil penal code, to integrate EVAW Law, CEDAW and other necessary elements to prevent GBV.
- Coordinated United Nations/international advocacy on improved implementing/operationalizing of national/sub national mechanisms to prevent GBV.
- Increased number of joint UNCT/international community initiatives advocating local engagement on promoting prevention of GBV (early marriage, running away, etc.).

Outcomes
Afghanistan becomes a 'centre of excellence' in the region regarding the coordinated and resilient implementation of its legal frameworks combating and preventing violence against women and girls.

Strategic Plan Goals:
UN Women Global Strategic Plan DRF
Goal 3: Prevent violence against women and girls and expand access to victim/survivor services.

Underlying assumptions
- UN Women has the administrative capacity and technical expertise to effectively and accountably administer the EVAW SF.
- Legal frameworks will be enforced or implemented, at all levels.
- The Government of Afghanistan will adhere to its commitments to eliminate VAW, both through prioritizing improved access to services but also ending impunity and protecting victims.
- Government and NGO have the capacity to implement and oversee funded activities.
- Risks and insecurity associated around sensitive issues such as VAW can be sufficiently mitigated.
- Awareness-raising activities will have positive outcomes with respect to VAW.
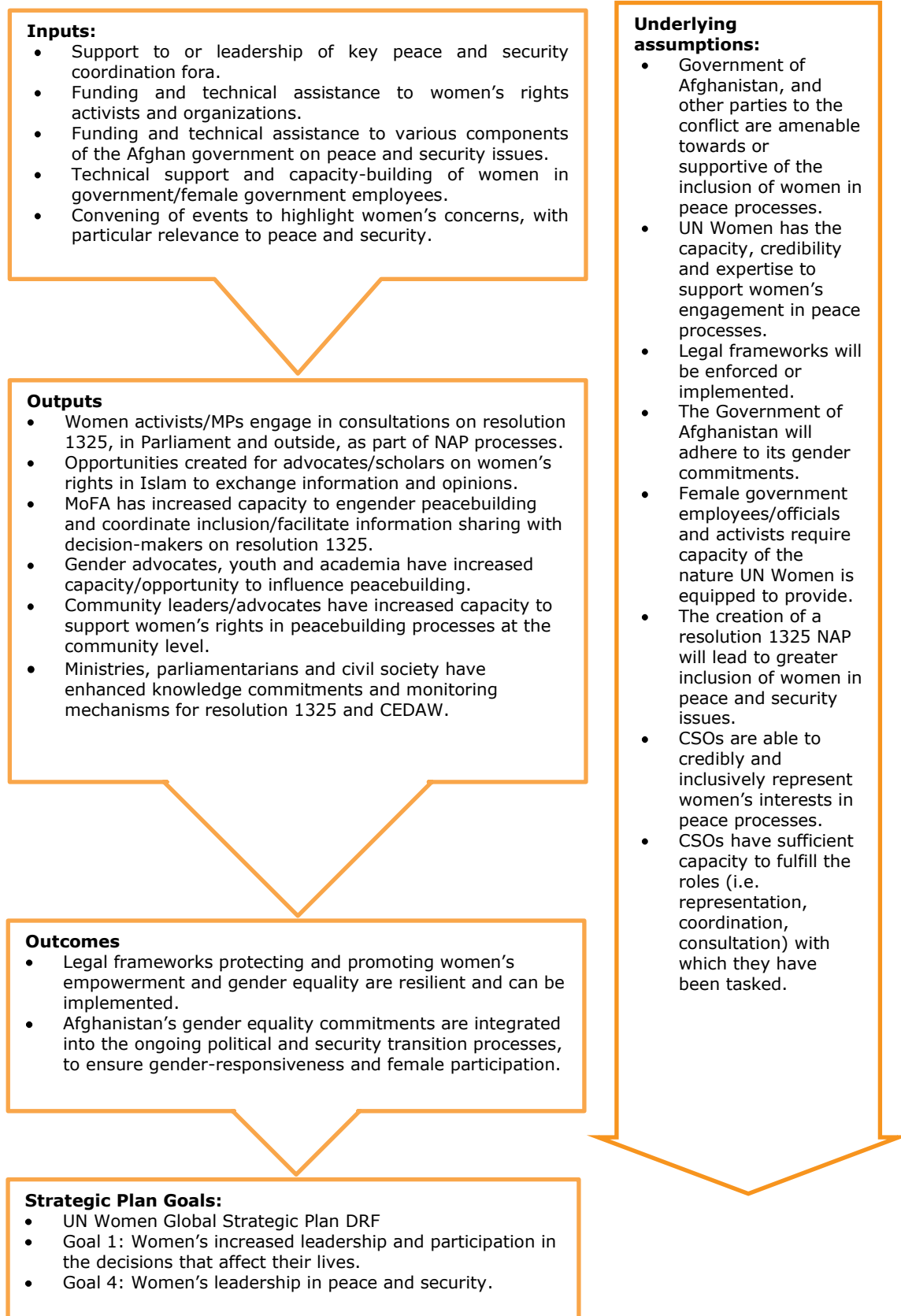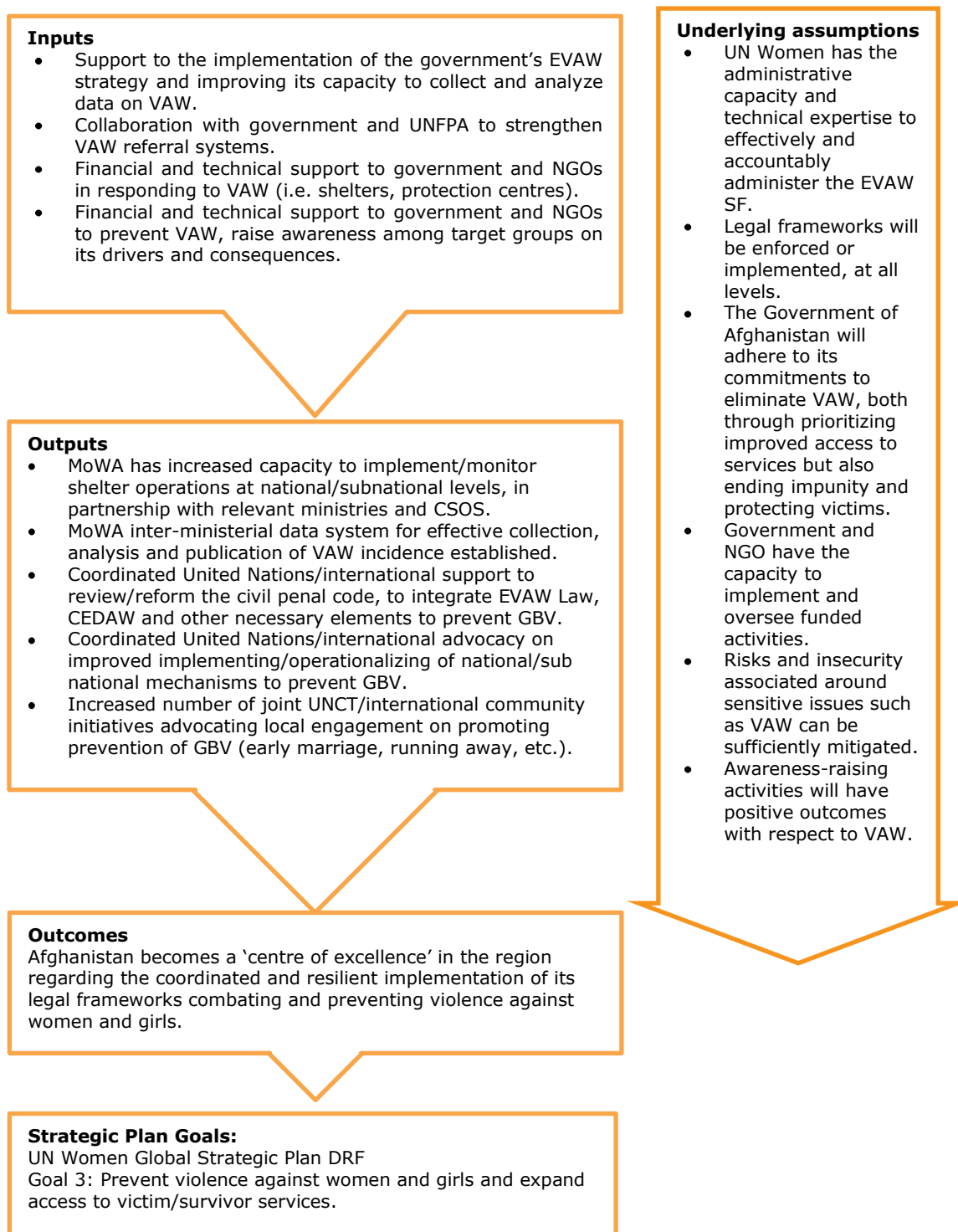
Assessment of evaluation questions

Dimension 1: UN Women's policy and strategic direction

In what ways did UN Women influence policies and practice (within the United Nations system as well as in key external agencies) in relation to women's political participation and leadership in peace and security?

In the absence of an official peace process, efforts by UN Women and all international and national actors working on women, peace and security were limited. UN Women strived to ensure that women's voices were heard in international conferences around these issues as well as in national *jirgas*, to raise awareness and put women's leadership and equal participation on the agenda. It supported national civil society actors, primarily through the AWN and its members, to conduct research and advocacy on these issues to influence the government and donors.

UN Women appeared fairly conservative and narrow in scope with regard to these activities and lacked a strong, long-term strategic vision for peace and security. It focused on key international and national events (such as international conferences) and worked through/supported other actors. However, increased emphasis on advocacy and awareness-raising would have helped UN Women to better position itself and opened doors for other national and international partners to advocate for women's leadership in peace negotiations. UN Women's senior management expressed concerns over high-profile public advocacy which validated the frequent rhetoric that gender was an imposed issue from the international community and therefore anti-Islamic. Senior managers also felt that advocacy should be Afghan-led and -owned. UN Women (and UNIFEM) also provided support to female politicians, seeking to strengthen their governing capacity and voice on women's issues. It provided critical support on some key policies, including ANDS and NAPWA, as well as legislative issues, such as the incorporation of the EVAW Law in the criminal code.

However, given the complexity of the national context and the absence of a meaningful peace process, UN Women, at the time a non-resident entity in the UNCT, often struggled to demonstrate its added value on peace and security work vis-à-vis other United Nations entities operating in Afghanistan. Prior to the transition to UN Women, some UN Women staff felt that the country office was viewed as a UNDP project, with an unclear mandate and little political clout. UN Women still faces the challenge of a comparatively small budget and lack of core resources, which leads to donor-driven programming. Within the context of peace and security, UN Women has to convince national and UNCT partners of its credentials and mandate on a regular basis. These factors have undermined the entity's ability to be heard within the United Nations and the Afghan government. Since 2009, staffing problems, security issues and other internal issues, have resulted in UN Women at times being sidelined or forgotten on key issues or initiatives, such as peace dialogue and reintegration programmes. It had also more often than not followed an agenda set by other actors and been reactive to events rather than leading efforts, seeking to innovative or challenging the conventional narrative on peace and security in Afghanistan. However, due to the lack of resources and difficulties in recruiting a critical mass of technical expertise over the long-term, UN Women had to identify discrete areas where it could have an impact. Some UN Women staff felt that this resulted in UNIFEM's frequent deferral to UNDP and UNAMA, who had both clout and resources. Despite this, UN Women made some important contributions which should be recognized: among them, it contributed to the development of APRP's gender strategy and seconded a staff member to the HPC for two years.

There were numerous internal and external challenges to sustainability, including the dynamic and precarious nature of the security and political environment and the internal difficulties faced by UN Women (high turnover and barriers to recruitment, often due to security constraints, etc.; discussed further under Dimension 3). Additionally, conditions have changed dramatically in Afghanistan since 2008 in ways that would have been difficult to predict and plan for. Security has significantly deteriorated, with Afghanistan no longer a post-conflict country but experiencing widespread (although relatively low-intensity) conflict. The uncertainty of Afghanistan's future after the withdraw of combat troops and the lack of political dialogue with the insurgency renders forward planning difficult, tenuous and precarious. Additionally, the impact of the withdrawal of ISAF which coincides with the elections and subsequent change of government on the political atmosphere remains unpredictable, making it difficult to chart a strategic course.

One key issue regarding sustainability is UN Women's work with MoWA, whose primary function is as a 'policy' ministry supporting intergovernmental collaboration and coordination on women's issues, and to ensure that government policies and programmes are gender-sensitive and -responsive. While UN Women's capacity-building work – one of many of MoWA's supporters/donors – helped to improve the functioning of the ministry, such work remained highly dependent on donor support (UN Women, 2010). To varying degrees, similar concerns existed about many government ministries who receive significant donor support. In the case of MoWA, dependence upon donor support was as a result of it not receiving the required funding from the government budget. As a result, there was an over-abundance of financing in some areas and MoWA was able to cherry-pick, at least to a degree. UN Women staff reported that they often ended up doing key tasks, such as writing speeches and proposals for MoWA. However, with the restructuring, senior staff felt UN Women's support to MoWA should focus on building the ministry's ability to fulfil its coordination and advocacy mandate, and that increased engagement between the Minister and her deputies and UN Women senior management was reflected in the nature of requests being made of UN Women to support the Ministry.

UN Women's 2008–2011 programme strategy made mention of 'exit planning' in support for the Ministry, but none actually appeared to exist (UN Women, n.d.). Senior UN Women staff reported attributed this to unrealistic projections by the UNCT as a whole that Afghanistan would be at peace, and firmly on the road to recovery and development. However, UN Women staff noted that the new strategic approach would help address some of the issues by focusing on helping MoWA deliver its mandate in terms of advocacy and coordination within the government and nationally.

There were questions over the sustainability and appropriateness of aspects of other interventions, and at times a lack of understanding by counterparts or partners of UN Women's added value. UN Women staff working at the RCWP, for example, reported that it was used primarily by parliamentary staff (i.e. cleaners, security guards) and not the MPs themselves, who generally have their own computers. Thus, it was not evident that the intended beneficiaries (i.e. MPs) were being effectively targeted. The RCWP did however provide research support, particularly to new MPs and their staff. There were therefore also divergent needs among intended beneficiaries, and different perceptions about how voice is best facilitated. While some MPs were highly educated and experienced in government or leadership roles and outspoken, others were less so and required more fundamental support. When consulted, the former generally wanted UN Women to play a more strategic political role, while

the latter wanted more basic support, such as English-language classes. UN Women staff stated that English classes and basic computer skills had been provided, and that organizing coordination meetings between female MPs and activists constituted technical support. The senior Gender Advisor position in parliament (filled after the completion of fieldwork) will provide technical support to parliament's women's committee.[23]

Engagement with civil society was an important part of support to women's participation in Afghanistan and aimed at helping women become more vocal and heard on peace and security. However, efforts – such as sending women to international conferences and helping them undertake such representation – could be more strategic and sustainable if planned with a longer-term vision and given more comprehensive support. Although there had been some investment in longer-term capacity-building, UN Women's peace and security work appeared more reactive and ad hoc than strategic and catalytic. Both the delay in the preparation of the resolution 1325 NAP and the lack of a formal peace process undoubtedly presented external challenges in this regard. Many CSOs felt that more could be done to ensure effective collaboration and partnership between themselves and UN Women in terms of funding, but also in terms of more strategic engagement and advocacy work. Women's organizations and activists are increasingly sophisticated, especially in Kabul, and their expectations are higher (as are the expectations being placed upon them by others). Many require greater strategic support and engagement. However, at the same time UN Women must ensure broad consultations, so that perspectives reflect all of civil society nationwide.

How effective was UN Women in its policy engagement at different levels, including global, regional and national?

At the national level, recent efforts to develop relationships with other ministries, particularly MoFA and MoI with regard to peace and security and gender and justice work, were important. However, given the current heavy emphasis on security transition, particularly the prioritization of increased numbers of security forces and their operational capacity, gender concerns were in danger of being put on the periphery of development and political agendas. Additionally, there was a lack of clarity within ministries as to what gender responsiveness and gender equality meant in terms of their own mandates. For example, when asked what kind of support he would like to see UN Women provide, the Head of the MoI Human Rights Department requested infrastructural support, which UN Women cannot provide and which is not in keeping with its mandate. There was, therefore, the challenge of misperceptions regarding UN Women's role, which also reflects the challenging socio-political context. As transition progresses and the support of other donors wanes, UN Women may find new spaces in which to work with government partners. UN Women is well positioned with its new programmatic approach to engage these new partners and address shared priorities. However, within the context of the evaluation timeframe it was not reasonable to expect this given the different profile and level of engagement UNIFEM had had with its government partners.

Some UN Women staff and partners perceived a disconnect between policy priorities and initiatives at headquarter level and actual engagement in Afghanistan. At the same time, senior management reported that significant efforts have been made both by UN Women at headquarters and the country office in 2012-2013 to increase joint engagement and commitment to highlighting Afghan women's issues and facilitating their participation and input into global initiatives. UN Women country office staff felt that, given the unique country context,

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[23] A notable exception was EPD's programming on governance at the subnational level. However, the consultant was unable to travel outside of Kabul to interview beneficiaries of this programming first-hand, as such it was not possible to make a precise assessment of its performance or sustainability.

communication with headquarters needed to be strengthened. The country office needs to better inform efforts at headquarters by providing more information of country-level process and interventions. At the same time, headquarters should support the country office with networking assistance to bring in lessons learned and good practices to inform the its efforts. Despite regular support to ensure participation in the Commission on the Status of Women, Bonn and Tokyo Conferences, several women's activists felt that more proactive and responsive engagement by UN Women in New York could result in greater impact on Afghan women's issues at a global level. The visit of the Chief of UN Women's Peace and Security Section in support of female activists around a national Jirga, for instance, was seen as useful in giving visibility to women's needs and experiences.

UN Women conducted less policy engagement at regional level, primarily due to UNAMA taking precedence in this area. While there was some initial support to engage regionally on peace and security work through establishing dialogue between Afghan and Pakistani female activists and parliamentarians, this was suspended as it did not fall within the priorities of the country office, given the greater resources and capacities of other actors in the larger political arena.

To what extent did the current policy/strategic direction reflect the lessons learned from policy engagement on peace and security and humanitarian response since 2008, and how fit for purpose was it for the new UN Women mandate?

It was difficult to identify lessons from earlier interventions or periods of engagement on peace and security given the low-profile engagement described in earlier sections, although wider engagement with Afghan government ministries beyond MoWA seemed to be one critical lesson learned. The EVAW SF was better placed to identify and benefit from lessons learned from previous challenges. The overall restructuring, however, was based on the lessons learned overall as a country office, in terms of focusing on improved partnerships, increased advocacy and ensuring that results were monitored and contributed to a strategic and more sustainable programme.

Dimension 2: UN Women's policies, programming and operations

To what extent did UN Women's programmes achieve the expected results? What explained variations?

The WPB programme aimed to:

- Improve the participation of women in peace processes;
- Increase the capacity of agencies to use resolution 1325 as a policy and programming framework;
- Support women's coordinated advocacy and build technical skills for direct negotiations; and
- Create a monitoring and accountability mechanism for the implementation of resolution 1325 by international security actors.

Progress on including women or gender concerns in many of these processes was hindered by the general lack of progress on security sector issues, suggesting that this may not be realistic or in line with the reality on the ground. There was no formal political process to end the conflict in which women could take part, and the lack of a resolution 1325 NAP suggested that developing monitoring and accountability mechanisms to measure adherence to resolution 1325 was premature. Nonetheless, UN Women supported women to be present at major

international/national conferences and public events where there were discussions on peace and security. Where women were initially excluded or sidelined (such as with the London conference), UN Women worked with civil society to ensure that they were represented. These efforts helped convey a public perception of women speaking out about their concerns and exerted pressure on donors to support women's rights. There was also a sense that such participation led to better outcomes from these events for women.

It was unclear if this has resulted in women being present in the ongoing closed-door diplomatic discussions that will ultimately decide these matters, or if women will have a voice in any eventual political talks and processes. The extent to which resolution 1325 is a relevant policy framework for Afghanistan given the current conditions, is debatable. However, UN Women's current work with the MoFA on the creation of a resolution 1325 NAP aims to promote women's engagement in the development and implementation of resolution 1325, and to ensure that commitments are put in place to secure women's involvement in peace and security issues.

The EVAW SF aimed to support:

- Effective implementation of the government's EVAW strategy, including the VAW database, and improving the government's credibility and capacity to lead on VAW eradication throughout the country;
- Improved consolidation, coordination, collaboration and synergy among EVAW efforts nationwide; and
- An increased number of projects and geographical outreach of the EVAW SF.

The EVAW pillar made significant progress in achieving many of these objectives, though much remains to be done given the near endemic levels of VAW and weak capacities to address it. The VAW database, which collects and collates information about VAW from various government and non-government sources, is now in place and constitutes an important knowledge resource. While it was difficult to measure improved synergy, the EVAW SF brought together a wide range of stakeholders and appeared to have improved coordination and collaboration where possible, particularly in monitoring and evaluating such programmes. The fund undoubtedly provided much-needed financial support for key EVAW programmes including women's shelters and family referral centres – both of which increased in number and geographic spread since the initiation of the EVAW SF. However, UN Women staff and partners felt that UNIFEM's cumbersome bureaucracy, overhead costs and time-consuming processes were seen as significant challenges by beneficiary groups and this this has been a main focus for UN Women since it was established. UN Women is in the process of rolling out its regional architecture, along with increased delegation to senior managers in the field. These initiatives aim to increase UN Women's efficiency and effectiveness.

To what extent was UN Women able to translate global policy/strategies into programmatic work?

In interviews with UN Women country staff, many felt that Afghanistan was a unique case both within the region and globally, and that the country office often had to advocate for recognition of the singular needs, context and challenges of working in Afghanistan. UN Women's work on resolution 1325 and other resolutions pertinent to women, peace and security in Afghanistan link up with work at headquarters and global strategic peace and security themes. However, the pace and direction of this work was necessarily led by the Afghan government and other partners which meant that expectations about what was realistic needed to be accordingly tempered. Moreover, the country office faced context-specific challenges in relation to how far global norms and standards were responsive to country conditions. Country visits from

headquarters were perceived to be too infrequent to ensure good understanding about the Afghanistan programme, and to ensure good links between the two. Additionally, civil society partners of UN Women's peace and security work said that they would have liked to see stronger links between UN Women's work in Afghanistan and the global women, peace and security agenda.

To what extent were UN Women's programmes tailored to the specific socio-political, cultural and economic context in which they operate? How was this translated into programme design and planning?

While there was a strong sense among UN Women staff that it had made good efforts to adapt programming to the changing context, it was not clear that this process was founded completely on evidence. The UN Women Change Management strategy document found that UN Women 'is not yet sufficiently positioned strategically in terms of an articulated country program strategy based on a comprehensive and contemporary situational analysis or needs assessment in relation to its core roles on gender issues and women's empowerment' (UN Women, 2012a. p 17). While the reliability of data and obtaining up-to-date or national-level data sets remained challenging, more could be done to draw on the body of evidence, expertise and data already available.

The sustainability of engagement with civil society actors raised some questions. Many Afghan organizations are highly donor-driven with little or no core funding. Donor funding is likely to decrease in Afghanistan in coming years, and it was unclear to what extent organizations would be able to sustain their programming and policy engagement.

While innovative, the sustainability of UN Women's engagement with shelters was constrained by several factors, including cultural norms, security and political will. The handover of shelters to the government in two locations was highly problematic, largely due to the lack of financial frameworks under which the MoWA could receive funds, as well as lack of institutional capacity and systems to administer them. While NGOs administering the remaining shelters appeared to have greater capacity, it was unclear where they would receive funding if not for the EVAW SF. The sustainability of these shelter arrangements for the women who live in them was also unclear, both in terms of their continued operations and the provision of durable solutions for the women which would enable them to leave the shelters and start new lives.

How effective was UN Women at identifying *and* using key opportunities and partnerships at country level?

Partnerships with national civil society actors were positive but could be strengthened and expanded, particularly with regard to peace and security. There were three core national civil society partners on peace and security work: EPD, AWN and the Afghanistan Human Rights Organization, which was contracted to work with universities, train students and provide lectures on resolution 1325 and the women, peace and security agenda in general. Engagement with these partners, particularly AWN and its members, could be more strategic and catalytic, resources permitting. CSOs were primary implementing partners for UN Women, and it remains important to continue to strengthen these strategic relationships, including through renewed efforts to ensure ongoing engagement with civil society. While UN Women's only office is located in Kabul and security restrictions make reaching many areas of the country difficult, UN Women should strengthen and leverage its civil society partnerships to ensure that the voices and needs of rural, poor women are heard and addressed (for example, EPD's work with female politicians at the sub-national level). UN Women recognized the danger of being perceived as favouring Kabul-based activists and organizations, and should find the resources to

broaden the net of engagement.

Partnerships with the government were critical but appeared narrow. Efforts to support the government, with a particular focus on capacity-building with the MoWA, were critical but there were significant concerns about the sustainability and effectiveness of this partnership. Throughout 2012, increased emphasis on accountability, national ownership and capacity-building of MoWA was sought by UN Women as a key contribution to sustainable institutional changes within the government and in the lives of women and girls. However, in the case of the EVAW SF, MoWA's limited capacity to administer the test-case shelters in Parwan and Nangarhar raised significant concerns around the level of political will to meet national obligations to protect women, as well as the reliability, within the current environment, of government actors outside Kabul, where influencing factors within the community affected the ability of the Department of Women's Affairs to carry out operations in a safe and consistent manner. Lack of clarity on how precisely MoWA should receive payments from the EVAW SF and a lack of timely responsiveness from MoWA on these issues resulted in delayed payments. While this issue has since been resolved, according to UN Women staff, the situation resulted in delayed salary payments, thereby placing shelter residents at risk.

How effective were UN Women's programmes at fostering/strengthening national ownership through country engagement of intended outcomes regarding improved leadership and participation of women in relevant peace and security and humanitarian response intervention/process?

With EVAW SF partners, the fund allowed national organizations and government actors to provide critical programming, driven by national needs. With civil society on peace and security and other issues, UN Women played an important supportive role in enabling Afghan women activists and others to speak out on key issues, while UN Women itself remains fairly quiet. This was positive in terms of national ownership, and needs to be more strategically supported by UN Women. Feedback from stakeholders predominantly in Kabul was consistent in that they wanted to see a stronger, more publicly vocal UN Women. Female activists made the case that, in doing so, UN Women will complement their own work and that of female politicians, thereby support their ability to exert pressure on the government, donors and other key targets. Their statements suggest a perception that UN Women faces less risk in doing this than Afghan women in public life, who are increasingly subject to harassment, intimidation and violence. In contrast, UN Women staff felt that UN Women may face some limitations in its ability to do this within the United Nations system, as well as the fear of negative repercussions arising from the potential perception of international meddling in issues which touch upon deeply held religious and cultural beliefs and traditions. Moreover, a calculatedly cautious approach is potentially politically more realistic. By speaking out on sensitive issues, such as the impact of the legacy of conflict on women or VAW, female activists felt that UN Women could help shed light on key issues and create an opening for others to pursue further engagement on them.

In what ways did the new mandate/reorganization provide opportunities to improve programme effectiveness and coherence between UN Women's policies and operational engagement?

As outlined above, the transition from UNIFEM to UN Women in programmatic and operational terms was perceived by many country office staff as still ongoing. However, building on UNIFEM's work, UN Women was tasked with a number of key coordination priorities at the country, regional and global level. In Afghanistan, UN Women has led UNCT policy discussions on a variety of issues, both internal and external, such as engendering the

Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework monitoring and the CCA/UNDAF, as well as the EVAW Law and United Nations support to resolution 1325, as discussed earlier. UN Women is gaining increased space on the humanitarian agenda, offering support to the gender marker process for determining the degree of gender-responsiveness of individual humanitarian initiatives proposed in the Consolidated Appeal Process documents, as well as overall technical support to ensure a gender-responsive humanitarian action process. This was being done with significant support from both headquarter and, more recently, the regional office.

There was a perception among many staff and partners that there would be little change in areas of focus in the transition from UNIFEM to UN Women, but rather an understanding that UN Women would apply a more strategic and longer-term approach in its thinking in order to shift from donor-driven project cycles to a more integrated programme approach. However, such a shift will not be feasible without significantly more resources and, perhaps more importantly, greater predictability/stability of funding (i.e. core funding). UN Women had already planned its first-ever all-donor meeting in April 2013 to present its new structure and programming priorities, in order to mobilise the resources needed over the period 2014–2017. At the same time, in order to have the flexibility to meet emerging needs and address areas or functions which do not fall under programmatic priorities, such as staff development, it is requesting support from headquarters for partnership-building and ensuring a solid and sustainable staff structure.

How innovative was UN Women in its programmatic approaches and what lessons can be learned that can be replicated in different contexts?

The EVAW SF's support on responses to VAW (i.e. women's shelters, family guidance centres) was highly innovative within the Afghanistan context, especially given that no formal shelters existed in Afghanistan six years ago. The EVAW SF also tried to improve operating standards and monitoring of these programmes, and encourage learning between the different implementing partners. The programmatic shift between approaches pursued in 2008 versus the current approach (discussed above) demonstrated reflexivity and adaptation. However, such innovation was precarious due to the sustainability concerns highlighted above and obliged the EVAW SF to move to multi-year funding, which will give its partners some economic security and enable them to invest in strengthening the quality, sustainability and accountability of their interventions.

Although the RCWP was, in theory innovative, it had not adapted fully to the diverse needs of female MPs. It was hoped that this will change with the recruitment of the senior Gender Advisor, and the request of the Secretary-General of parliament for expanded space to allow for more training offerings and accommodate more clients. However, to fully understand and address the needs of MPs, a needs assessment would be advisable.

Dimension 3: UN Women's organizational capacities, resources and structures

How adequate were UN Women's human and financial resources to effectively engage in conflict-affected countries?

UN Women was constrained by many operational factors. The difficulty of recruiting and retaining qualified Afghan and international staff inhibited its ability to achieve its objectives. Although a problem for most United Nations entities, and indeed international, agencies in Afghanistan, it seemed particularly pronounced for UN Women due to the lack of fixed-term posts. Moreover, exacerbated by project-base funding resulted in short-term contracts for most

staff, especially for national staff, and little job security.

The precarious security conditions and difficult living conditions at the UNOCA, Kabul compound, where the United Nations office and accommodation are based, also negatively impacted the ability to attract or retain staff (particularly internationals). An expatriate advisor position for the WPG Unit has been vacant for approximately two years, despite several rounds of recruitment. The Unit currently has four national staff members but no international staff which seriously limited what the WPG unit could realistically achieve, as well as its ability to engage strategically on these issues. Similarly, efforts to recruit the resolution 1325 NAP Advisor failed, primarily due to the challenges of attracting international experts to Kabul.

Recruitment was further complicated by UN Women's reliance on UNDP for human resources support at the national staff level, and headquarters for international professional level staff. While UN Women assumes the majority of substantive responsibility for recruitment (i.e. reviewing curriculum vitaes [CVs], conducting interviews, selecting successful candidates), it relied on UNDP to issue offer letters and contracts and associated administrative tasks which it often appeared unable to do in a timely manner. UN Women staff cited an example whereby UNDP staff took approximately one month to issue offer letters to successful candidates for senior national staff positions. Recruitment processes at headquarters are also protracted, leading to extended vacancies. Both factors led to lower levels of implementation, reduced trust in UN Women's capacity to deliver and an over-burdening of national staff in particular.

There also appeared to be a lack of staff capacity-building and support on substantive and operational matters. Staff reported that there was little or no induction (although UN Women management subsequently reported that an induction programme had been launched). As a result, staff did not have a clear idea of their role and responsibilities or the goals and objectives of their project or UN Women locally or globally.

UN Women in Afghanistan is the largest globally, but it relies almost completely on non-core funding for all of its expenditures. This issue is under discussion with headquarters, particularly in light of the potentially significant decrease in donor resources over the next five to seven years/post-transition.

How fit for purpose was UN Women in terms of the technical skills of its staff and its broader capacity to fulfil its mandate?

The challenge of attracting and retaining national and international staff affected the quality of staff in post. Retention was a significant issue. However, several donors and partners commented that it was not the number of United Nations staff or recruitment/retention issues, particularly with regard to national staff, that was most relevant. Rather, the technical capacity of national staff was sometimes problematic. However, UN Women already appeared to aware of these issues and in the process of addressing them. The country office reportedly reformed its recruitment process in terms of panel selections and ensuring consistency with United Nations Competency Interviewing guidelines, as well as working on mobilizing resources for staff development. Through the roll-out of the revised Programme and Operations Manual, UN Women staff reported that they were attempting to ensure that all staff were aware of country office rules, regulations and procedures.

How effective was UN Women at coordinating gender-related work across United Nations entities and other key partners?

Within the United Nations, UN Women coordinates the Gender Working Group, which is comprised of gender staff from United Nations entities present in Afghanistan. The purpose of

the Group was to provide a forum for information-sharing, with coordination where appropriate or feasible. Among wider stakeholders, UN Women coordinated and participated in a number of key fora, including chairing the Gender Donor Coordination Group. In relation to peace and security, at the time of the evaluation, UN Women lead the WPS WG (leadership is rotated every six months). Many stakeholders were positive about UN Women's leadership and felt that, rather than rotating, UN Women should continue to occupy this role indefinitely. It also participated in the resolution 1325 Technical Working Group and the subsidiary Technical Advisory Group, both of which were led by MoFA.

How effectively did UN Women manage risks in its operations? What strategies worked best?

Afghanistan is a highly insecure environment, and much risk management focused on the physical risk arising from insecurity. There was some indication that staffing problems, as well as security concerns and resultant restrictions, undermined UN Women's ability to fulfil its objectives. On 28 October 2009, a United Nations-approved commercial guest house was attacked and five United Nations staff members were killed which had 'a devastating impact on the work of UN Women and the United Nations system in Afghanistan'. The United Nations declared Afghanistan 'an extreme and critical' programming situation, which resulted in many agencies limiting their work in the aftermath and United Nations entities being required to reduce the number of international staff in Afghanistan to 40 per cent. By 2010–2011, nearly all international staff had resigned. UN Women during this period found 'it extremely difficult to recruit qualified staff for the international posts'. Additionally, there was a repeated change of Country Director. Although UN Women external reports stated that 'this was used as an opportunity to optimise the potential of the national staff, to set up emergency mechanisms such as the support site in Dubai and to institutionalize a long-term capacity development programme for national staff', it clearly had negative consequences for programme implementation and staff retention (UN Women, 2010).

While the parameters of security management are set by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), UN Women's security advisor, in consultation with the Country Representative, has some discretion. However, this often resulted in security management measures which staff said were stricter than those recommended by UNDSS. When the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) declares 'grey city', movement is limited to essential staff and many national staff (given the distance of many of their residences from the UNOCA compound) are advised to work from home. Senior UN Women management were of the view that, although this does not work with equal efficiency for all functions of the office, it was the best possible response under the circumstances. Several staff members found this made it difficult to work, as many did not have internet access or adequate facilities at home, and managers stated that the frequency of 'grey city' declarations made it difficult to monitor the work of staff.

Women's rights are a highly sensitive subject in Afghanistan, and UN Women sought to minimise the risks related to this. For example, the findings from the Oral History project, initiated in 2007, are still to be published due to such concerns. When consulted, donors and many partners felt that UN Women could more creatively manage this risk and perhaps be more outspoken regarding the challenges facing Afghan women. If not directly, they could leverage key relationships with donors (particularly the Nordic countries) to do so. In this instance, the country office would benefit from closer links with headquarters who could offer models and alternatives for consideration.

Staff at all levels were aware of the weak and deficient M&E systems. The change management strategy highlighted the need for a more systematic and integrated approach to monitoring, reporting and evaluation, which was echoed in interviews with UN Women staff. The M&E systems which do exist are currently project-specific, with little sharing across programmes and varying degrees of comprehensiveness and coverage. In general, staff members appeared to focus more on donor reporting than on developing internal M&E systems allowing them to track and determine the effectiveness of their work. An exception was the EVAW SF, which recently began to place greater emphasis on M&E, developing tools for key partners and enhancing its own monitoring systems. Such changes may be in part due to its comparatively greater resources as it was able to outsource M&E and hire an M&E Officer.

Despite the lack of comprehensive M&E, there appeared to be significant 'evaluation fatigue'. At the time of the field research, UN Women had recently completed a financial audit, a change management exercise and a mid-term review of Norway-SIDA funded programmes. All of these exercises, while worthwhile, took significant staff time and resources away from programmatic work and could be viewed as extraneous if they do not add some value or provide some perceived benefit to programme staff. With particular regard to headquarter-commissioned evaluations, extensive consultation and planning with the Afghanistan country office, from the inception of evaluation plans to communicating and discussing evaluation results, would be helpful in the future in ensuring that the process proceeds smoothly and findings are followed up on.

Overall analysis and implications for policy and practice

Normative and policy dimension

UN Women clearly influenced the national and international debate and policy choices relevant to advancing the normative goals of women, peace and security in Afghanistan. In particular, this was demonstrated by UN Women's support to women's participation in and the outcomes of key international and national conferences, and reflected in national policies and systems, despite the challenges and constraints of the political environment.

Working with the government to obtain policy and legal change was critical to put in place legislation which contributed to advancing the objectives of resolution 1325. There were mixed views on whether UN Women could be more forceful in advocating for further policy change in support of the implementation of women, peace and security, which would be more in keeping with the expectations of women's organizations.

Programming and operations dimension

With respect to Dimension 2, a thorough examination of the effectiveness of the programmatic interventions examined was beyond the scope of this study. However, for the selected case studies the findings were mixed. UN Women's programmes were generally tailored to the operating environment. Programme objectives around building capacity, with respect to both WPB and EVAW SF, showed positive outcomes. Yet the difficulties of gender work in Afghanistan made such progress hard won and tenuous. While there were achievements in improving national ownership, field research indicated that there is a need for more strategic long-term planning, despite the challenging political context.

Similarly, some innovative programming was identified in terms of both changing norms and creating space for women's voice and participation. However, documenting and applying

lessons learned from Afghanistan – and drawing from other country contexts – could better inform programming to result in more meaningful impact and advancements for women. It was difficult to ascertain the impact of the transition from UNIFEM to UN Women, particularly as it coincided with some of the worst security incidents in recent years. It was described by many in the country office as still ongoing, but current restructuring and other strategic shifts were positive and showed significant potential to improve the planning, sustainability and effectiveness of UN Women's interventions.

Operational, programmatic and strategic links between headquarters and the country office were seen as insufficient, and there was a perceived imbalance between the strong technical capacity at headquarters and critical capacity deficits at field level, technical and otherwise. There was a perception that more could be done to productively link headquarter and country levels.

Organizational, resource and capacity dimension

UN Women in Afghanistan has faced significant constraints and challenges since 2008, particularly in relation to security conditions and staff turnover, which coincided with the transition from UNIFEM to UN Women and appeared to result in a lower profile and less continuity/strategic orientation in programming than desired. While still struggling with fundamental issues of staff retention, programme planning/implementation, operations and M&E, UN Women appeared to have made significant progress in addressing these issues over the past year due, in no small part, to the strengthened management team (international and national), and other staff, underscoring the vital importance of senior management leadership. However, much remained to be done. UN Women's weak role within the United Nations, the lack of predictable resources, the absence of strong systems (with particular regard to M&E) and inadequate or inappropriate staffing remain formidable challenges. UN Women will require significant further support and strong leadership to address these gaps and weaknesses, as well as to earn trust and strengthen its reputation among key partners and stakeholders.

With respect to the withdrawal of international combat forces from Afghanistan by the end of 2014 and the uncertainty around what will happen next, there were serious questions about UN Women's ability and positioning to play a meaningful role in peace and security. To date, its support in these areas has been positive in many respects, but largely reactive. UN Women has a critical role to play in Afghanistan, and stakeholders and donors believe that UN Women could do more and think bigger. UN Women's value on peace and security is strategic and catalytic in nature, but requires a longer-term strategy, greater technical, human and financial resources and deeper, more consistent engagement to play this role meaningfully.

6.   Recommendations

To the UN Women Afghanistan country office

Policy/normative role of UN Women

UN Women's added value – particularly on peace and security – lies in its strategic and catalytic role, and it should continue to focus its engagement on peace and security at this level. Transition will bring greater uncertainty and UN Women must work with partners and stakeholders to prepare for this period. Longer-term investment from the United Nations system as a whole, more analytical and holistic approaches to empower women and stronger direct public and/or private advocacy with key stakeholders to enable women to voice their concerns on these issues will be required.

Going forward, increased investment to better understand how to strategically embed support for women's participation and leadership, particularly in government, in the peace and security agenda is recommended. While this is in part linked to context analysis and theories of change, more can be done to critically and productively examine which approaches and interventions actually yield or support greater sustainable empowerment of women in political and peacemaking processes.

UN Women can step up its coordination role, within the parameters of its country-level mandate, to promote and track implementation of resolution 1325 by the government and the United Nations. UNAMA has never had a female SRSG, and on only one occasion has a woman been appointed to either of the two Deputy SRSG positions. United Nations entities and embassies, to varying degrees, possess similar track records of having overwhelmingly appointed men to senior leadership positions. While beyond its mandate to effect change, UN Women can internally help to highlight the importance of women's involvement in peace and security issues within the United Nations in accordance with United Nations-wide commitments regarding women, peace and security (including the Seven-Point Action Plan).

Programmatic work

More emphasis on integrating context, power and risk analysis into programming should be given priority, although this varied significantly for the projects developed within the timeframe of this evaluation (2008–2011). Efforts such as the consolidated work plan funded by Norway and Sweden are key to encouraging a more holistic approach to UN Women's interventions in all priority areas, including women, peace and security and EVAW. UN Women should invest in developing systems, approaches and processes to ensure that its interventions are responsive to the context, conflict-sensitive and guided by the principle of 'do no harm'.

Increased effort and investment need to be made to develop sustainable programmes, based on national ownership. Better evidence and analysis and critical examinations of assumptions are required to ensure that UN Women's programmes are both effective and appropriate. Linked to this, increased input from key stakeholders (i.e. donors, CSOs and the government) could support UN Women's theories of change and the transition from a project- to a programme-based approach. The Civil Society Advisory Group, for example, could be useful in guiding programme development, and providing a mechanism for consultation and buy-in among the diverse actors with whom UN Women works. The advisory board could also help to improve oversight and accountability, and strengthen existing partnerships.

Sustainability is a substantial concern which needs to be addressed more consistently across programmes on women, peace and security, and particularly in regard to EVAW. In the absence of a formal peace process, UN Women should critically examine its peace and security support to civil society, in order to develop longer-term strategic thinking on building up civil society structures and relationships for the future. With regard to the EVAW SF, more investment should be made in mapping potential longer-term support to response mechanisms to improve their sustainability, as well as deeper analysis of how to enable women and girls to leave shelters and either transition back into society or return to their families in a mediated manner., However, the challenging and uncertain security, political, economic and socio-cultural context must be recognized.

Organizational capacity

While it was not within the remit of this evaluation (though it has some bearing on its ability to effectively fulfil the activities and objectives examined in this evaluation), UN Women is encouraged to continue its efforts to develop orientation and induction processes. UN Women

should ensure that all staff have clear roles and responsibilities, their performance is adequately measured and they are familiar with the ways of working and purpose of UN Women, as this has a direct impact on programme delivery.

Hiring qualified national and international staff was a challenge between 2008–2011, and remains so. UN Women should be supported in its efforts to hire and retain international and national staff with the relevant skills in political engagement and analysis and relevant thematic expertise. Hiring and recruitment practices should be decentralised to the country office to the extent possible, given the high turnover and extreme difficulty of recruiting staff (particularly expatriates), and given the challenging conditions of the context. Continued reliance on UNDP for recruitment should be carefully examined, and ways to improve this relationship should be explored. UN Women at headquarters and relevant stakeholders can play a bigger role in assisting the UN Women country office by deploying temporary support to fill immediate gaps, or providing candidates for longer-term recruitment.

To UN Women globally

The Afghanistan country office could substantially benefit from further engagement from headquarter and regional UN Women technical expertise on peace and security thematic areas, in terms of crafting strategy, lending on-the-ground technical assistance and elevating the concerns of women and girls in Afghanistan on peace and security at the regional and global level. As discussed earlier, the synergistic relationship between headquarters and the country office should be strengthened to ensure more strategic and informed exchanges.

High turnover and slow recruitment of qualified staff have, at times, caused delays in programme implementation and continue to pose severe challenges. UN Women headquarters should consider how to support the country office more effectively on such critical issues, either through assistance with recruitment and contingency planning or through temporary secondments of headquarter/regional staff to positions in the Afghanistan country office.

Organizational

Change management requires additional resources and support, not only for planning change but also for effective implementation. UN Women at field level is overstretched both financially and in terms of workload, and requires significant support throughout this process, either from headquarter or the Bangkok regional office, which the country office recently joined. While the country office's senior management recognises what needs to be done, there are insufficient human and financial resources to implement the changes in a complete and timely manner, particularly in terms of staff and programme development, while also keeping current programme implementation on track.

Related to this, the success of the shift from a donor-driven project-based approach to the programme-based approach UN Women is pursuing will depend on predictability and fund security, which has proved difficult with financial cut-backs by donors across the board in their multilateral development assistance. It is hoped that UN Women globally will be able to assure greater funding stability and increased core funding resources for UN Women in Afghanistan.

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Interviews

External stakeholders, partners and others

Organization	Function/Title
UN Women	Country Representative
UN Women	Deputy Country Representative
UN Women	EVAW Special Fund Coordinator
UN Women	EVAW Protection Officer
UN Women	Gender and Justice Officer in Charge
UN Women	Gender and Justice Programme Associate
UN Women	Parliament Resource Centre Assistant
UN Women	WPG Officer in Charge
UN Women	WPG Programme Associate
UN Women	Field Security Officer
Afghan Women's Network	Acting Director
Afghan Women's Education Centre	Director
Afghan Women Skills and Education Centre	Executive Director
Afghan Women's Skills Development Centre /Shelter Network	Director
Embassy of Finland	First Secretary
Embassy of Sweden	Second Secretary
Humanitarian Assistance for the Women and Children of Afghanistan	Chairwoman
Human Rights Watch	Researcher
Medica Afghanistan	Executive Director
Norway-SIDA	Mid-term review consultants (hired by UN Women)
Afghan Parliament	Member of Parliament, Ghazni
Afghan Parliament	Member of Parliament, Kabul
Gender Affairs Unit, Ministry of Interior	Director
Ministry of Women's Affairs	Deputy Minister
Ministry of Women's Affairs	Director for Legal and Human Rights
Organization for Human Welfare	Deputy Managing Director
United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan Human Rights	Protection Officer
United Nations Development Programme	Afghan Peace and Reintegration Programme Team
United Nations Population Fund	Gender Assistant

United Nations Population Fund	Gender Specialist

COLOMBIA

Country Case Study*

Acronyms

AECID	*Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo* (Spanish Development Agency)
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DRF	Development results framework
FARC	*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces)
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDG-F	Millennium Development Goal Fund
MPS	*Mujeres, Paz y Seguridad* (Women, Peace and Security)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SAT	*Sistema de Alerta Temprana* (Early Warning System)
TA	Technical Assistance
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
VAW	Violence against Women
VJR	*Verdad, Justicia y Reparación* (Truth, Justice and Reparation)
WEF	World Economic Forum

1.   Introduction

The Colombia case study was the first of five country case studies of the corporate evaluation of UN Women's contribution to increasing women's leadership and participation in peace and security and humanitarian response. It was conducted between 20-30 January 2013.

2.   Methodology

The fieldwork was carried out by a member of the evaluation team in collaboration with a local researcher. In the case of Colombia, the fieldwork team included a member of the UN Women Evaluation Office who collaborated with the local researcher to ensure better triangulation, improved knowledge of the socio-political context and broadened data coverage.

During the fieldwork country-level strategy and programming, with a focus on the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda, was examined. More detailed observation of country office work in this area involved looking at a selection of interventions decided between the country office and the evaluation team leader. In this case, it was possible to visit stakeholders outside of Bogota, in a trip to Neiva in the department of Huila. The country evaluation team met stakeholders from across the group of relevant stakeholders at the subnational level.

The case study's qualitative analysis drew on both documentary evidence provided by the country office and other stakeholders and interviews. It was conducted to ensure that the range of relevant stakeholders identified in the inception phase and with the country office were interviewed. Interviews were semi-structured to address the concrete evaluation questions, but also allowed for unstructured questions as appropriate to the interview and the context, and in relation to the intervention/activity under observation. Interviews included both focus group and one-to-one interviews.

In line with United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) handbook, *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation – Towards UNEG Guidance* (UNEG, 2011)*, the country evaluation team took measures to ensure the inclusion and participation of relevant stakeholders, taking care to identify issues of power relations. The context analysis and \ stakeholder mapping took account of the context-specific balance of power between relevant groups. During the fieldwork, the team was mindful of the relationship between implementers and different stakeholders in interventions, including taking into consideration the role of the evaluation team.

3.   Country context

Context analysis

Colombia has been in conflict for over 50 years. The origins and particular evolution of the conflict are complex, and reflect longstanding grievances associated with the concentration of wealth and power, the absence of substantive land reform and entrenched patterns of inequalities exacerbated by the nature and historical legacies of subnational power relations and elite interest structures. During the cycle of conflict of the past 50 years, Colombia has experienced very high levels of casualties.

The 1991 Constitution, the outcome of an earlier peace process, represented an important moment of political restructuring. It was intended to resolve the conflict and dismantle the legacy of the power-sharing arrangement of the liberal and conservative parties of the past (an arrangement dating from 1958 which had, in its time, served to pacify an earlier cycle of

violence in the country). Crucially, the 1991 Constitution put in place a number of oversight mechanisms which have constituted key institutional mechanisms to limit the scope for arbitrary state action. Notably, this included a new Constitutional Court with extensive review powers, a more competitive political party system (in principle), an expanded Bill of Rights and the *tutela* writ (which gives standing to all citizens to initiate constitutional review on rights in the new Constitutional Court).

However, the new political order was not fully able to address the root causes of violence, nor could it create the conditions to dismantle the range of armed actors who had acquired prominence since the 1980s. Instead of ending, conflict has undergone different dynamics of transformation, including in terms of the forms of violence wielded and the alliances which have surfaced between different armed groups. A complex array of armed groups and interests and modes of violent engagement have featured in the conflict and insecurity of the 1990s and into the 2000s. Key actors have included armed guerrilla movements, notably through the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* [FARC]); paramilitary groups, including an assortment of self-defence groups; and different levels of organized crime groups associated with production and trade of narcotics. In the 1990s, the paramilitary war gained ground and levels of conflict escalated. FARC and drug-related crime also remained active. Between 1998 and 2006 there were an estimated 40,000 conflict-related deaths, most of which occurred in isolated rural areas, and mostly a result of paramilitary activity (Restrepo and Muggah, 2009). The United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (*Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* [AUC]) surfaced at the end of the 1990s as an umbrella organization bringing together different paramilitary organizations.

In addition, there have been mass displacements through illegal land and property takeovers. These are a tactic of both war and terror, and have created one of the largest displaced populations in the world. Internal displacement in Colombia reached its peak between 2000 and 2002. *Acción S*ocial, a government office, estimated that over a period of 15 years (1985-2010) the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) amounted to 3,623,961 (Meertens, 2012).

The *Santa Fe de Ralito* Accord in 2003, an agreement between the President Uribe government (2002-2010) and the paramilitary groups, led to a new dynamic in the conflict with the initiation of a demobilization and disarmament of sorts. However, although the paramilitary groups were officially dismantled, this led to a transformation of the conflict rather than to its resolution. There was initially a positive impact in terms of reduced levels of insecurity and homicide rates. However, new types of violence have surfaced in the form of the *bacrim*, or criminal bands which bring together elements of demobilised paramilitary and other criminal groups, and this has led to a renewed escalation of violence and intimidation (Restrepo and Muggah, 2009). This transformed violence is more dispersed and less captured through the more politically oriented identities that featured in the past, but are no less destabilising for that reason.[24] At the same time, FARC has remained active. Under President Uribe's administration there was no official recognition of the conflict situation. This has changed under President Santos' administration.

Policy on conflict since the Uribe administration and into the administration of Juan Manuel Santos (in office since 2010) included the establishment of different transitional justice mechanisms, with different modalities, and varying levels of legitimacy and acceptance

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[24] Notably, these new manifestations of violence were not captured in the transitional justice legislation in place since 2005, which is especially problematic from the perspective of victims, as it has implications in terms of the legal redress mechanisms they can invoke – whether in terms of the protection measures, reparations or land restitution claims that are available.

among a range of stakeholders. Notably, however, and paradoxically, these mechanisms are in place in a context in which the armed conflict remains unresolved. There is thus a situation in place where victims have a range of redress mechanisms to hand but an environment of threat and violence remains in many respects.

Under the Santos administration there has been a new direction in addressing conflict-related issues. Notable milestones include Law 1448 on Victims and Land Restitution, which addresses some of the legacies of the conflict situation and, current peace talks between the government and FARC. These measures have contributed to bringing issues related to the legacy of violence and conflict onto the public agenda, and to creating new spaces for state–society dialogue on post-conflict processes aimed at sustainable peace-building.

Of note is that the different dynamics and cycles of conflict are experienced differentially in the different regions of the country, and across different cleavages, including gender, class and ethnicity as well as the urban/rural divide.

Finally, it is important to underline that the Colombian conflict coexists within a polity of fairly stable state institutions, an established tradition of democratic representation, a sophisticated legal tradition and a recently activated judicial apparatus. Notably, the Constitutional Court has played an important role in tempering the worst excesses of impunity, and has conditioned the legislative and political process to set up transitional justice mechanisms to keep these within the spirit of the 1991 Constitution.[25] Although power alternates, Colombia is considered one of the most stable democracies in the region.

Key political and legal milestones related to the conflict since 2000

A number of key political and legal milestones altered the tempo and trajectory of the conflict and contributed to the emerging peace process including:

- 2002-2010: The Democratic Security Policy (under Uribe) and Plan Colombia;

- 2003: The *Santa Fe de Ralito* Accord between the Uribe government and the paramilitary groups to initiate a demobilization and disarmament process;

- 2004: Decision T-025 of the Constitutional Court, which called on the state to address the structural causes of the situation of unconstitutional conditions facing the displaced population in the country;

- 2005: Law 975 on Justice and Peace (passed under Uribe, and intended as the first transitional justice effort) which brought together the agreements of the *Santa Fe de Ralito* Accord. It put in place a range of measures and judicial incentives to achieve the demobilization of mainly members of paramilitary groups (numbering about 30,000) and to recognize the victimization of the civilian population and their right to reparation, truth and historical memory. To date, only three individuals have been convicted (interview);

- 2006: Decision C-370, a Constitutional Court ruling which modified Law 975 on Justice and Peace to create more space for victims' voice and participation, and strengthened the right to reparation. The new legislation put in place special units in the Prosecutor's Office, the Office of the Attorney General and the Ombudsperson (*Defensoria del Pueblo*);

- 2008: Ruling 092, following up on Decision T-025, to address the issue of the historical vulnerabilities of women, the disproportionate impact of the armed

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[25] Some recent constitutional reforms, finalised in 2012, contribute to shaping the rules of transitional justice.

conflict on women and the particular experience of women as IDPs. It is important to note that the Constitutional Court has continued to monitor the situation of IDPs since 2004. It has also introduced the concept of the 'extraordinary impact' of conflict on women, and ordered the establishment of a special commission, the *Comisión de Seguimiento*, tasked with conducting national inquiries on the situation of IDPs, including losses incurred (of land, property, assets, future profits);

- 2010: Law 1424, which provides incentives for demobilized paramilitaries found not responsible of grave crimes and who engage in a process of truth and memory with the Centre of Historical Memory, in exchange for judicial leniency regarding their crimes;

- 2011: Law 1448 on Victims and Land Restitution, which acknowledged the armed conflict in the country. The law aims at providing reparation to four million victims, as well as land restitution to those who have suffered displacement. A number of institutions have been created under the law;

- 2012: The Legal Framework for Peace (*Marco legal para la paz*), a constitutional reform which created ground rules for peacebuilding and transitional justice; and

- 2012: Initiation of a peace dialogue between the government and FARC (27 August).

In 2012, a new stage in the conflict developed with the initiation of peace talks between the current Santos government and FARC regarding the peace process. The ceasefire was a unilateral initiative by the FARC and came to an end in January 2013.

Women and conflict in Colombia

Colombia ranks 91st on the human development index. The World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Gender Gap Report pointed to a deterioration in gender equality in the country. In 2012, Colombia ranked 63rd compared to 22nd in 2006, signalling either that gender inequality had worsened or that other countries were progressing at a faster rate. The weak points, according to WEF, relate to limited progress on women's political and economic empowerment (WEF, 2012).

The gendered impact of conflict in Colombia has been increasingly documented and the objective of research (Global Network of Women Peacebuilders [GWNP], 2011; Meertens, 2012; UNDP, 2011). Conflict has affected women in a number of ways and their experience of conflict-related sexual violence has not diminished with demobilization (GNWP, 2011). The Early Warning System (*Sistema de Alerta Temprana* [SAT]) found that the threat of conflict-related violence against organized women's groups has increased since 2008. It is reported that the aim of intimidation and violence, in addition to instilling fear, is to dissuade reporting on conflict-related crimes and to demobilise women leaders. Women represent 46.8 per cent of cases of forced disappearance. Women are also the main victims of displacement, and make up 51 per cent of IDPs. From 1995 to 2011, violence associated with this conflict has generated over 3.7 million IDPs (nearly 8 per cent of the country's total population), 49 per cent of whom are women.[26] Meertens (2012) reported three ways in which sexual violence and displacement are connected: sexual violence as part of violent acts which led to

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[26] See also UN Women (2012b), which cites data from the Victim Register and from the SAT.

displacement; the threat of sexual violence as a cause of displacement; and sexual violence as a particular form of vulnerability experienced by women during and after displacement.

Gender discrimination means women have faced barriers to accessing decision-making processes, especially as related to the conflict. In the recent peace process, there has been an increased presence of women in the regional forums of discussion, but women were underrepresented in the peace talks during the ceasefire.

Women are not seen as agents of change in the conflict. Moreover, they are represented primarily as victims. Ruling 092 of 2008 issued by the Constitutional Court was a major step in highlighting the particular vulnerabilities of women resulting from the context of conflict. Despite increased support for participation, women's voice remains marginal in the peace process. There is an ongoing risk not just that discriminatory gender relations in the post-conflict process will persist, but also of an escalation in the risk and experience of post-conflict sexual violence.

Wider context of gender politics in Colombia

Key milestones in Colombia regarding gender equality include the following policy and legislative changes:

- 1982: Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);

- 1995: Ratification of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Sanction and Elimination of Violence against Women (*Convención de Belem do Pará*);

- 2000: Law 581, which put in place a 30 per cent quota for women's participation in policy, although implementation remains a challenge. The proportion of women in elected office currently stands at: 9.4 per cent of governorships; 9.8 per cent of mayoral positions; 17.9 per cent in departmental legislatures; 16.1 per cent in municipal councils; 12.6 per cent of congressional seats in the Chamber of Representatives; and 16.6 per cent of seats in the Senate; (UN Women, 2012d)

- 2006: Establishment of the Observatory of Gender Affairs;

- 2008: Law 1257 on Visibility, Prevention and Punishment of All Forms of Violence and Discrimination against Women, which increased sanctions and sentencing for violence and discrimination against women;

- 2010: Establishment of the *Alta Consejería para la Mujer,* an executive branch body in charge of advancing gender equality policies;

- Inclusion in the National Development Plan (2010-2014, Articles 177 and 179) of a commitment to develop public policy on gender equality for women;

- 2011: Law 1475, which regulates gender equality in the organization and functioning of political movements, parties and election processes; and

- 2012: Approval of the National Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Rights (*Lineamientos de Política Pública Nacional para la Equidad de Género y los Derechos de las Mujeres*) which is budgeted for in 2013 (see also the *Conpes 161*).

The National Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Rights was led by the executive branch and was the result of a process of consultation with societal actors at national and regional levels. It represents public recognition of ongoing structures of gender inequality and discrimination and includes seven axis points, one of which addresses peacebuilding. It involves putting in place a number of strategic actions which support women's rights and address structures of discrimination, through sectoral and multi-sectoral interventions, institutional reform and the transformation of social norms that perpetuate gender inequalities. If this is to be achieved the government will require a range of public policy measures.

While there is no national action plan (NAP) for implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325, through the axis on peacebuilding there is recognition of the need to undertake a range of measures to address legacies of conflict-related gender-based violence (GBV), and to create the space for women's voice in peace building. These are a potential entry points to mobilise efforts in support of the objectives of resolution 1325.

Key stakeholders

UN Women, and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) before it, engaged with a number of actors, including government and societal actors, and international development partners. The evaluation team interviewed people from across these stakeholder groups, to ensure that relevant and affected rights holders and duty bearers were consulted on UN Women's peace and security work.

The evaluation team interviewed key stakeholders for advancing gender equality goals, including in relation to the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda, across a number of groups as detailed below.

Government actors, public officials and elected officials

UN Women and UNIFEM's engagement with government actors, including elected officials and public officials in relevant bodies tasked with different components of the peace process or transitional justice mechanisms, was relevant to support normative and policy work which advances the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda. Key actors with whom UN Women and UNIFEM has worked include:

- In the executive branch, the Ministries of the Interior and Agriculture, and the Public Prosecution Office (the evaluation team was not able to interview stakeholders from the *Alta Consejería para la Mujer*);

- Elected representatives from the legislative branch;

- Offices in the judiciary, and in the wider justice and security system;

- New 'transitional justice' bodies, such as the Protection Unit, the Victims Unit and the Land Unit;

- The *Defensoria del Pueblo* (Human Rights Ombudsperson); and

- Regional and municipal officials (UN Women has focused efforts on having territorial presence where it can use the presence and networks of the United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] to achieve more effective outreach in its work).

Civil society actors

Among the beneficiaries of UN Women and UNIFEM support are different women's organizations:

- National-level women's organizations, which are diverse and do not necessarily all agree on different aspects of the peace process and transitional justice mechanisms which have emerged in recent legislation. Organizations at the national level with whom UN Women engages include: *Corporación Sisma Mujer, Red Nacional de Mujeres; Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres; Iniciativa de Mujeres por la Paz; Mesa de Trabajo Mujer y Conflicto Armado*;

- Subnational and grassroots women's groups. These have come to constitute important networks in those regions where UN Women has projects to ensure outreach and presence on some of the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda.

International development actors

- UN Women works with other United Nations entities. Key here is work with UNDP, not least through UN Women's work using UNDP's territorial presence to ensure more outreach beyond Bogota, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA);

- Bilateral and multilateral agencies, most notably the Spanish Development Agency (*Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo* [AECID]) and Sweden.

Other national organizations

These have also been relevant stakeholders for UNIFEM and UN Women and include organizations which have engaged in collaborative work with UN Women, or as beneficiaries of UN Women support, such as research think-tanks. Notable examples are *DeJusticia* and regional universities with which UN Women has developed diplomas on transitional justice.

The different ways in which UN Women and UNIFEM engaged with these stakeholders are detailed in the evaluation questions below.

The following features should be noted in terms of how these actors are positioned in relation to one another, and the nature of power relations between them:

- Colombia hosts a relatively large United Nations presence which is not unrelated to the security issues of the country. However, it was noted in interviews that United Nations entities were reminded about the limits of their actions to ensure principles of sovereignty were not violated. The United Nations system has not had a key presence in the high-level peace talks between the government and the FARC. However, it has contributed to facilitating some of the spaces for citizen and wider political participation, for instance with the *Universidad Nacional*, specifically the *Foro Agrario* and the *Foro de Participación Política*, and through support to nine congressional regional working groups in 2012.

- International donors have significant presence in the country. At the same time, Columbia is a middle-income country which is not aid-dependent, and the government dictates the terms of its development agenda and sets

clear boundaries for what constitutes international interventions which are considered acceptable.

- Women's civil society organizations (CSOs) have a strong historical presence in the country. From interviews, it was clear that such organizations are wary of UN Women or any other international actor representing their interests/perspectives.

- At the same time, the CSOs recognized the importance of international actors, and notably of UN Women in terms of providing a space to facilitate dialogue with the government, including in relation to giving public protection to leading figures. Grassroots organizations in particular work at the harder edge of some of the conflict issues. A clear distinction should also be made between national-level women's organizations and feminist voices (mostly academics), located in Bogota, and regional organizations, including community-level organizations, which may not always feel well represented by the national organizations. For national women's organizations the 'protective' presence of UN Women was less important. The value of UN Women is in giving visibility to (but not representing) their views and positions, and in providing them with technical assistance (TA) and expertise, as well as organizational support. For grassroots organizations at subnational level, the 'protective' role of UN Women remains important in conflict-affected areas. Organizational support and TA is also important, while UN Women's role in facilitating dialogue with government and state officials is important for both grassroots and CSOs.

4.   UN Women strategy and activities in Colombia

Country office overview

UN Women, formerly UNIFEM, has been working in Colombia since 2004 as a programme office. An early objective in opening the country office was to focus on the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (*Mujeres Paz y Seguridad* [MPS]) programme. At the time, this corresponded with UNIFEM's governance thematic area, and was supported chiefly through AECID funding. More recently, other donors have supported UN Women and UNIFEM, notably Sweden and, in smaller proportions, Canada, Norway and the Netherlands.

Under UNIFEM, the Colombia country office reported to the subregional office in Quito (Ecuador). Sub-regional strategic documents (UNIFEM, 2005; 2006; 2008a; 2008b) and regional documents indicated that Colombia was a priority country in the region and subregion, and the focus of UNIFEM work was identified in relation to women peace and security. Country strategic plans for the corresponding period speak to this subregional agenda.

For the purposes of this evaluation, the MPS programme provided the umbrella framework under which country office peace and security and humanitarian response work was undertaken. In practice, funding came from different sources, mostly through bilateral funds. However, reporting was managed through Quito, which added a layer of bureaucratic complexity and difficulty.

Thematic priorities of UN Women and programme work

The country office Strategic Plan 2010-2013 responded to UNIFEM's strategic plan of the time. The Strategic Annual Workplan 2012-2013 reflected engagement with Goals 1, 3 and 4 of the global UN Women Strategic Plan, and activities were presented accordingly. In practice, activities were guided by funding realities in country. In addition, it was important to note that the country office Strategic Plan was nested formally in that of the sub-region. For the period 2008-2009, the specific point noted for Colombia in the Andean Strategic Plan was '[t]he effective implementation of resolution 1325 in Colombia and the reinforcement of the democratic governance and peace with gender justice in conflict prevention'.

The thematic priorities of UN Women's work were organized in the following programmatic areas:

- MPS: Included support to the implementation of resolution 1325, and associated resolutions (1820, 1888, 1889 and 1612); and the Truth, Justice and Reparation (*Verdad, Justicia y Reparación* [VJR]) programme which focused on women victims of the armed conflict through different activities aimed at institutional and organizational support to women's CSOs which was the focus of this evaluation.

- Political participation of women: As part of the International Donor Working Group on Gender in Colombia (*Mesa de Género de la Cooperación Internacional*), and developed in conjunction with the Ministry of the Interior, a strategy for working with women in elected positions from different parts of the country was put in place. Work has included engaging with approximately 500 women councillors, legislative deputies, mayors and representatives of local administrative bodies to develop a work agenda including lectures and capacity development on party caucuses, political control, development plans and participatory budgeting. Particular emphasis was placed on women's participation and on challenges in implementing the Law on Victims. UN Women continues to monitor gender-sensitive legislation and provide technical support to Congress in processing laws which have a particular impact on women's rights. In addition, there was support to legislation to ensure alignment with international commitments to women's rights; the development of the Gender Equality Policy (*Política Pública de Equidad de Género para las Mujeres*); recent quotas legislation; and legislation associated with transitional justice, notably, the Law on Victims and Law 1257 on Violence against Women (VAW).

- Support to addressing VAW: Included UN Women's leadership of the Millennium Development Goal Fund (MDG-F) on gender 2008-2011; the Safe Cities (regional/global) programme 2007-2011; UN Women's support to the national government's decision to sign up to the Secretary-General's Joint Campaign to End VAW; the Safe Cities Regional Programme's contribution to the establishment of a protocol of attention for the national police; support to the Integral Plan aimed at guaranteeing women a life free of violence, which was part of the Gender Equality Policy, and collection of related data and lessons learnt on the progress and results of the MDG-F gender programme; and technical support to Law 1542, which removed the character of complaint for crimes of domestic violence.

UNIFEM, it was noted in interviews, did not receive any core funding other than through the global programme of Safe Cities (which was not within the peace and security agenda). Since 2005, most funding has come from AECID, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Dutch Cooperation, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. Spain was a key funder from 2005-2009 and Sweden has progressively become a key source of funding. In addition, the country office was involved in a number of joint programmes, principally in relation to the MDG-F. Thus, thematic priorities also responded in some degree to bilateral donor priorities. Country office strategic documents and plans, therefore, constituted a balancing act of speaking to UN Women and UNIFEM global Strategic Plans, and presenting what actually constituted country-level interventions and activities.

Most of UN Women country office's work on peace and security and humanitarian response was captured in MPS programmatic work to date which does not feature in joint programmes (shared with other entities) or global programmes (such as the Safe Cities programme). A key objective of the programme was to support gender-sensitive peace and democracy work in Colombia, ensure the integration of a gender-sensitive approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding and support women's rights.

Currently, the UN Women Colombia office has also been involved in the following joint programmes:

- Joint Programme on VAW/MDG funding (ended in December 2011, led by UN Women in collaboration with UNFPA and the International Organization for Migration [IOM]);

- Peacebuilding and Development in Nariño/MDG-F (led by UNDP with UN Women, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], the United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF] and the Food and Agricultural Organization [FAO]); and

- Programme for the Improvement of Human Security of Vulnerable Groups in *Soacha*, (funded by the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security [UNTFHS] and seven United Nations entities led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [OCHA]).

UNIFEM's participation in the joint programme for *Soacha* focused mostly on capacity development on gender perspectives, but not specifically as regards humanitarian work. Humanitarian work in Colombia (as is true of UN Women globally) remains an underdeveloped sub-thematic area of the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda. The demand and need for UN Women in Columbia to be able to provide technical support on gender-responsive humanitarian work was noted during the interviews.

Transition from former UNIFEM to UN Women

The transition to UN Women was underway at the time of the evaluation. Under the new regional architecture, Colombia became a country office headed by a Country Representative and dependent on the Regional Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean in Panama. An operations Director will not be assigned to Bogotá which, as noted during interviews, has implications for operational decision-making.

The regional reorganization resulting from the transition from UNIFEM to UN Women means that country office reporting has shifted from Quito (UNIFEM regional office) to Panama (the new regional office) (UN Women, 2012c).

The perceived slowness of the transition had a wearing effect on country office staff, and generated a heightened sense of uncertainty regarding human resources. At the same time, there was a sense of strong commitment to and engagement with ongoing programmes and activities by country staff. In part, this was due to funding having always been non-core. It was also clear that there were limited expectations regarding increased funding in the short-to medium-term.

Selection of programmes/activities

A key objective of the MPS programme was to support gender-sensitive peace and democracy work in Colombia, to ensure the integration of gender-sensitive approaches into conflict prevention and peacebuilding and to support women's rights.

The country office selected the programme for the evaluation because it represented some of its most relevant work in the area of peace and security and humanitarian response but also because, from the perspective of the wider evaluation process, it provided an opportunity to focus on transitional justice as a relevant and emerging sub-theme in UN Women's global agenda in this work area.

In this regard, the fieldwork concentrated mostly on activities and interventions included under the MPS, with a special focus on the VJR programme funded by Sweden. In practice, this included mostly activities related to different processes and objectives of transitional justice mechanisms as they evolved in Colombia. An evaluation of the 2012 programme (Hayek-Weinmann, 2012) which assessed activities in the current VJR programme noted that, in two years of execution, 34 lines of action were undertaken. The activities this evaluation exercise considered were mostly in relation to transitional justice work which included:

Strategic results (1) relating to truth:

- Selection of knowledge outputs on truth supported by UN Women, including through work with the National Commission of Reparation and Reconciliation (*Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciació*n [CNRR]) and subnational commissions; and

- Support to memory work in the regions.

Strategic results (2) relating to justice:

- Selection of strategic publications and toolkits developed with different beneficiaries, including the CNRR, the Human Rights Ombudsperson and the Land Unit. Notable outputs included a toolkit to identify, characterize and prevent situations of risk for the SAT in the Human Rights Ombudsperson, as well as the Report on Land (*Informe de Tierras)*;

- Support to and involvement in the Diploma on Transitional Justice, which was developed in different regions, notably Oriente Antioqueño and Neiva in Huila;

- Technical support to the development of the Law on Victims to various entities, including the Victims Unit, the Public Prosecution Office and the judicial branch, including on the systematization of jurisprudence. Research and training (through the Diploma on Transitional Justice) was provided in collaboration with *DeJusticia* and departmental universities; and

- Support to new units and other relevant offices (notably the Victims Unit, the Human Rights Ombudsperson, the Protection Unit, the Public Prosecution Office and the judiciary).

Strategic results (3) in relation to reparations:

- Support to the Land Unit (*Unidad de Tierras*).

Strategic results (4) in relation to coordination of international donor action on gender:

- Support to the Technical Secretariat of the International Donor Working Group on Gender.

In addition, a number of other activities relevant to the work of UN Women were considered for the evaluation which addressed all the questions in the evaluation matrix. Some were not specific to the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda, but understanding the wider evolution of UN Women in country through these activities was necessary, in particular to capture a more contextualized understanding of UN Women's work on this agenda.

These included:

- Support to resolution 1325 (with funding from the Netherlands);

- The MDG Programme on Gender and Women's Rights (from the *Ventana, Paz y Seguridad* programme);

- Legislative work (support to public policy work to advance gender equality polices), specifically on contributing to the recent Gender Equality Policy (*Conpes* 161).

- Accompaniment and support to women's movements at the national and subnational level (including through interviews with Huila-based women's organizations), and to regional peacebuilding forums; and

- Coordination work with other United Nations entities, and other partners, including through gender forums such as the Interagency Gender Group and the International Donor Working Group on Gender.

Types and range of activities included:

- Direct TA to government and public offices on recent developments in public policy initiatives on gender equality, or on introducing gender awareness into the implementation of national policy in relation to the peace process, such as the Laws on Justice and Peace, Victims and Land Restitution;

- Direct TA to Congress on legislative processes, such as the development of the Laws on Victims and Land Restitution;

- Direct TA to other United Nations entities in the form of providing gender expertise;

- Direct TA to CSOs, in the form of either workshops and training or support in publication outputs;

- TA in the form of subcontracted consultants with gender and thematic expertise placed in other offices, such as the Human Rights Ombudsperson, the Land Unit and the Victims Unit (which varied in form and effectiveness);

- Capacity development and training of different stakeholders (but not much evidence of training of trainers), including in the form of university diplomas;

- Accompaniment of CSOs to:

  o Support organizational and technical strengthening of CSO capabilities in relation to different peacebuilding and transitional justice activities;

  o Facilitate and broker dialogue i) between women CSOs at the national and local levels; and ii) between women CSOs and government or public officials (at the national and local level); and

  o Give visibility to women CSOs' voice plus protection and recognition in the relationship with government at national and subnational level;

- Preparation (sometimes through subcontracted consultants) of toolkits and information on research publications which were relevant to different components of the transitional justice and peacebuilding agenda;

- Funding of research outputs;

- Coordination of working groups on gender, notably the inter-agency and international donor groups; and

- Advocacy work.

5. Findings

Theory of change

The key question in observing these activities was to consider the extent to which support to women's leadership and participation featured as a clear objective and intended outcome in UN Women and UNIFEM's peace and security and humanitarian response work.

Country office documentation over time showed a more rigorous development of the results chain, and therefore to the explicit theory of change (UNIFEM, 2009; UN Women, 2012b). This was most evident in the Annual Workplan 2012-2013 (UN Women, 2012b), where the development results framework (DRF) was clearer about the connection between outcomes, indicators, outputs and inputs/activities relating to country-level United Nations country team (UNCT) priorities than in earlier strategic documents. Overall, a review of the country office's strategic documentation revealed an improvement over time in the presentation of expected causal connections between programme activities and objectives. It is worth noting that the 2008-2009 subregional Strategic Plan (UNIFEM, 2007) did not reflect a detailed representation of UNIFEM's work but rather presented brushstrokes of a general peace and security agenda more or less focused on resolution 1325 and support to women victims of the conflict, which generally matched the country office plan. Overall, theories of change did not explicitly identify how particular interventions contributed to intended outcomes which reflected two points for consideration.

First, as noted in interviews, the UNIFEM country office tended to operate with a focus on project-based activities, and less in ways which reflected more strategic long-term planning with a medium- and long-term vision of change and impact of its work. Second, the absence

of core funding meant that the country office had to engage in a creative balancing act of drafting strategic documentation which addressed UNIFEM (and then UN Women) global strategic directions, while having to report to bilateral donors, with reporting mediated by the regional office.

Overall, strategic documentation matched country office activities with the global strategic direction of UN Women and UNIFEM, and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). Context analysis within documents was generally reflected in the choice of interventions. However, a closer consideration of how participation and leadership feature in strategic thinking about activities in related themes within the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda presented a mixed picture, notably:

- In the Strategic Plan 2010-2013 (UNIFEM, 2009a), while participation of women (and support to leadership) in peace and security work were noted as intended objectives, including advancing resolution 1325, there was no clear narrative about how participation and leadership of women in peace and security would be supported.

- The Concept Note for the MPS Programme Document 2009-2010 (UNIFEM, 2009b) explicitly mentioned the objectives of strengthening women's participation through building capabilities of state and civil society; strengthening social mobilization and networks; awareness-raising, sensitization and knowledge production; and the role of coordination of the international community in this area. The importance of support to participation of women was noted most clearly in relation to peacebuilding and building capacities for women to strategically position gender issues on peacebuilding agendas.

- The Annual Workplan 2012-2013 (UN Women, 2012b) most explicitly developed a results chain which connected outputs to outcomes, and set out clear output and outcome indicators. Inputs and concrete activities were noted in a separate annex as DRF activities per output. Support to women's participation and leadership here was noted in the following respects:

  o Women's organizations participating in local and national planning processes in the implementation of the Laws on Victims and Land Restitution;

  o Women having voice in 'truth telling' and memory work through the relevant institutions of memory and truth at the national and subnational levels; and

  o Women's organizations participating in peacebuilding, and specifically in peace talks as these take shape (noting the limited role the United Nations had in shaping this).

- Finally, the VJR programme with Sweden set out its own results chain, which spoke to the particular activities, inputs, outputs and intended outcomes and related indicators and means of verification for the programme. In this case, underlying hypotheses and risks were identified. Here, participation and leadership support related especially to visibility and voice of women in truth and memory work, giving visibility to the experience of conflict-related violence and supporting victims' access to protection, redress and reparations.

Overall, a review of country office documentation revealed a stronger theory of change in relation to supporting women's participation and leadership in formal political processes. However, a strong strategic narrative about support to participation and leadership in relation to peace and security and humanitarian response activities and outcomes was less clear.

Specifically, in practice, the emphasis of the VJR programme was more on work with victims (or on victims when working with government or official bodies) as victims and less as agents of change. In other words, the emphasis was to support victims and women's organizations' gain access to the relevant transitional justice mechanisms (on truth, justice and reparation), and relevant official bodies' capacity in and awareness of women's experiences and needs as regards transitional justice mechanisms and the wider conflict context in which these were located.
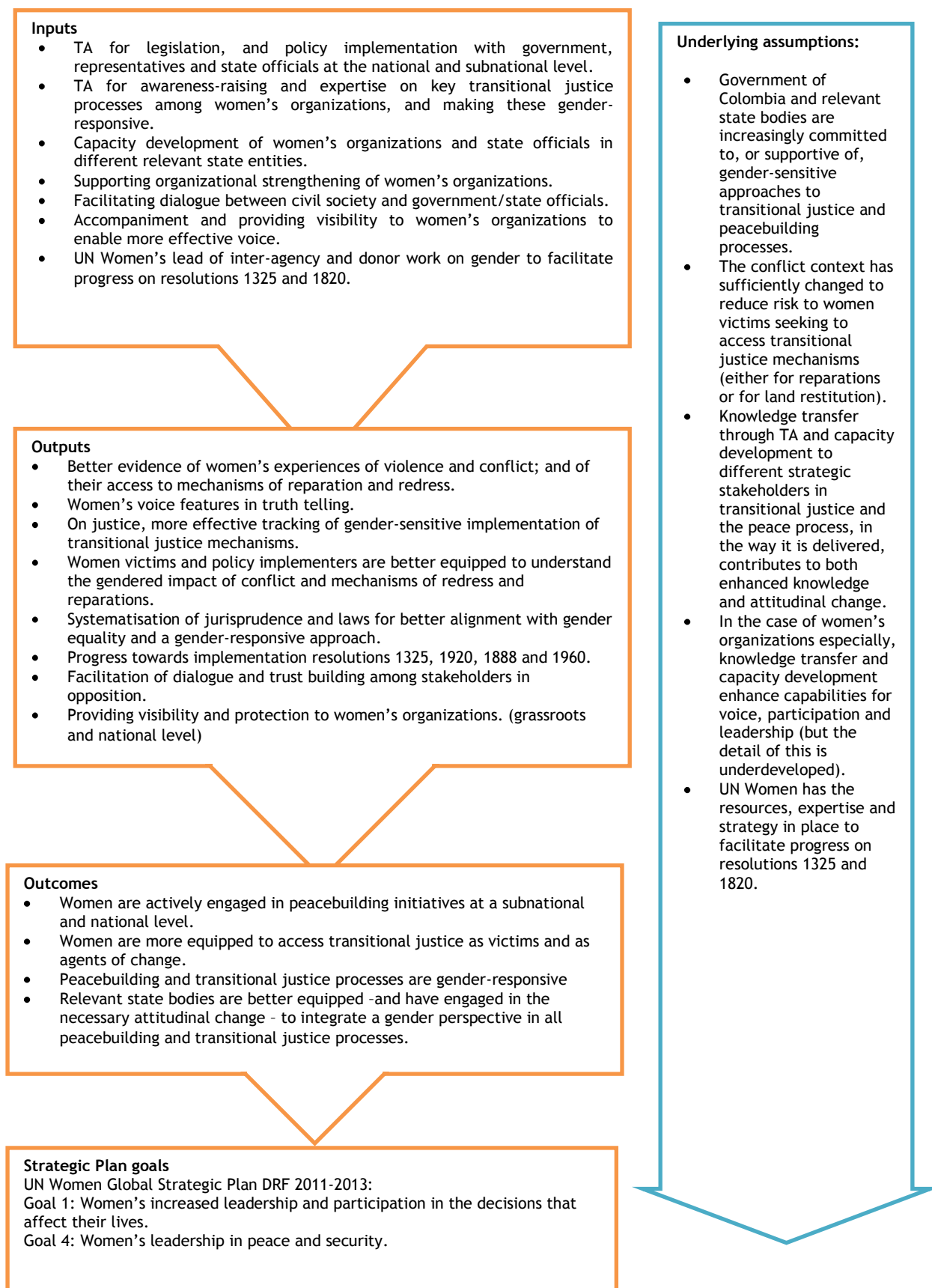
There was also an emphasis on sensitisation, awareness-raising and knowledge transfer on rights and transitional justice mechanisms for redress, truth and reparation, as well as on building up institutional capabilities for better voice and visibility on these issues from the perspective of women's experience of conflict. The implication was that this had an empowering impact for women victims. However, this was not clearly captured in the documentation.

In part, this also reflected that the global guidance on participation and leadership work in peace and security was not clearly articulated at the country office level. The programme and strategic plan documents did not clearly elaborate on how more effective participation and leadership of women in transitional justice should develop. Where there was explicit mention of improved participation and leadership skills – which was important – it was in relation to UN Women's support to women's presence in the regional roundtable on peace talks (UN Women, 2013).

More importantly for this evaluation, the implicit theories of change in how concrete activities were effectuated – which were not captured in the logframes – were more revealing about strategic practices which had positive impact in terms of enhanced participation (although less so leadership) in the country office's peace and security work. UN Women's needs to more effectively capture lessons learned from practices that remain undocumented and were typically not reflected by results oriented logframes. More concrete examples of the findings against the specific evaluation questions are outlined below.

The figure below draws on both strategic plan documents and documents for the VJR programme, as well as interviews to elicit, and summarize the underlying theory of change that characterised country office work in this area. It was important also to note that the very fragmented activities that were part of this programme reflected a summary of expected causal connections between inputs, outputs, outcomes and strategic global goals.

Fig 1.Theory of change

Inputs
- TA for legislation, and policy implementation with government, representatives and state officials at the national and subnational level.
- TA for awareness-raising and expertise on key transitional justice processes among women's organizations, and making these gender-responsive.
- Capacity development of women's organizations and state officials in different relevant state entities.
- Supporting organizational strengthening of women's organizations.
- Facilitating dialogue between civil society and government/state officials.
- Accompaniment and providing visibility to women's organizations to enable more effective voice.
- UN Women's lead of inter-agency and donor work on gender to facilitate progress on resolutions 1325 and 1820.

Outputs
- Better evidence of women's experiences of violence and conflict; and of their access to mechanisms of reparation and redress.
- Women's voice features in truth telling.
- On justice, more effective tracking of gender-sensitive implementation of transitional justice mechanisms.
- Women victims and policy implementers are better equipped to understand the gendered impact of conflict and mechanisms of redress and reparations.
- Systematisation of jurisprudence and laws for better alignment with gender equality and a gender-responsive approach.
- Progress towards implementation resolutions 1325, 1920, 1888 and 1960.
- Facilitation of dialogue and trust building among stakeholders in opposition.
- Providing visibility and protection to women's organizations. (grassroots and national level)

Outcomes
- Women are actively engaged in peacebuilding initiatives at a subnational and national level.
- Women are more equipped to access transitional justice as victims and as agents of change.
- Peacebuilding and transitional justice processes are gender-responsive
- Relevant state bodies are better equipped –and have engaged in the necessary attitudinal change – to integrate a gender perspective in all peacebuilding and transitional justice processes.

Strategic Plan goals
UN Women Global Strategic Plan DRF 2011-2013:
Goal 1: Women's increased leadership and participation in the decisions that affect their lives.
Goal 4: Women's leadership in peace and security.

Underlying assumptions:
- Government of Colombia and relevant state bodies are increasingly committed to, or supportive of, gender-sensitive approaches to transitional justice and peacebuilding processes.
- The conflict context has sufficiently changed to reduce risk to women victims seeking to access transitional justice mechanisms (either for reparations or for land restitution).
- Knowledge transfer through TA and capacity development to different strategic stakeholders in transitional justice and the peace process, in the way it is delivered, contributes to both enhanced knowledge and attitudinal change.
- In the case of women's organizations especially, knowledge transfer and capacity development enhance capabilities for voice, participation and leadership (but the detail of this is underdeveloped).
- UN Women has the resources, expertise and strategy in place to facilitate progress on resolutions 1325 and 1820.

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Evaluation questions

In what ways did UN Women influence policies and practice (within the United Nations system, as well as in key external agencies) in relation to women's political participation and leadership in peace and security?

UN Women and UNIFEM in Colombia played an important role in contributing to shaping policy and practice on gender equality in the political process generally, and specifically in relation to the peace process.

Achievements for the evaluation period included:

- UN Women contributed to heightened public visibility of and sensitization to women's experience of the conflict among public and political officials in different relevant institutions – notably with regard to the transitional justice machinery, in particular at the national level, but also with important impact at the subnational level (including the legislative branch and individuals in key state bodies involved in the implementation of transitional justice);

- UN Women contributed to normative work through legislative change through TA to Congress and support to CSOs to contribute to change. The Law on Victims is a primary example of where UN Women's engagement resulted in concrete changes to the legislative bill to make it more gender-sensitive;

- UN Women contributed to raising awareness and sensitization on resolution 1325 in policy discussions, although this remains limited;

- UN Women contributed to making resolution 1820 more visible. However, accounts in interviews were mixed about UN Women's role. Some interviewees were more vocal in their recognition of UN Women's value-added; others felt UN Women had not strategically positioned itself in relation to other stakeholders and United Nations entities to make a difference; and

- Policy impact at subnational regional level is now seen as important – less in terms of real change and more in beginning to shift the terms of the discourse among subnational actors. Given political resistance to change, and the particular features of power and gender relations at the subnational level, UN Women was effective through its accompanying role in two respects. First, it was noted in interviews that the presence of UN Women (as that of other United Nations entities) provided some protection to women's grassroots organizations, which was relevant given conditions of ongoing risk. Second, the UN Women's brokering role was important in creating an enabling environment, and for building trust and spaces for dialogue among political and social actors where there was a strong legacy of mistrust. These efforts were especially important in facilitating contact and dialogue between women's grassroots organizations and subnational government and state officials.

Weaknesses identified included:

- A sense of weak medium- and long-term strategic planning in the peace agenda was felt. Political work was observed to be reactive and ad hoc, even if

well attuned to political context and to changing conditions; and

- Progress on resolution 1325 was not especially visible. To a large extent, UN Women's role here was somewhat limited by the official position of the government. However, interviewees noted that it was not evident that the country office had considered a medium- or long-term strategy on how to support progress. Rather, action seemed more ad hoc and punctual than strategic, for instance in the form of organizing events on the resolution. The evaluation team was not made aware of any more systemically targeted work.

Factors which explained success included:

- Strategic positioning by country office staff in relevant political forums at the national and subregional level resulted in catapulting UN Women's presence in public and political debates on the conflict, and on the need to integrate gender analysis and gender equality objectives better into transitional justice policy and into the peace process;

- Strategic recruitment of staff with thematic expertise (albeit some of it through consultancy contracts rather than staff contracts) and/or strong connections to relevant national political and/or CSO networks in relation to different thematic areas extended expertise in the office on peace and security issues. In this respect, special mention was made during interviews of the high level of expertise on transitional justice within UN Women contributing to the office's impact, and on the country office's role of effective outreach through subnational work, notwithstanding resource constraints; and

- There was effective use of subnational networks through collaborative work with UNDP, and a cumulative effect of developing relations with relevant networks of grassroots women's organizations in the areas where UN Women has worked.

Factors which explained limitations included:

- In the context of Colombia, there were clear limitations on what UN Women – and other international partners – could do regarding intergovernmental work. The dynamics of conflict and the peace process were predominantly country-level political processes on which international actors had limited influence. The Colombian government has limited the United Nations' role in the peace talks. Thus, for instance, it was unrealistic to expect that UN Women – or the United Nations in general – could effectively push for women's presence in the peace talks on the government side. However, it was realistic to expect the country office to support advocacy more effectively on women's participation in the peace process and on resolution 1325.

- There were challenges related to the balancing act of needing to be a neutral actor that can hold credibility with the government and CSOs, while at the same time needing to promote a normative agenda of gender equality which has transformative goals and therefore political implications. In contrast with UNIFEM, UN Women found this increasingly challenging and it was reported that it acted more as a non-governmental organization with an advocacy agenda.

- Interviewees noted the challenges which arose from the incomplete transition

from UNIFEM to UN Women and its limited resources. The country office was perceived to be operating with uncertain funding prospects, while simultaneously fielding heightened expectations about its role. With the arrival of a new country director, the country office is now receiving core funding, which represents a major improvement in terms of funding.

- It was also noted that, prior to the recent arrival of the country director, UN Women had evidently not overcome UNIFEM modes of operation, focusing more on project-specific activities than on developing strategic normative and policy objectives which substantively informed its mode of engagement with political actors. Changes were expected with the new country office status, core funding and annual workplan.

How sustainable were the effort and results of UN Women's policy influencing/engagement?

Repeated mention of policy documents and recent legislation (such as the Law on Victims) in interviews confirmed the progressive shift towards gender awareness in the peace process; in the application and implementation of transitional justice mechanisms and processes; and towards taking account of the specific needs and experiences of women in this respect. Interviewees acknowledged that UN Women and UNIFEM played a role in contributing to this process of legal and policy change which included facilitating the contribution of views and inputs of women's organizations to the Laws on Victims and Land Restitution; UN Women's own TA contribution to this; and the TA and capacity development provided to implementing state bodies.

Sustainability was acknowledged as having been achieved through UN Women's role in providing TA on the implementation of gender legislation and policy. This is relevant in ongoing support to policy-implementing agencies, such as the different public offices which are leading on different transitional justice and protection measures, and in the role of UN Women accompanying judicial officials to check the consistency of court rulings with new legislative measures.

Follow-up work through TA and the accompaniment of legislators and policy implementation is important, and should be strategically incorporated in country office planning. The evaluation team was not able to gain a full measure of the scale of this work and influence during the fieldwork.

The sustainability of UN Women's work was inevitably conditioned by the wider context of conflict. The political uncertainty of the peace process and the contradictions inherent that transitional justice is underway while conflict remains ongoing, is a distinctive feature of the context and signals the need for realistic achievements.

How effective was UN Women in its policy engagement at different levels, including global regional and national?

UN Women developed some strategic partnerships which facilitated country office effectiveness and coverage in policy influence and normative impact and examples of such partnerships identified by the evaluation team are outlined below.

The partnership with UNDP was noted as especially effective at the subnational level. Given UN Women's limited territorial presence, it enabled the country office to engage with grassroots movements outside Bogota using UNDP's more established networks in

regions where it had a presence including the departments of Meta, Nariño, Huila, Antioquia, Atlántico, Montes de Maria, Barranquilla and Villavicencio. These networks were built up and used not only for work on transitional justice (through organizational strengthening, capacity development, including the Diplomas on Transitional Justice in the departments) but also to facilitate political participation and leadership work in electoral processes at the local level. As UN Women is unlikely to be in a position to have the kind of territorial presence that other United Nations entities (such as UNFPA and UNICEF) have, this type of partnership is critical to enhancing the effectiveness of its catalytic role, and should therefore be nurtured.

UN Women developed relationships with universities and influential think-tanks, such as *DeJusticia* and the PAVIP (a space which facilitates exchange among a network of universities, relevant state bodies and CSOs on transitional justice and support to victims of the conflict), which contributed to making outreach and coverage on awareness-raising, capacity development and knowledge outputs more effective.

Partnership with women's CSOs was perceived as being overall positive by beneficiary groups. National-level CSOs recognized the importance of the role of UN Women in supporting change in gender policy and practice, and gave due credit to UN Women's supporting role for civil society at the national and subnational level. However, they were concerned that UN Women attribute to itself the role of speaking on their behalf on policy issues. Rather, they see UN Women's role as focusing on brokering relations with government and accompanying national actors; supporting CSO institutional development and capacity development on specific issues; and providing technical guidance and thematic expertise. UN Women should not aspire to being a protagonist, but rather a facilitator of change.

Supporting networks of women's organizations at subnational level was recognized as crucial to ensuring outreach and awareness among beneficiary groups about policy change; access to the various transitional justice mechanisms; and the importance of women participating in the peace process. Grassroots organizations interviewed during the Neiva visit highlighted the positive impact of UN Women's work on enhancing voice and agency at the subnational level. It was not possible to get a sense of the levels of change in voice or in attitudes in state agencies which could be attributed to UN Women's work. The context was not especially conducive, and resistance to change was especially strong at the subnational level.

Finally, on some policy issues, UN Women was effective in identifying reform leaders in different policy and implementation spaces whose support was critical in relaying sensitization and knowledge more effectively into policy processes. The work with specific MPs here was noted as especially relevant in relation to legislative change on transitional justice.

However, effectiveness of engagement was undermined by the absence of a more strategic medium- and long-term planning and prioritization.

> To what extent did the current policy/strategic direction reflect the lessons learned from policy engagement on peace and security and humanitarian response since 2008, and how fit for purpose was it for the new UN Women mandate?

It was not clear that there was a purposeful process of taking on lessons from earlier modes of engagement due, in part, to the *ad hoc* nature of country office operations, and the weakness of monitoring systems in place to track process of programme implementation

more effectively.

To what extent did UN Women's programmes achieve the expected results? What explained variations?

Through the fieldwork important results within the VJR programme were ascertained including:

- There was better awareness among beneficiary groups and other stakeholders about transitional justice mechanisms, the differential impact of conflict on women and the need for gender-sensitive policies and practices. This was important for the official bodies implementing or administering truth, justice and reparations processes, as well as protection measures (noted in the Land Unit and in Neiva). It was also important in terms of the different relevant CSOs at the national and subnational levels.

- There was improved institutional and organizational capabilities and knowledge among relevant transitional justice-related institutions, and among CSOs at the national and subnational level on transitional justice. This was especially noted in the Human Rights Ombudsperson in its work to support victims, and in the work with organizations in Neiva such as the *Corporación de la Memoria* and the legal aid group *Corporación de Abogados y Profesionales Sur Colombianos*, and with grassroots organizations in Neiva.

- A number of interviewees underlined the importance of UN Women and UNIFEM's role in accompanying CSOs in key policy processes, specifically the Laws on Victims and Land Restitution, transitional justice processes and advocacy spaces. UN Women played an effective role of brokering and facilitating relationships and dialogue among stakeholders who otherwise may have found it difficult to interrelate. In the context of conflict, this contributed to several processes. First, it contributed to building trust between parties on opposite sides of the political and social spectrum. Second, UN Women in some cases, by its presence through accompanying activities to CSOs, contributed to creating a safer environment for them in their advocacy activities. At the grassroots level especially, this was noted as contributing to their empowerment in local political economies and self-confidence. Third, UN Women contributed to facilitating space for women's movements voice to have an impact on policy (e.g. the Law on Victims) which was especially valued by CSOs.

- The accompaniment role was also important in fostering an enabling environment for the consolidation of transitional justice mechanisms which were created. The support of UN Women to these public institutions (the different units created around transitional justice) gave them some legitimacy.

- UN Women was acknowledged as having contributed to changing attitudes in relation to conflict-related sexual violence (although the level of change was also noted as limited, especially at subnational level, as confirmed in the Neiva visit). This was especially noted in relation to the public institutions UN Women works with on transitional justice. Within the Public Prosecution

Office there was some indication of changing mind-sets resulting from the increased visibility of gender-sensitive approaches and discourse.

- Importantly, it was acknowledged that UN Women contributed to changing the public discourse on gender equality, and on the need for gender-sensitive approaches in the peace process and transitional justice mechanisms. Interviewees mentioned that gender-*in*sensitive approaches or discourses were more likely to be met with disapproval or criticism than in the past (although this was of course difficult to measure and attribute to UN Women). In the context of Colombia specifically, the *enfoque diferencial* principle (the principle of difference), which acknowledges the importance of a differential approach to addressing horizontal inequalities, was used to promote gender awareness as well as awareness about other differences on which discrimination is based, such as ethnic and cultural pluralism.

- There were results on participation of women at regional and national level to which UN Women's support was relevant, such as enhanced numbers of women in regional peace talk forums. It was also important to bear in mind the caveat that the relevance of the regional peace talks features only marginally in the *realpolitik* of the high-level peace process. Support for women to participate in local elections in conflict zones was noted as effective.

- There were results on the development of toolkits, including regarding the protection measures and early warning systems in place, for instance in the Ombudsperson*,* and knowledge products such as the toolkit on steps to take in order to activate the early warning system on conflict-related GBV (*Herramineta para identififca, caracterizar y prevenir riesgos de violence de genero en el marco del conflict*).[27] Impact was noted through the recognition of the value of some of the outputs among different stakeholders. This was not true of all the knowledge outputs UN Women funds or supports, however, so more careful selection about which knowledge products to support would improve effectiveness.

Other points for consideration included:

- Within the VJR programme, results on women's participation focus on being able to access transitional justice mechanisms were weak. However, while there is an intention to move beyond support to women as victims to women as agents of change, within the context of support to transitional justice it was unclear what this actually meant or should mean. Also, while the discourse on the importance of women's participation in the peace process is ongoing, it was less clear what support to leadership should look like. Women at the grassroots level noted that capacity development was effective in raising awareness and contributing to sensitization on gender relations, but they also pointed to the limited gains in terms of real empowerment of rural women and women living in conflict-affected areas.

- Some activities, while well intended, would benefit from more strategic planning to ensure sustainability. For instance, while UN Women staff may be delivering high-quality training and capacity development, it was not clear that

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[27] Produced by the Human Rights Ombudsperson, with support from UN Women and Unite to End Violence Against Women funds.

there was a strategy to 'train trainers' within the organizations receiving capacity development. Such a strong a dependence on UN Women staff also limited enhancing ownership of the peace and security agenda among national stakeholders, and limited the sustainability and effectiveness of knowledge transfer approaches. Sustainability may be advanced by ensuring that knowledge transfer and capacity development on relevant peace and security and humanitarian response occurs first among more country office staff. Also, training trainers within beneficiary organizations can have a multiplier effect over time, and reduce dependency on UN Women. Moreover, it should be particularly noted that, transitional justice training focused not only on the legal forms but also on the socio-cultural and socio-political challenges in effectuating gender-sensitive approaches to women which, it was suggested, enhanced the implementation prospects of the law.

- UN Women was perceived as trying to cover too much, resulting in small ad hoc project-type activities.

- On content issues relating to peace work and transitional justice, there were recommendations for UN Women to focus resources on disarmament, demobilization and reconciliation (DDR) and security sector issues which were absent from current programming. DDR was especially relevant for the current context in Colombia as the peace process advances. It should be noted that earlier decisions not to engage with DDR reflected concerns about the legitimacy of working with DDR in the country. As the conflict conditions have changed, it will be important for UN Women to engage more on these issues.

- The country office appeared to have the flexibility to adapt to changing conditions and make the most of opportunities for engagement as they arose, in part because of the reactive way of working.

Factors which contributed to success included:

- The high level of competence among key country office staff in terms of thematic expertise (e.g. on transitional justice and political participation) and deep understanding of context, including subnational politics, conflict dynamics, socio-cultural norm systems and multi-ethnic and multicultural settings.

- The strategic use of personal relationships and building-up of informal networks by key country office staff in CSOs and in relevant public offices.

- Key country office staff were nationals, which contributed to ensuring good contacts and networks with relevant strategic national partners and stakeholders.

- The deep commitment of country office staff members to their work.

Some of these factors were not easily captured by the kind of results agendas that feature in logframes, but could be better documented in reporting which applies to both United Nations entities and international development actors.

Challenges/factors which explained limitations were:

- In the endeavour to meet expectations about the new role of UN Women, there was a sense that the country office was trying to cover all themes. It was therefore working on too many (small) activities which undermined the effectiveness and sustainability of its work. There was limited sense of a strategy for prioritizing issues which was reflected in the absence of a focused long-term vision of strategic engagement with the issues.

- UN Women had not been effective in defining its new role. Nor was the new role of the country office clear in particular as to whether it should continue to play mostly a catalytic role in facilitating change through different forms of expertise and technical support and associated forms of accompaniment for this.

To what extent was UN Women able to translate global policy/strategies in programmatic work?

The country office developed its peace work in response to context-specific conditions and funding opportunities. While the general objectives of the Strategic Plan and programme documents were, to varying degrees, in line with the global agenda on peace and security and humanitarian response, it was both context specific and working with country-level funding dynamics which defined interventions.

Some strategic objectives emphasized as important in the subregional strategy have not, in practice, really featured as core areas of engagement, in particular vis-à-vis work on resolution 1325. It was noted that the country context was not amenable to this, and there was also a sense of frustration among other stakeholders surrounding the high levels of international alignment to support the implementation of resolution 1335.

It was noted that country office work in peace and security was somewhat disconnected from headquarter dynamics and policy which could be explained by the insufficient communications with headquarter on policy and programme content felt by county office staff. In addition, the relationship with the subregional office was dominated by reporting and bureaucratic logics, instead of reflecting more strategic organizational work to translate global policy into programming. Finally, it was not evident that in the past country office resources and capabilities had been directed at more effective engagement with global strategic planning. It is expected that this will change with the transition, but how was unclear.

Country office staff also perceived insufficient support from headquarters on capacity development and on access to knowledge platforms which source policy and practice guidance tools, or documented experiences from other country offices.

As the regional architecture is being rolled out, providing better support to country offices will be important both from headquarters and from the new regional office in Panama.

To what extent were UN Women programmes tailored to the specific socio-political and cultural and economic context in which they operate? How was this translated into programme design and planning?

The country office was effective in adapting its peace and security work to the country context.

Factors already mentioned which contributed to this included: the presence of national country office staff, which meant that local knowledge informed choices about

interventions and activities; and recruitment in the period under review was characterised by strategic appointment of staff who either had strategic expertise in thematic areas or strong networks and contacts among key stakeholders.

Context analysis duly featured in programme documents and informed choices of activities and interventions.

More importantly, it was the manner in which this analysis and understanding of political context and prevailing socio-cultural norms in practice informed the way country office staff interacted with key stakeholders and institutions which contributed to making activities especially relevant and effective.

Logframes and programme reporting documents did not readily capture these more informal ways of navigating complex political processes. A challenge for UN Women – and the wider international community – was finding ways of documenting more imaginative and strategic forms of engagement that were taking place.

There were some sustainability challenges in terms of the country office work on the peace and security agenda. For instance, expertise in transitional justice was focused in one individual who was not even country office staff but a consultant. It was difficult therefore to gauge what the knowledge transfer of that expertise to other (including more junior) staff had been. Furthermore, country office mechanisms to facilitate capacity development for staff were not evident and, prior to current country office during the fieldwork, it seemed staffing had been funded by project/programme funding.

How effective was UN Women at identifying and using key opportunities and partnerships at country level?

There was significant evidence that country office staff had been effective in mobilizing key partnerships to enhance sensitization, develop capacity and give better visibility of women's experience of conflict.

Key partnerships included: the alliance forged with UNDP at the subnational level, which was fundamental in enabling UN Women to have outreach in rural areas and build up networks with grassroots organizations in the regions; alliances with some think-tanks (*DeJusticia*) and subnational universities (in Neiva), as well as networks such as the PAVIP, were instrumental in improving outreach; partnerships with national CSOs and subnational grassroots organizations; and partnerships with key political actors. Joint programing, and concretely the MDG programme, was signalled as especially effective, for instance in Nariño. Here, UN Women's work seemed to have focused particularly on enhanced voice and participation, including in relation to projects working on early recovery.

The country office's role in brokering spaces for dialogue between other stakeholders was especially valued in the context of conflict.

Some of the partnerships were nurtured through the use of UN Women subcontracted consultants who sat in offices, providing TA. In some cases, this was been especially effective (e.g. the Ombudsperson or Land Unit) while in others there was concern that such use of consultancies could result in a 'silo-ised' and peripheral presence of gender-responsive approaches. Concern for issues of ownership (relevant for the next question) were also raised.

UN Women was sometimes perceived as taking an overly protagonist role in its interaction with partners and relevant stakeholders. UN Women needs to be more mindful of women

CSOs' role, voice and historic experience.

How effective were UN Women programmes at fostering/strengthening national ownership through country engagement of intended outcomes regarding improved leadership and participation of women in relevant peace and security and humanitarian response intervention/process?

Effectiveness on strengthening ownership was mixed although some achievements were made. First, women's organizations, especially at the grassroots level, had greater capacity to engage with transitional justice mechanisms (despite the fact that these processes are still very young), and that there was greater awareness about women's rights among affected groups. Second, public institutions were beginning to undergo changes in the public discourse at least, but also in attitudes towards the need for gender-sensitive approaches.

Providing TA in the form of subcontracted consultancy work had mixed results in terms of ownership. In some cases, such as the Human Rights Ombudsperson and the Land Unit, the role of subcontracted consultants contributed to providing effective and – it was claimed – sustainable knowledge transfer. In others, potential confusion over line management and reporting was noted as problematic. Moreover, it could limit the effectiveness of knowledge transfer and appropriation by the host organization, which may simply delegate responsibility for gender-responsive work to the consultant.

In what ways did the new mandate/reorganization provide opportunities to improve programme effectiveness and coherence between UN Women policies and operational engagement?

The transition from UNIFEM to UN Women had already begun to have a positive impact in terms of providing UN Women with more leverage and voice in both intergovernmental and inter-agency terms. Although a country office director with full authority is only now beginning to operate in country, the change itself created space for UN Women to engage on different terms with key stakeholders. At the same time, though, as the transition was still incomplete, there was the sense that expectations about what UN Women could do were very high, while country office systems were not in place for programming to reflect the new mandate.

Important opportunities include:

- Strengthening the coordination role at the inter-agency and international donor level. Interviewees suggested that this was still not being used as effectively as possible, in terms of planning and strategic agenda setting. It will be important for UN Women to assure a level of seniority in terms of office leadership, to galvanise equivalent levels of seniority in the attendance of other United Nations and donor entities (as appropriate). UN Women should use this space to be more strategic in setting the agenda and in its catalytic role which requires a more proactive approach to its chairing function.

- Creating more effective planning and strategy systems for the political/policy space created by the new mandate means the country office, which is now more strategically positioned to bridge its normative and policy goals with programming activities.

How innovative was UN Women in its programmatic approaches and what lessons can be learned which can be replicated in different contexts?

There were number of ways in which the country office had been engaging in innovative practices:

- Country office staff made strategic and innovative use of informal networks at national and local levels to mobilise resources and achieve outreach;

- Some capacity development modalities were described as innovative in some aspects of transitional justice. For instance, how judges were trained to move beyond more legalistic approaches to working with the new legal and institutional context, to considering the practical and socio-political challenges of addressing real cases and to engaging with affected groups was cited as a shift from more tradition forms of capacity development; and

- Working strategically through existing networks of national actors at the national and subnational level was critical in enabling UN Women's presence and outreach for its catalytic role. Nurturing and sustaining this will be important and in some cases, will require effective partnerships with other United Nations entities (some of which are already working well).

Dimension 3: UN Women's organizational capacities, resources and structures

How adequate were UN Women's human and financial resources to effectively engage in conflict-affected countries?

The country office had limited financial resources and did not receive core funds. Since funding was sourced from bilateral funds and joint programming, the country office needed to balance its strategic planning across different reporting and financial cycles, and different programmatic agendas. The transition is unlikely to lead to a significant increase in resources.

Management of human resources was challenged by the uncertainty of the future of contracts after the transition process which had a wearing effect on staff motivation. It was also noted that there was potentially a staff retention problem over time – although in some cases staff members have gone on to occupy key positions in the public administration where the knowledge transfer from UN Women could have impact.

There was a demand among country office staff for more opportunities to access capacity development and to be trained up across different thematic areas. They felt there was insufficient support on career progression; access to a knowledge platform that was either globally or regionally managed and which could provide staff members with thematic guidance; or access to documents on experiences in other countries. To overcome this issue, more strategic headquarter and/or regional support on staff skills and on knowledge management is required.

It was worth noting that the flexible approach to interventions (also made possible by the nature of the relationship with donors) was especially appropriate in a constantly changing conflict situation where unpredictable windows of opportunity arose and which allowed the country office to capitalize on strategic and rapid engagement.

How fit for purpose was UN Women in terms of the technical skills of its staff and its

broader capacity to fulfil its mandate?

Whilst there were high-quality senior members of staff, it was difficult to judge more junior staff members. Specialist knowledge among key members of staff in relation to a number of areas were seen to be well covered in the peace and security agenda, notably in relation to different aspects of transitional justice, political participation and recovery of livelihoods. As noted, some of the specialist personnel were not full-time staff members but consultants. There are implications for fulfilling UN Women's mandate, as the bulk of work and focus of peace and security was transitional justice was managed by a consultant. It will be important for the country office to build up technical expertise among staff members to ensure sustainable quality across the relevant peace and security and humanitarian response agenda.

Some areas of expertise which remained underdeveloped or absent:

- Humanitarian response remains underdeveloped, although this reflected a wider UN Women challenge.

- Building leadership capacity among grassroots organizations was noted as important, but it was not clear what this involved in terms of concrete activities. At the subnational level, it was noted in interviews that women felt more aware of their rights, but not necessarily more empowered to contribute to changing their environment.

- Security sector reform, including DDR, was a critical area of engagement moving forward, but it was not evident that the thematic expertise was available in the country office.

It will be important for the country office to find ways of ensuring that expertise does not remain only in certain country office staff members. Headquarters and the regional office can facilitate this by focusing on improving the knowledge platforms to which country office staff have access.

As previously noted, organizational challenges, weak management/strategy systems and overly bureaucratic modes of engagement weakened the effectiveness of the country office which had consequences on how the country office engaged with its partners. For instance, work with partners funded by UN Women funds was undermined by the bureaucratic difficulties of engaging with the country office. Some CSOs would prefer to avoid support from UN Women for this reason.

How effective was UN Women at coordinating gender-related work across United Nations entities and other key partners?

UN Women chairs both inter-agency and international donor working groups on gender. It was also invited to attend other groups with civil society (such as the group chaired by Organization of American States' Support Mission to the Peace Process in Colombia), although its attendance was sporadic. However, reports on the effectiveness of its coordination role were mixed.

On the one hand, the importance of this role was recognized. From a United Nations perspective, there were demands and expectations (noted in a meeting with the inter-agency group, and additional interviews) that UN Women could contribute to leading more strategically on VAW, including conflict-related VAW; on resolution 1325; and provide leadership for other entities to mainstream gender more effectively in their work.

Concretely, it was noted that it would be important for the country office to step up its humanitarian response capacity, as this continues to be an important issue in Colombia.

It was also noted in interviews that, to date, UN Women had been more reactive than proactive in setting or guiding the agendas of the gender working groups it led. There was a perception by other members of limited effectiveness in using these groups more strategically to advance normative work.

Finally, it was noted that ensuring the presence of senior country office staff (including the director) would enhance the profile and presence of the working groups, including in contributing to the wider international involvement of peace and security work in Colombia. As noted, this is an important role for the country office as it provides an important space for agenda setting.

How effectively did UN Women manage risks in its operations? What strategies worked best?

It was not evident from the fieldwork how risk was managed. Given the nature of the work and the context of conflict and ongoing threats to vulnerable groups, UN Women needs to define a clear position on 'do no harm' strategies, in particular to minimize risk for affected groups. It was not obvious from interviews or documents that this was in place or substantively informed programming.

How fit for purpose were UN Women monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and reporting systems? Did they adequately capture lessons learned on results and impact?

Although there are evaluations for most programmes, their quality is quite uneven.

Monitoring of programmes over time was weak and limited. While there were mid-term reviews and annual reports, it was not clear how programming was adapted to respond to changes that were suggested. Annual reports were donor-driven and did not always respond to the office programme logics. In addition, donors noted the weak capacity and culture in the country office regarding results-based management.

Monitoring and evaluation across the work of international development actors is often jointly presented, despite their different purposes. Monitoring should involve appraising the effectiveness and relevance of interventions as they are implemented, and documenting what works and what is not working. However, in the case of the country office, there were no baselines against which to measure progress.

The country office reportedly had an effective communication strategy, which came to an end when funding stopped. Going forward, it will be important for the country office to develop a new communication strategy.

Overall analysis and implications for policy, programming and practice

Policy/normative: intergovernmental role of UN Women

The policy impact of the country office was important in the period under review, and drew attention to useful lessons for UN Women. UN Women and UNIFEM positioned themselves to have a strategic presence in policy debates and some decision-making circles so as to be able to affect legislation and contribute somewhat to agenda setting and altering the terms of the debate. Developing a more strategic approach to working with government and political actors and making themselves a visible international actor in national politics, required acting opportunistically to identify political allies willing to champion a gender focus in policy

issues relating to the peace and security agenda. For this, it was necessary to invest time and effort in developing networks and relations with relevant political actors. The specific results, in terms of legislative and policy impact, signalled the importance of this approach to working with government.

In scaling up its relationship with government, there is a risk of the country office distancing itself from beneficiary actors, in particular CSOs. At the same time, the policy gains were acknowledged as important. It will be important to achieve a balance between engaging with government and continuing to nurture capabilities for women's voice and representation in shaping policy outcomes. National CSOs expressed the need for UN Women to focus on its role of brokering and facilitating space for dialogue and exchange, in keeping with the objective of supporting women's participation and leadership roles in peace and security work, rather than acting as their voice. The role of facilitating space for dialogue between government and civil society was valued, moreover, in the degree to which it contributed to breaking down a legacy of conflict-related mistrust between national stakeholders.

The accompanying role was highly valued among many national stakeholders, for different reasons. For grassroots organizations, it gave them added protection and visibility in the context of ongoing conflict. For all CSOs, it enhanced women's voice. For public and government institutions, UN Women support to reforms was a politically useful signal of approval and legitimacy. It was important to stress the value of this accompanying role, including as a lesson learned for work in other conflict-affected situations.

At the grassroots level, the political work of UN Women was especially valued as giving subnational CSOs both added protection and voice in spaces that were normally closed to them.

Overall, the policy impact of UN Women and UNIFEM was important. However, ways on how support to women's leadership and participation in relation to peace and security should be articulated to improve transformative impact beyond numbers, need to be clearer. There was an insufficiently developed narrative and strategic vision of how to support women becoming empowered to become agents of change in some of the sub-thematic areas of the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda.

Programmatic work

The programme observed for the evaluation, which focused on transitional justice activities, had some important achievements, which were perceived as such by a wide range of government and CSO actors.

Reasons behind the effectiveness of programmatic work included the capacity of the country office to use country-specific knowledge to inform activities *in practice* (even when context analysis in programme documentation is more descriptive than embedded in the results chain). There was overall strong relevance to country-specific context, which informed how the country office engaged, in particular because key staff (some through consultancy contracts) were strategically recruited because of their thematic expertise and/or because they were well connected in relevant local networks, and had skills to operate strategically and politically. The importance of such considerations in recruitment strategies cannot be overemphasized in terms of the impact on achieving results.

In turn, strategic partnerships at the national and subnational level were developed which were facilitated by effective inter-agency relations (notably with UNDP). At the same time, UN Women was not always seen to award due credit to other actors for coordinated efforts.

The sustainability of country office work was observed in some outputs, notably with regards to capacity development and training (but with some concern about reducing dependence on individual staff members or consultants), some transitional justice-related toolkits, and guidance and knowledge products. In this regard, ownership of the gender-sensitive agenda on peace and security among some key national actors was enhanced. For this, it was important to highlight the investment in working closely with relevant stakeholders, to build capabilities and knowledge on key issues related to transitional justice (women's CSOs and relevant government bodies whose buy-in was crucial), to collaborate with local expertise (e.g. with universities, think-tanks and well-placed opinion leaders) or to seek to change mind-sets (within government and public bodies).

However, despite the rhetoric on participation and leadership in peace and security work, and the intention to enhance agency, it will be important to develop more clarity on how concrete activities and modes of engagement can contribute to more transformative impact in this regard. In some cases, this will involve documenting better what works to achieve results but is more the outcome of intuitive if strategic action.

Given the ongoing conditions of conflict-related violence, it is important to be realistic about what is possible.

Finally, programming remains reactive and insufficiently strategic which was reflected in the perception that UN Women was less influential in setting the agenda. At the level of inter-agency coordination, this will be an important role to build up.

Operational capacity

The ongoing transition process from UNIFEM to UN Women continued to be a relevant factor to operational capacity, and funding limitations remain a challenge.

Bearing this in mind, the country office was found to have weak systems in place to ensure more strategic planning and prioritization of issues. The expectation was that this will improve with the new structures coming into play.

It will be important not to lose in this process the fact that the country office has strong individual capacity in terms of thematic expertise and country knowledge; strong but uneven connections to relevant networks; and is overly dependent on key persons. However, the demand for better communications with headquarters on thematic guidance which could support the development of programmatic work was noted.

Furthermore, the inconsistent and uneven integration of risk management should be considered, in particular vis-à-vis the principle of 'do no harm' which was especially weak in programmatic design. Do no harm required risk to be acknowledged and the existence of a strategy to mitigate against the possibility of unintended consequences, both for country office staff and beneficiary groups. This was especially relevant in conflict-affected situations where the risk of backlash (including as a consequence of international interventions) was important.

Finally, the role of inter-agency and donor coordination work remained underdeveloped, especially as regards the potential for UN Women's agenda-setting capacity.

6.   Recommendations

The Colombian peace process provides a particularly interesting example of transition (still uncertain and challenging) from a conflict situation that is still ongoing in different parts of the country to the beginnings of a peace process where transitional justice mechanisms are already in place. It will be important to watch and document this process, including to obtain

lessons for similar contexts elsewhere. For this reason, the findings of this case study are relevant not only for Colombia, but also for UN Women's global strategy on peace and security and humanitarian response.

Normative and policy-level: Intergovernmental role

The UN Women country office needs to develop a more strategic medium- and long-term vision for its normative and intergovernmental work in country. It will require developing the capacity for strategic prioritization, and ensuring the country office evolves from being more reactive and ad hoc, to being more effective at agenda setting. A more forward-looking perspective in support of the global normative objectives of UN Women will be needed.

It will be important for UN Women, not only at country office level, to reflect strategically on different approaches to its intergovernmental work, and decide whether it should mostly support policy processes as a neutral actor or whether, in view of the resistance likely to be generated by the transformative goals in the peace and security agenda, it should engage more proactively in political and advocacy work. Normative work cannot be politically neutral because intended outcomes involve a redefinition of power relations. However, UN Women needs to operate strategically to facilitate the effective appropriation of normative goals (in alignment with internationally agreed objectives) by national government actors.

Objectives should be realistic and guide how to adapt normative work to the political realities of conflict and post-conflict situations. Politically informed modes of engagement, in which the political economy conditions of context are considered to inform strategy and programming, will be required. In the case of Colombia, such analysis is present *de facto* to varying degrees, if not reflected in documents and theories of change.

There is a need for better strategic clarity on how to embed support to women's participation and leadership more effectively in the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda. To date, as this focused on transitional justice at country office level, the emphasis was more on women as victims (which is important) and less on women as agents of change (which remained underdeveloped in relation to transitional justice). However, the deeper issue at stake concerns the substantive theory of change regarding change in voice and agency for women in conflict situations. In the Colombian context, more work is required on this in relation to peacebuilding and resolution 1325.

At country office level, there are three areas which could potentially support staff capacity to develop more robust theories of change on enhancing women's voice and agency in peace and security work generally, and transitional justice specifically:

- More purposeful collaborative work between the peace and security and the political participation expertise at country office level to facilitate a cross-fertilisation of ideas, expertise and resources and access to relevant political and societal networks which will enable moving beyond what remains somewhat thematically siloised areas of UN Women's interventions;

- Capacity development of country office staff in relevant peace and security work – including transitional justice but also wider security and justice work, DDR and humanitarian response; and

- The country office drawing more effectively on the emerging body of knowledge outputs at headquarter level.

Shortcomings in the participation and leadership vision in peace and security and humanitarian response work can also be addressed through improved knowledge management, including from headquarters.

Programming

The UN Women country office needs to develop more effective planning and strategy. In practice, there were politically strategic approaches in place, in terms of how some staff members engage with key political and social stakeholders. However, more work is needed to ensure political economy analysis approaches are more embedded in programming documents. Context and conflict analysis will need to be undertaken, which can be used as the basis for guiding and identifying better what should be the entry points to advance peace and security outcomes.

In relation to this, there is a need for more critical consideration of what types of interventions are relevant (e.g. TA or capacity development), and also, concretely, how these should be delivered, paying attention to content and the mode of delivery. For instance, on capacity development, lessons can be drawn from the Colombian case on the modes of delivery of the transitional justice modules, which focused more on practical and political challenges of implementing transitional justice than legalistic approaches.

More clarity and better guidance on UN Women's role and mandate is needed and is important in terms of how partnerships and alliances are formed, and the expectations on UN Women's work.

Organizational capacities

It will be important to integrate monitoring more effectively into the programme life so it informs programme work as it evolves.

There is a need for more effective capacity development for country office staff in key areas of the peace and security agenda that are relevant for the context. Currently, this includes more expertise on DDR, security sector reform and humanitarian response, which are crucially relevant but where the office has limited capacity.

Do no harm and better risk analysis need to be integrated more meaningfully into UN Women's peace and security and humanitarian response work. There was very limited evidence that this featured significantly in how interventions were designed and implemented.

There is a need for more strategic engagement in the gender working groups that UN Women coordinates, in terms of inter-agency work and international donor presence in Colombia. In practice, this will involve ensuring more proactive agenda setting, prioritization of issues and senior-level leadership.

Importantly, other United Nations entities and international donors also need to step up in terms of integrating gender perspectives in their work in a less 'silo-ised' way and UN Women can be more effective in galvanising this by investing more resources in its inter-agency work.

There is an important need for more effective communications between the country office, the regional office and headquarters. It remains to be seen how the new regional architecture will resolve this.

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Interviews

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Organization	Function/Title
Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo – AECID	Responsable del Programa Género y Derechos de las Mujeres
Agencia Sueca de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo – ASDI	Oficial Nacional de Programa
Cámara de Representantes	Representante a la Cámara
Cámara de Representante	Representante a la Cámara
Casa de la Mujer	Representante Mesa de Política Pública
Centro de Estudios de Derecho, Justicia y Sociedad – DeJusticia	Investigadora Principal en Género
Centro de Estudios de Derecho, Justicia y Sociedad – DeJusticia	Director
Centro de Información de las Naciones Unidas – CINU	Oficial de Programa a Cargo de los Programas de Género UN-Habitat
Coordinación Mujeres Desplazadas	
Coordinación Naciones Unidas	Coordinador Residente
Coordinación Naciones Unidas	Analista
Corporación Casa de la Memoria (Neiva)	
Corporación de Abogados y Profesionales Sur Colombianos (Neiva)	Profesional de Apoyo
Corporación de Investigación y Acción Social y Económica – CIASE	Representante Mesa de Política Pública
Defensoría del Pueblo - SAT	Director SAT
Defensoría del Pueblo - SAT	Consultora Enfoque Diferencial
Departamento de Seguridad de Naciones Unidas – UNDSS	Analista
Fiscalía General de la Nación	Jefe de Fiscales de Justicia y Paz
Fiscalía General de la Nación	Área de Género
Fiscalía General de la Nación	Directora Unidad Especializada en Desplazamiento y Desaparición
Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia – UNICEF	Oficial de Protección Infantil
Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Población – UNFPA	Asesora Género y Derechos
Gobernación del Huila	Jefe Oficina Asesora para la Mujer, la Infancia, la Adolescencia y Asuntos Sociales
Gobierno de Canadá	Oficial de Programa (GPSF)

Iniciativa de Mujeres Colombianas por la Paz	Coordinadora Política Pública
Misión de Apoyo al Proceso de Paz en Colombia – Mapp-OEA	Analistas
Mujeres Huila (Neiva)	Líderes
Oficina de las Naciones Unidas para la Coordinación de la Ayuda Humanitaria – OCHA	Oficial de Coordinación Humanitaria
Oficina del Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos –OACNUDH	Oficial de Derechos Humanos
Oficina del Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos –OACNUDH	Oficial de Programa
ONU Mujeres	Ex-Coordinadora Nacional
ONU Mujeres	Consultora ONU Mujeres
ONU Mujeres	Asociadas de Programa Colombia
Organización Internacional para las Migraciones – OIM	Especialista en Prevención y Asistencia Directa
Organización Mundial de la Salud – OMS	Consultor en Saludo de la Mujer, Género y Mertnoneonatal OPS/OMS
Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo	Asesor del Área de Paz
Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo	Especialista en Género
Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo	Coordinador Territorial PNUD
Programa de las Naciones Unidas para los Asentamientos Humanos – ONU Habitat	Oficial de Programa a Cargo de los Programas de Género UN Habitat
Red Nacional de Mujeres	
Senado de la República de Colombia	Senador
Senado de la República de Colombia	Senador
SISMA Mujer	Directora Ejecutiva
Unidad de Protección	Coordinador CETRAI
Unidad de Tierras del Ministerio de Agricultura	Coordinadora Mujer e Infancia
Unidad de Tierras del Ministerio de Agricultura	Director
Unidad de Víctimas	Directora
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HAITI

Country Case Study*

Acronyms

APROSIFA	Association for the Promotion of Integral Family Healthcare
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DFID	Department for International Development
EVAW	Ending Violence Against Women
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IOM	International Organization for Migration
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCFDF	Ministry for Gender and Women's Affairs
MICT	Ministry of the Interior and Collective Territories
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
MPCE	Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation
MUDHA	Movement of Dominican Haitian Women
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PNH	Haitian National Police
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SSR	Security Sector Reform
START	Support for Security Accompaniment in Response to the Issue of GBV in Temporary Shelters
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNPOL	United Nations Police
VAW	Violence Against Women

1.   Introduction

The Haiti case study is one of five country case studies for the corporate evaluation of UN Women's contribution to increasing women's leadership and participation in peace and security and humanitarian response. This case study examines UN Women's peace and security and humanitarian response work in Haiti since 2008. It includes an examination of interventions in sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and policy and programmatic work related to the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda..

2.   Methodology

Fieldwork was conducted by a member of the evaluation team in collaboration with a local researcher. Preparatory work and consultations with UN Women were conducted prior to fieldwork in Haiti in late February and early March 2013. The fieldwork involved examining country-level strategy and programming, with a focus on peace and security and humanitarian response. More detailed observation of country office work in this area looked at a selection of interventions decided by the country office and the evaluation team leader. Logistical and time constraints meant that interviews were only conducted in Port-au-Prince, subsequently subnational perspectives are under-represented. However, interviews with a sufficiently broad range of relevant stakeholders sought to compensate for this. A full list of interviewees is included below.

The qualitative analysis used during the fieldwork drew on a combination of documentary evidence provided by the country and other stakeholders, as well as interviews and focus group discussions involving stakeholders identified during the evaluation's inception phase. Interviews and focus group discussions were semi-structured to address the concrete evaluation questions, but also allowed for unstructured questions as appropriate. Context analysis and stakeholder mapping were developed so as to take account of power relations between relevant groups. During the fieldwork, the team was mindful of the relationship between implementers and different stakeholders in interventions, including taking into consideration the role of the evaluation team.

3.   Country context

Context analysis

Over the past century, Haiti has endured dictatorships, political repression, military coups, foreign occupation, weak and corrupt justice and law enforcement, and endemic levels of poverty and underdevelopment. A form of democracy existed in Haiti until 1957 when François Duvalier seized power. Duvalier died in 1971 and was succeeded by his son, Jean-Claude Duvalier, who ruled the country until 1986 when he was forced into exile. Following his departure, Haiti went through a turbulent and often violent period marked by military rule, coups and counter-coups, and fraudulent and abortive elections. Haiti's first democratically elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, was ousted in a military coup in 1991. In 1994, the coup regime collapsed under international pressure and the threat of military intervention by the United States. Aristide was reinstalled, though his mandate came to an end in 1996. He became president once again in 2001, but the elections that brought him back to power were boycotted by the opposition.

Aristide's final term in office came to an end on 29 February 2004, when he resigned and left the country. His departure was followed by the installation of an interim government led by Prime Minister Gérard Latortue. Thousands of pro-Aristide militants and sympathisers were killed, imprisoned or lost their jobs during Latortue's tenure, but the regime was unable to

control rising violence in pro-Aristide strongholds such as the slums of *Bel Air* and *Cité Soleil*, and armed gangs, former soldiers and police gradually took control of most of the north of the country.

In response to growing political and criminal violence, including drug-trafficking, the United Nations Security Council authorised a Multinational Interim Force in Haiti (MIF) for a three-month period from 29 February 2004. The MIF was succeeded by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), which was established on 1 June 2004 by United Nations Security Council resolution 1542. MINUSTAH's principal objective is 'to restore a secure and stable environment, to promote the political process, to strengthen Haiti's Government institutions and rule-of-law-structures, as well as to promote and to protect human rights'. This includes providing support to reform the Haitian National Police (PNH); action to restore and maintain rule of law and public safety; assistance in the organization of free and fair elections; the promotion and protection of human rights; and monitoring and reporting on the human rights situation in the country.

Since MINUSTAH's deployment, violence has abated and democratic elections in 2010 and 2012 were relatively trouble-free. However, the mission has not been without controversy.

Haiti's manifold political, social and economic problems were exacerbated in January 2010 when a devastating earthquake struck the capital, Port-au-Prince and surrounding areas including Leogane and Jacmel. Some 220,000 people were killed, 300,000 injured and over 2 million (about a quarter of the population) made homeless. There was massive damage to the country's already precarious infrastructure. The earthquake had a particularly devastating impact on the Haitian government, with 30 per cent of its civil servants killed and all but one ministry building destroyed. The international community pledged $9.9 billion[28] in assistance, but disbursement of these funds has been slow due to fears of corruption and misuse. Three years on, despite a flood of aid agencies into the country in the wake of the earthquake, hundreds of thousands of Haitians are still living in camps. According to an Oxfam GB (2010) survey of 3,600 camp residents in Port-au-Prince, most families want to leave but many do not have the assets to secure alternative accommodation.

Women and conflict/fragility in Haiti

Key milestones in Haiti regarding gender equality include the following policy and legislative changes:

- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1979), ratified in 1981.

- The Ministry for Gender and Women's Affairs was established on 8 November 1994.

- The 1994 Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women (*Convención de Belem do Pará*), ratified in 1996.

- A government decree making rape a crime was passed in 2005.

- The National Development Plan 2010-2030 (*Plan Stratégique de Développement d'Haïti*) includes commitments to develop and strengthen public policies with regards to women and gender issues.

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[28] Unless otherwise indicated, figures refer to United States dollars.

- In 2012, national legislation was passed, approving a 30 per cent quota for women's participation in government.

- Measures have been taken to increase the participation of women in key positions in government. The Government of Haiti has increased the proportion of women in governmental posts to 44 per cent of ministers and 30.3 per cent of the government as whole (including State Secretaries).

- The Ministry for Gender and Women's Affairs is currently working on draft legislation aimed at prohibiting violence against women and girls.

Key stakeholders

Haiti hosts a large United Nations presence and has one of the highest numbers of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) per capita in the world. Although international donors have a significant presence in the country, they tend to be reluctant to fund government departments directly given concerns about corruption and capacity.

UN Women (and UNIFEM) have worked with a number of actors in government, international governmental agencies, NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs) in Haiti, in particular on the area of peace and security and humanitarian response. It has particularly strong links with the Ministry for Gender and Women's Affairs (MCFDF), and collaborates with the Ministry of Human Rights, the PNH, the Civil Protection Directorate, the Ministry of the Interior and Collective Territories (MICT) and the Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation (MPCE). UN Women is also involved in providing training to the PNH (Haiti has no national army) and CSOs on issues of SGBV.

CSOs with which UN Women has worked include the Association for the Promotion of Integral Family Healthcare (APROSIFA), the women's organization *Kay Fanm*, the Haitian Women's Movement for Education and Development, the Movement of Dominican Haitian Women (MUDHA) and *Solidarité Fanm Ayisyen*. Other key actors with which UN Women collaborates include the Gender Unit of MINUSTAH, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), as well as several international donors that support its work, including the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Spanish Agency for Development Cooperation (AECID), who have a presence in the country.

UN Women is not a formal member of the United Nations Cluster system in Haiti, though it does work with cluster actors. In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, UN Women was initially involved in all the clusters and, once it was activated, UN Women focused most of its attention on the protection cluster, notably the protection sub-cluster on gender-based violence (GBV), country office-led by UNFPA and the MCFDF. UNFPA's mandate involves significant work in the area of SGBV, as well as a focus on reproductive health and support for the collection of demographic data. UNFPA and UN Women have worked together on a number of projects in Haiti, and the two organizations also collaborate with some of the same state bodies and CSOs although on different issues – in particular the PNH, the *Concertation Nationale* and several CSOs. The *Concertation Nationale,* or national dialogue against violence against women (VAW), is a coordination mechanism comprising government actors, CSOs and international agencies. After the earthquake, most of UN Women's collaboration with other agencies revolved around work on SGBV coordinated by the protection sub-cluster.

4.   UN Women strategy and activities in Haiti

Background

UN Women and UNIFEM before it have been working in Haiti since 2004, with a country office established in 2007. Currently the country office comprises the UN Women representative, four Programme Officers, one Project Officer, one Programme Specialist, a Programme Assistant, an Administrative Assistant, an Information and Communication Technology Specialist and a Finance Associate. Staff numbers have grown since the transition from UNIFEM to UN Women, and there are plans to increase the number of personnel in the future.

Thematic priorities and programme work

The country office's National Programme 2012–2013 is guided by UN Women's global strategy, and is informed by national development priorities and ongoing consultations with key partners. In particular, the objectives of the country office Strategy 2012–2013 reflect engagements with Goals 1 and 4 of UN Women's Global Strategic Plan.[29] As in previous years, the overall country office strategy for 2012–2013 focuses on supporting the activities of state partners at the policy level and addressing the priority needs of women. The strategy also clearly reflects UN Women's engagement in the humanitarian response in Haiti. Activities are organized under the following broad categories:

- Increasing women's participation in political processes and in leadership roles. This includes the joint programme on 'Conflict Prevention and Social Cohesion through Local Community Empowerment and Institutional Capacity-Building' (2009–2011) implemented by five agencies: IOM, the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNFPA and MINUSTAH.

- Reducing VAW, including support to implementation of the 'Safe Cities' programme, a global programme which is being implemented in Haiti. It also includes the Support for Security Accompaniment in Response to the Issue of GBV in Temporary Shelters (START) project, which was instituted as a contribution to Outcome 2 of the pilot project 'Security and Empowerment for Women and their families: Ensuring a gender-responsive humanitarian and early recovery response'.

- Fostering stronger accountability to the gender equality commitments in national planning and budgeting processes. This includes the 'Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment' programme which falls under the strategic priorities of governance and ending VAW.

- Enhancing awareness of a gender-responsive humanitarian response which takes into account gender differentials in needs, responsibilities, vulnerabilities and strengths.

With respect to peace and security and humanitarian response, the strategy also focuses on technical support to incorporate gender dimensions into the United Nations' consolidated funding appeal for Haiti, technical assistance to United Nations personnel on addressing

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[29] Goal 1 of the global UN Women Strategic Plan is 'to increase women's leadership and participation in all areas that affect their lives'. Goal 4 is 'to increase women's leadership in peace and security and humanitarian response' (UNW/2011/09).

violence against women and girls, and advocacy on gender equality within the humanitarian response.

A significant strategic shift with the transition to UN Women was the increased focus on consistency and synergies across the different programmes underway in issues related to peace and security, as well as the particular attention given to consolidating and strengthening the response side to SGBV at the institutional level, especially through work with the PNH. Previously, under UNIFEM, there was a lack of an integrated strategy for gender mainstreaming in peace and security issues, in particular with regards to the reform of the security sector.

Since the transition to UN Women there has been a concerted effort to focus more on consolidation of work with institutional partners, including work with more/new partners both at the community and at the state/institutional level. This has included for example work with stakeholders other than the MCFDF, such as the police and the judicial sector. Equally, at the community level, new partners were chosen for their existing contacts and influence with state institutions in their respective regions, rather than because of their outreach and place in the community.

Transition from UNIFEM to UN Women

The process of transition from UNIFEM to UN Women was, for practical purposes, still underway in Haiti at the time of the evaluation. A key priority was completing the relocation of management responsibility from the Barbados subregional office to the Panama regional office. During the early transition period, which coincided with the earthquake, there was some consistency as some former UNIFEM staff remained in the country office until 2012. This provided for important institutional memory and ensured continuity in partner relations during a time when most other United Nations entities and partners experienced high staff turnover. According to interviewees this was highly valuable for the work of the clusters. For example, UN Women advocated that tools on gender mainstreaming developed previously during the 2008 cyclone be reused during the earthquake, rather than starting again.

However, while existing staff provided continuity during the initial transition phase, UN Women did not have the capacity to increase the number of staff quickly during the humanitarian emergency and step up to its new mandate. Interviewees highlighted that UN Women initially had only one GenCap Adviser who took over the work on all the clusters, but this was clearly not enough. Hence during the transition period which coincided with a significant humanitarian emergency in Haiti, UN Women was significantly understaffed, affecting its ability to meet expectations reflected in the new mandate. In 2009, UN Women reportedly had six to seven people working on programmes, whereas after the earthquake there was only four to five staff members working in the country office. Interviewees highlighted that the lack of staffing and resources on the ground has been a persistent problem for UN Women and affects its ability to execute programmes.

Since 2012, however, representation at the country level was strengthened with the appointment of a new country representative and the recruitment of a new country team, including senior Haitian nationals, along with increased levels of funding.

UN Women funding was not flexible enough to adapt to the humanitarian response and the emergency needs arising from the earthquake. After the earthquake, UN Women came under increasing pressure from its existing partners in Haiti to seek emergency funding from other sources in order to help partner organizations re-establish themselves and assist their respective communities.

UN Women gradually expanded the reach of its programmes in Haiti and is now working with more partners in two departments across the north and the south east. New partnerships include community-based organizations (CBOs) with different geographical focus and stronger linkages with state structures, including for example the police and justice sectors in their respective regions. This was part of a deliberate strategy to increase the impact of work at the community level, and at the policy and institutional level.

At the policy level, UN Women also expanded its partnerships with state institutions to include other ministries, such as the Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation and the Ministry of Finance and of Human Rights, in order to ensure that gender mainstreaming at the national level was institutionalized across state structures, and included in national budgeting processes. There was a deliberate shift in focus at the strategic level towards supporting change and change actors at the institutional level. This was particularly accentuated in programmes related to SGBV, where there was increased attention on work among response partners such as the national police and the justice system on improving referral systems and the introduction of standard operating procedures to address and respond to VAW (see section on programmes below).

While at the strategic level there was an increased focus on institutional capacity-building and strengthening of institutional partnerships in order to consolidate policy changes at the national level, there was no major programmatic shift with the transition from former UNIFEM to UN Women in Haiti. Most existing partnerships with state entities and CSOs continued and were consolidated, while new partners were added.

With the transition to UN Women focus on ensuring consistency within programmes and harnessing potential synergies between programmes, both within UN Women and across the wider United Nations system, has increased. Evidence of this was found, for example, in attempts to rationalize resources or use already existing resources, and efforts to ensure partners continued to benefit from trainings under different UN Women programmes. Previously, under UNIFEM, an integrated strategy for gender mainstreaming in peace and security issues did not exist, in particular with regard to the reform of the security sector. A programme officer was then appointed internally as focal point for programmes engaging with peace and security work.

The transition to UN Women has also seen a concerted effort to focus more on consolidation of work with institutional partners, including work with more/new partners both at the community and at the state/institutional level. This included, for example, work with stakeholders other than the MCFDF, such as the police and the judicial sector. Equally, at the community level, new partners were chosen for their existing contacts and influence with state institutions in their respective regions, rather than simply because of their outreach and rootedness in the community.

All UN Women's partners seemed to be aware of the transition and most seemed positive about it, though there was still some way to go to clarify UN Women's mandate and strategic objectives in Haiti. Country Office staff noted that initially there were high expectations from partners with regards to UN Women's new role and mandate, in particular expectations that UN Women would now work on gender mainstreaming with all agencies and across programmes and clusters – an expectation still to be met due to staff and resource constraints. Several partner agencies also seemed to have misunderstood the nature of the new UN Women mandate, assuming that UN Women would take over certain operational areas of work from other agencies, rather than support ongoing activities through coordination, catalytic and technical support. Initial coordination and communication problems with regard to the new mandate were aggravated by the fact that, after the earthquake, many agencies

started to engage in GBV work in Haiti, and there was competition for funding and lack of coordination among United Nations entities and their partners. Overall, this study concludes that the transition from former UNIFEM to UN Women does not seem to have affected relations with partners.

Selection of programmes/activities

Within its peace and security activities UN Women, and UNIFEM before it, worked according to a two-fold strategy of intervening both at the community level and at the national/institutional level to achieve gender mainstreaming in peace and security issues. On peace and security and humanitarian response work, the evaluation team examined three programmes in some depth, one global programme and two country-specific programmes: From Communities to Global Security Institutions: Engaging Women in Building Peace and Security and Security and Empowerment for Women and Their Families' and 'Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. All three programmes were nearing completion at the time of the evaluation.

The global programme was a flagship programme of UN Women globally in the peace and security sector and Haiti was one of the pilot countries for community-level work. The programme started under former UNIFEM and continued under UN Women. It was ongoing during the earthquake and experienced serious setbacks during this time. Key partners included government ministries in the justice and security sector, the PNH and a number of women's organizations.

The two country programmes were selected on the basis that they comprised projects that were clearly related to the global and national strategic themes of peace and security and humanitarian response, and in particular the latter component. Both were ongoing during the earthquake, and both involved the collaboration of a range of actors, including government ministries, the PNH, CSOs, MINUSTAH and UNFPA.

From Communities to Global Security Institutions: Engaging Women in Building Peace and Security

UN Woman's global programme From Communities to Global Security Institutions: Engaging Women in Building Peace and Security (2010–2013) fell under UN Women's strategic area of peace and security. The programme was part of a global programme within which there were four pilot countries (Haiti, Liberia, Timor-Leste and Uganda). The purpose of the programme was to ensure women were able to contribute to and benefit from security measures, and peacebuilding and peacemaking processes at the community, national, regional and global levels. It targeted actions and results in three key areas: women's engagement in decision-making on peacebuilding; gender-responsive reform of the security sector; and accountability for Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820. It was funded globally by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).

In Haiti the programme focused on supporting the capacity of local women's organizations and strengthening the links between women's organizations and service providers (health system, judicial system, the Haitian National Police, the courts) to improve support for abused women. For example, local security committees were established in communities with the help of women's CBOs to improve links with the police and identify and speed up the referral of GBV cases. UN Women has also worked closely with state actors, such as the Ministry of Justice or the PNH, to institutionalize referral mechanisms and scale up initiatives to the national level, including through the design of standard operating procedures. Key partners include the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the MCFDF, the State Secretary

for Public Security and the PNH, as well as a number of women's organizations in the north and the south-east of the country.

Security and Empowerment for Women and their Families

The programme Security and Empowerment for Women and their Families: Ensuring a Gender-Responsive Humanitarian and early Recovery Response (2010–2012, extended until June 2013) sat under the UN Women Strategic Areas of Peace and Security and Violence Against Women. UN Women provided administrative support in the implementation of the programme and capacity-building for partners, including security-sector reform (SSR). The evaluation team looked at the START (START) programme which was in its the final phase.

START aimed to provide secure conditions for women and girls living in temporary shelters. Its objectives were to reduce the incidence of sexual violence against women and girls, enhance the referral and response chain to deal with cases of violence and strengthen links between actors involved in the security sector. START was established following a temporary pilot project in 2010 which, very soon after the earthquake, aimed to restore community-led referral systems related to GBV, strengthen the response capacity of the PNH and strengthen the capacity of the police and military of peacekeeping missions in order to better fulfil their mandate. The main beneficiaries were women living in Port-au-Prince and Leogane. The principal partners in the programme were the MCFDF, Kay Fanm, APROSIFA, MUDHA, the PNH, *Concertation Nationale* and the United Nations Police (UNPOL) (UN Women, 2012).

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

The programme Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (2008–2012) fell under the UN Women Strategic Area of Governance and End Violence Against Women (EVAW). Following the earthquake, components of the programme were adapted to incorporate a humanitarian response focus. UN Women's contribution to the programme was twofold: the provision of technical assistance in the areas of GBV and the political participation of women; and institutional capacity-building for state and CSO partners.

Principal national counterparts at the state level were the MCFDF, the Ministry of Justice, the PNH, the Ministry of Finance, the MPCE, the Ministry of Communication and the National Museum. Non-state counterparts included women's organizations and human rights actors. United Nations system counterparts included UNFPA, the Gender Unit of MINUSTAH and UNDP.

The programme had three main objectives:

- Promoting gender-responsive governance and providing institutional support for gender mainstreaming;

- Providing technical support to the United Nations Gender Theme Group including gender training for staff within the United Nations system; and

- Strengthening institutional, legal and policy mechanisms for promoting gender justice, peace and security, in particular through support to the implementation of the national action plan (NAP) on VAW.

Other programmes, such as the global 'Safe Cities' programme funded by AECID in Haiti as well as a number of smaller or joint programmes with other agencies also had important contributions to work under the peace and security cluster, but could not be examined in depth during the evaluation. However, where there were linkages to the programmes

evaluated these will be highlighted, as is the case, for example, in one of the programmes discussed for the humanitarian response.

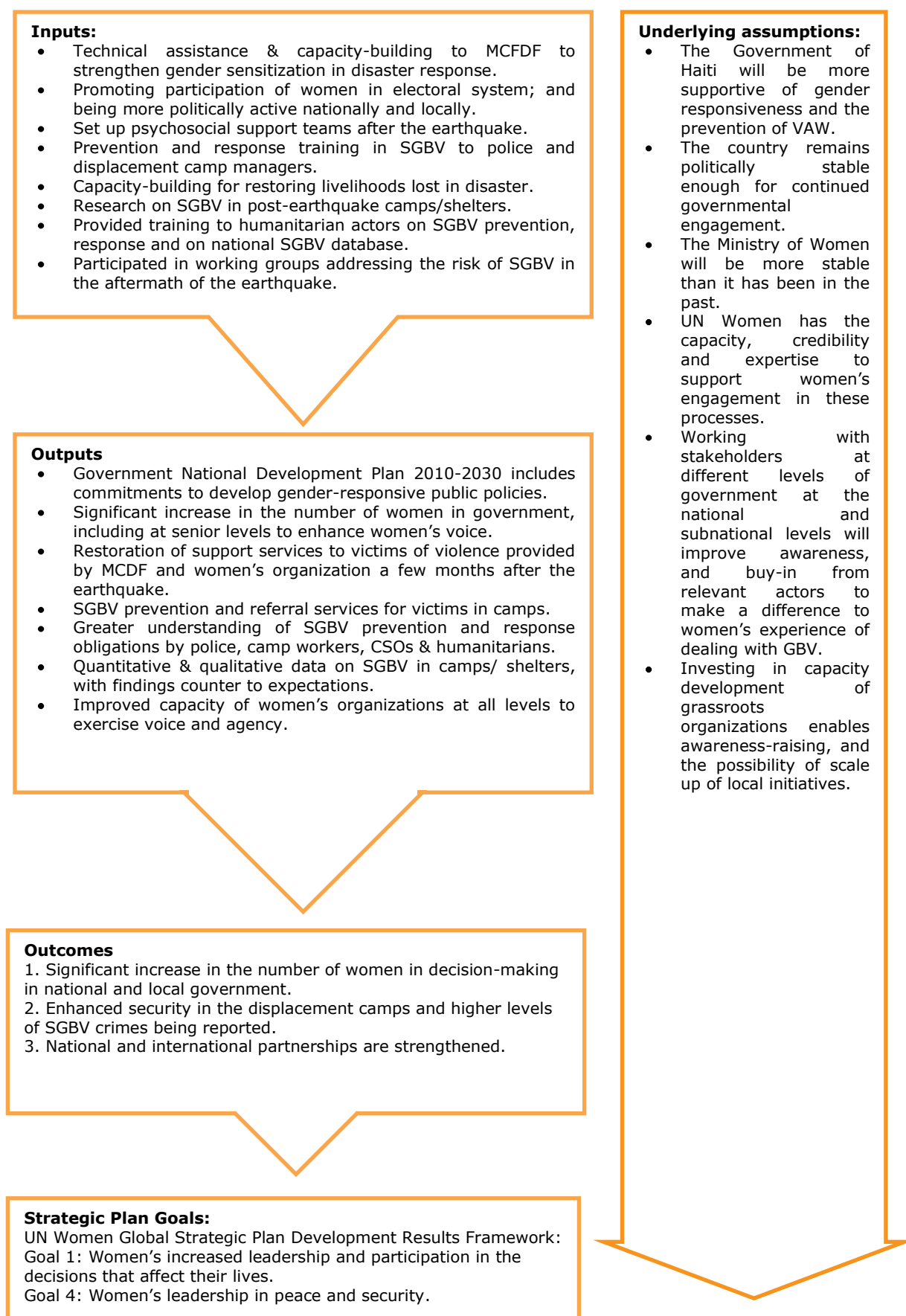# 5. Findings

Theory of change

Despite no explicit theory of change in the country offices policy and programmatic work, the country office strategy had a clear transformative agenda. With respect to peace and security and humanitarian response, this was evident through its efforts to make the government's response to humanitarian disasters more gender-sensitive (efforts which predated the earthquake). An objective of the evaluation was to elucidate the implicit theories of change underpinning UN Women's action and interventions, even where these were not evident from programming documents.

The country office played a significant role in increasing women's participation in national and local politics and the number of women appointed to senior government positions. While much of this work was undertaken under the 'Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment' project, which technically falls within the strategic area of governance and EVAW rather than peace and security, these activities played an important role in enhancing women's participation and leadership in peace and security and humanitarian response. However, given the importance of SGBV in the Haitian context the main focus of the work was gender justice and security.

While there was a limited explicit results chain to explain support to enhancing women's leadership and participation, the nature of UN Women's interventions demonstrated innovative modes of engagement which contributed to building enabling conditions for improved voice and agency, and to addressing specific objectives of the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda. These included, first, recognition of the need to work with a wider range of government and public-sector stakeholders at different national and subnational levels that the entity supports, both to enhance outreach and compensate for challenges of a changing political environment. Second, the role of building and brokering grassroots networks to connect the local with the national-level engagement was important for ensuring better outreach, and better scale up of local initiatives. Investing in research was effective. Third, UN Women contributed to a study which examined SGBV among displaced persons. Many actors (donors, UN Women headquarters and other United Nations entities and NGOs) assumed that this would be a widespread problem after the earthquake. However, the findings did not match these expectations. While rates of 'transactional' sex increased, there was no evidence of an increase in sexual violence as such. Country programme documents and progress reports reflected an increasing focus on institutional actors at the national level and the institutionalization of instruments for gender mainstreaming, in particular referral systems for SGBV. Interviews with country office staff similarly reflected an increase in concern over maximising gains from engagement at the institutional level, and refocusing efforts at engagement with civil society towards this wider goal.

Despite these more sound modes of engagement more can be done to ensure first, that sound practices are better reported, and second, that more strategic engagement to support women's leadership and participation is developed.

Figure 1: Theory of change underpinning UN Women programming

Inputs:
- Technical assistance & capacity-building to MCFDF to strengthen gender sensitization in disaster response.
- Promoting participation of women in electoral system; and being more politically active nationally and locally.
- Set up psychosocial support teams after the earthquake.
- Prevention and response training in SGBV to police and displacement camp managers.
- Capacity-building for restoring livelihoods lost in disaster.
- Research on SGBV in post-earthquake camps/shelters.
- Provided training to humanitarian actors on SGBV prevention, response and on national SGBV database.
- Participated in working groups addressing the risk of SGBV in the aftermath of the earthquake.

Outputs
- Government National Development Plan 2010-2030 includes commitments to develop gender-responsive public policies.
- Significant increase in the number of women in government, including at senior levels to enhance women's voice.
- Restoration of support services to victims of violence provided by MCDF and women's organization a few months after the earthquake.
- SGBV prevention and referral services for victims in camps.
- Greater understanding of SGBV prevention and response obligations by police, camp workers, CSOs & humanitarians.
- Quantitative & qualitative data on SGBV in camps/ shelters, with findings counter to expectations.
- Improved capacity of women's organizations at all levels to exercise voice and agency.

Outcomes
1. Significant increase in the number of women in decision-making in national and local government.
2. Enhanced security in the displacement camps and higher levels of SGBV crimes being reported.
3. National and international partnerships are strengthened.

Strategic Plan Goals:
UN Women Global Strategic Plan Development Results Framework:
Goal 1: Women's increased leadership and participation in the decisions that affect their lives.
Goal 4: Women's leadership in peace and security.

Underlying assumptions:
- The Government of Haiti will be more supportive of gender responsiveness and the prevention of VAW.
- The country remains politically stable enough for continued governmental engagement.
- The Ministry of Women will be more stable than it has been in the past.
- UN Women has the capacity, credibility and expertise to support women's engagement in these processes.
- Working with stakeholders at different levels of government at the national and subnational levels will improve awareness, and buy-in from relevant actors to make a difference to women's experience of dealing with GBV.
- Investing in capacity development of grassroots organizations enables awareness-raising, and the possibility of scale up of local initiatives.

Evaluation questions

In what ways did UN Women influence policies and practice (within the United Nations system and key external agencies) in relation to women's political participation and leadership in peace and security?

UN Women influenced several policy development processes at the national level. The MCFDF is working on draft legislation specifically prohibiting violence against women and girls, and UN Women has advised the Ministry in this work. UN Women's support to and advocacy with the MPCE resulted in the inclusion of commitments to develop and strengthen government policies with regards to women and gender issues in the National Development Plan 2010–2030. UN Women also provided input to the MCFDF's draft legislation on GBV. With respect to humanitarian response, the country office worked with the government in an attempt to improve gender sensitivity in its disaster preparedness and response policies. UN Women also provided capacity-building for MCFDF staff in terms of know-how (report-writing skills, preparation of laws) which facilitated the production of reports related to the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (the *Belem do Pará* Convention).

UN Women also increased the technical and coordination capacity within the MCFDF to support the draft gender equality policy, and worked with the MCFDF, the MPCE and the Ministry of Finance on gender-responsive budgeting. During the electoral period of 2009–2011, UN Women supported initiatives to enhance women's participation and leadership in politics, such as supporting women candidates in holding public debates and enhancing women's participation in public spaces. UN Women also advocated for the institutionalization of a 30 per cent quota for women representatives and supported women's organizations to put pressure on law-makers to implement this quota.

While many of these activities focused on building institutional capacity on gender mainstreaming and were undertaken through programmes officially within the strategic priorities of governance and EVAW, it was important to note the policy objective of enhancing women's participation in security and justice mechanisms at the national level through the development of relevant legislation on SGBV.

The country office also focused on gender justice and security, and ensuring adequate response mechanisms at the institutional level for women survivors of violence (including the police, health systems and the justice system). UN Women played an active role in discussions on security, including enhancing women's security in camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) after the earthquake. However, as noted, most interventions, especially at the policy level, were concerned more with response mechanisms and support to institutional actors to assist women who were victims of violence, rather than focusing on the women as agents of change.

Progress has been uneven, to a large extent as a result of political instability and high staff turnover in the MCFDF, which made it difficult to maintain momentum in the policy-making process. Partners acknowledged the significant impact the earthquake had on the capacity of the MCFDF and severely disrupted ongoing policy work. The Ministry lost key civil servants during the earthquake, including the Chef de Cabinet, and focused all efforts on addressing the humanitarian emergency. It took months for

the Ministry to reconstitute itself and re-engage with previous work on policy reform.

Delays in institutionalizing policy reform were exacerbated by the lack of priority afforded to these issues by senior government members.

In terms of enhancing women's leadership in peace and security, UN Women built strategic partnerships with a variety of local women's organizations at the national and subnational level. Much of UN Women's efforts focused on building the capacity of these organizations to influence policy and enhancing their linkages with key national and subnational state institutions. With the transition to UN Women, there was also a strategic shift in focus towards working more with institutional response actors and linking these to CSOs, rather than focusing solely on building the capacity of women's organizations.

How sustainable were the efforts and results of UN Women's policy influencing/engagement?

A key focus across all UN Women's programmes was building the capacity of its partners to effect and influence policy changes, and to take ownership of these processes. For example, in its work with the PNH there was sustained engagement to ensure police ownership of standard operating procedures and their integration into the police academy's training materials and curricula. As interviews and reports consulted by the evaluation team highlighted, this partnership with the police worked well and as a result a good, sustainable relationship was established not just with the gender unit but throughout the PNH, including the investigations unit, laying the foundations for future work. However, such processes often take a long time and are not always sustainable once funding priorities of donors change. For example, Spain, one of the donors to UN Women's Safe Cities programme, closed or scaled down many of its programmes in Haiti in the wake of its own economic crisis.

At the policy level, much focus was on sustaining cooperation with the MCFDF to the detriment of collaborations with other key ministries (although this changed more recently). Cooperation with the MCFDF suffered serious setbacks due to loss of key staff and many of its civil servants who died in the earthquake. Reform processes already underway, such as the gender equality policy and plan, were seriously derailed as ministries and their international partners were overwhelmed by the demands of the humanitarian response. Similarly, the existence of the MCFDF is challenged each time a new government comes into power and support to the Ministry from senior members of the administration is not consistent.

In response to these challenges, UN Women started to engage in broader partnerships at the policy level in a deliberate attempt to further institutionalize gender mainstreaming within other key ministries beyond the MCFDF. The country office has started to institutionalize its agreements and cooperation with a range of other ministries, so that institutional partnerships can more easily survive staff turnover. Such a strategy seems more likely to ensure the sustainability of UN Women's efforts at the policy level in the future.

With regards to the sustainability of the community-level partnerships, UN Women invested a great deal of in building the capacity of women's organizations. However, while partners acknowledged that capacity-building activities were beneficial and of high quality, follow-up was not been ensured. For example, one partner organization reported having never received the training material developed for awareness-raising

activities from UNIFEM, despite urgently needing the material for their own training activities. Although the organization in question acknowledged that this occurred soon after the earthquake, they lamented that there had not been adequate follow-up in terms of project inputs.

How effective was UN Women in its policy engagement at different levels, including global regional and national?

UN Women developed strategic and effective partnerships both at the community and public institutional level. While no actual institutional reforms and/or policies have been passed into law yet (mainly due to the huge disruption caused to these reform processes by the 2010 earthquake) there was continuous engagement with national counterparts to continue the reform process throughout and beyond the transition to UN Women (and beyond the earthquake).

Moreover, UN Women was acknowledged by partners to possess solid institutional contacts and good knowledge of the policy context in Haiti. This knowledge and continuous commitment to its institutional partners have been particularly beneficial in the context of the earthquake and the ensuing humanitarian emergency, where UN Women's institutional contacts and knowledge were recognized as an important asset in the protection cluster, with other agencies relying on UN Women as the entity with the strongest institutional memory and solid understanding of the context.

With the transition to UN Women, there was a consolidation of partnerships with Ministries other than the MCFDF, as noted above, in an attempt to ensure effective and broader engagement in gender mainstreaming at the policy level, including in national budgeting processes. The partnership with the PNH was noted as being particularly successful in project reports and during interviews conducted by the evaluation team. However, work with the judicial system remained underdeveloped.

Partners also credited UN Women's engagement with policymakers at the subnational level, which they said had been neglected by many other organizations. For example, UN Women attends meetings of the regional representation of the MCFDF, and engages with the police at the regional and local levels. It also engages with the local authorities, such as mayors and departments for urban planning (in the Safe Cities project) and encourages linkages and better networking between CBOs and local authorities. These regional partnerships helped strengthen capacity and build up institutional momentum to scale up activities. For instance, consistent engagement between women's organizations, communities and the police at the local level resulted in the formation of local security committees – which the DFID Annual Review (2012) of the global project acknowledged as a major achievement of Phase I. The work on localised referral and response systems involving the local security committees then served as the basis for an agreement with the PNH to scale up these efforts at the national level.

In terms of partnerships at the community level, UN Women and UNIFEM were acknowledged to have established strong partnerships with solid organizations from different backgrounds and across a wide range of geographic constituencies. CBOs are rooted in communities and have strong local ownership, which proved effective for outreach, awareness-raising and sustainability. Many of these CBOs are also well connected locally, with good links to Ministries and the police, which proved important in the scale up and institutionalization of local initiatives. Partners interviewed valued UN Women's support to CBOs from a wide geographical spread

across the north and the south-east of the country and acknowledged that both UNIFEM and subsequently UN Women had generally identified the right organizations to support. Project reports highlighted that while capacity-building of women's organizations was important, there needed to be more emphasis on building the capacities of institutions to respond effectively to incidents of SGBV and ensure appropriate follow-up.

Partnerships at the inter-agency level were less consistent and coordination with other United Nations entities could be improved. UNIFEM collaborated with UNFPA on a number of projects, notably on the development of standard operating procedures (together with women CBOs and the *Concertation Nationale*) and on SGBV in camps for IDPs in the aftermath of the earthquake. However, project reports (for both the START project and the DFID-funded global programme) highlighted that inter-agency coordination between those supporting the PNH, or working on issues related to GBV more generally, could be improved to create better synergies. Interviewees highlighted that after the earthquake in particular, many agencies tried to intervene in the area of GBV and there was a persistent lack of coordination of their efforts.

UN Women also developed a strong relationship with the Gender Unit at MINUSTAH and provided training for military officers on GBV. However, some local partners expressed concerns over UN Women's this partnership, as MINUSTAH soldiers are allegedly involved in sexual abuse of women in Haiti, and even cases of rape. As a result several key women's organizations reportedly refused to attend meetings convened by MINUSTAH.

With the transition, UN Women has focused more on creating synergies and consistency among its various programmes, in particular those concerning peace and security. A programme officer was appointed internally as focal point for programmes falling under the peace and security themes and was tasked to ensure that resources, such as training materials, were rationalised and consistently used across programmes. The programme officer was also supposed to ensure consistency among partners benefitting from various trainings and make sure that trainings did not overlap.

> To what extent did the current policy/strategic direction reflect the lessons learned from policy engagement on peace and security and humanitarian response since 2008, and how fit for purpose was it for the new UN Women mandate?

It was evident from this review that policy-related work in UN Women's programmes was grounded in experience and lessons learned from policy engagement in peace and security and humanitarian response work since 2008.

One of the major challenges identified by interviewees for the pre-2010 period was the lack of an integrated strategy for gender mainstreaming in peace and security issues, in particular concerning the reform of PNH. The 2010 baseline for the 'From Communities to Global Security Institutions' programme, for example, highlighted the absence of an overall framework for SSR in Haiti, which resulted in fragmentation among national and international actors. While there have been increased efforts by UN Women and MINUSTAH to train the police on issues relating to violence against women, the baseline noted that there was no official gender policy or training curriculum, nor a specific strategy to recruit women. As much of the focus of the programme was on community-led initiatives and the processes of establishing partnerships, the DFID Annual Review recommended 'greater attention should be given to the policy level to ensure national reforms are responding to women's

security needs' (DFID, 2012).

Interviewees also highlighted the absence of coordination among different actors supporting the police, not only among national actors and CSOs, but also the different agencies within the United Nations system. UNIFEM operated on a project-based approach, rather than an integrated strategy building on synergies and collaboration between its different projects and programmes at the country level.

With the transition to UN Women, the country office made a deliberate effort to engage more strategically with institutional stakeholders, such as the police and the justice system, and work on standardising and scaling up community-level achievements to effect policy changes at the national level. For example, in its work with the PNH, UN Women focused increasingly on designing standard operating procedures that would be used nationally to assist women who had experienced violence. There were also more attempts to include institutional actors, such as the police, in referral systems and networks that were successfully operating at the community level, and to scale up these initiatives to be operational and institutionalised at the national level. While previously there was greater focus on supporting the work of women's organizations in terms of sensitisation and capacity-building, focus has now shifted to supporting women's organizations to engage better with response actors and building linkages between CBOs and the institutional level.

Similarly in its partnerships with CBOs, UN Women increasingly focused on more strategic partnerships with organizations that already have good linkages with institutional actors at the subnational level, in order to maximise impact at the institutional level from ongoing community-based work.

As noted above, there had been attempts within UN Women to increase consistency across programmes, in particular those started before the earthquake and since the transition to UN Women. Emphasis has been on ensuring consistency among different initiatives of the country office, for instance by ensuring the same types of training materials were used across programmes, ensuring more strategic selection of partners' geographic and thematic distribution, as well as strengthening networks and linkages between partners.

The country office planned to develop a new national strategy document for 2013–2017 (its release was expected in late 2013 or early 2014). Given that the country office was preoccupied with completing ongoing programmes and delivering overdue reports, planning and developing a national strategy had been a challenge. The country office envisaged that the programmes and policies in the strategy will be a continuation of the current approach, rather than marking a radical new departure.

Dimension 2: UN Women's policies, programming and operations

To what extent did UN Women's programmes achieve the expected results? What explained variations?

As noted, the evaluation team examined two UN Women country-specific programmes and one global programme, the main achievements of which are highlighted below.

From Communities to Global Security:

a) Partner CSOs set up local security committees bringing together state

representatives (e.g. the police), representatives of ministries at the subnational level (e.g. the Ministry of Health) and civil society actors involved in supporting victims of violence. The committees developed prevention strategies and handled cases of violence, including accompanying victims to the hospitals and courts. The creation of the Security Committee is highlighted as one of the major successes of Phase I in the DFID Annual Review (2012).

b) Fora were active at the local level in ten communities in Haiti. Exact figures on the percentage of women participating are not available, but across different pilot countries women represent 30 per cent to 70 per cent of participants. The DFID Annual Review 2012, however, suggested that very limited information was provided by country offices regarding the precise number of GBV cases they had managed.

c) In total, eight community-led interventions began in 2011 to address SGBV in target communities in Haiti, through which a total of 100 survivors received direct services with many more benefiting from information, awareness-raising and community reconciliation in these communities.

d) UN Women's implementing partners were aware of available referral services in all ten of the community-based forum locations.

Overall, the programme in Haiti was more or less on track (DFID, 2012). According to interviewees, there have been good results particularly by organizations which had used the project to extend their activities into different communities and enhanced their leadership capacities. This was particularly the case in Borgne and Limbe in the north, as well as in Jacmel. It was, however, suggested that capacity-building measures could be improved, as could the synergy among all the institutions involved in the project.

Through its capacity-building measures for women's organizations, the programme contributed to the increased ability of women to participate in addressing peace and security issues that concern them. However, as the project report noted, the next phase needs to place more emphasis on working with national and subnational institutional actors and strengthening national ownership of these issues.

START's project objectives were to reduce the incidence of violence against women and girls, enhance the referral and response chain to deal with cases of violence and strengthen links between actors involved in the security sector. The main results of the project included:

- MCFDF and women's organizations restored support services to victims of sexual violence within a few months of the earthquake;

- Over a six-week period UN Women distributed food supplies to about 400 people living in 50 temporary shelters run by women;

- Information updates on service availability were disseminated in the shelters and in communities more broadly;

- Psychosocial support teams were established immediately after the earthquake. The programme also provided referral services to victims of sexual violence through centres and organizations

assisting abused women;

- Approximately 95 university students were trained to act as first-line responders for the prevention of GBV in the camps;

- Across approximately 100 locations, mobile psychosocial teams deployed by the MCFDF and women's organizations assisted some 144,000 people. Psychosocial support continues to be offered in Port-au-Prince and Leogane;

- Since the earthquake, UN Women and its local partners have provided technical assistance and support to over 1,900 cases of GBV, including support in prosecuting perpetrators. The majority of cases related to domestic violence;

- Support was provided to programmes seeking to improve women's socioeconomic status, including financial help and coaching. Preliminary findings indicate the programme helped 85 women start their own micro-enterprises;

- A study in temporary shelters to provide quantitative and qualitative data on GBV was undertaken;

- Efforts were undertaken to improve understanding of gender equality and women's safety within the PNH; and

- The programme strengthened the prevention and response to GBV capacity of the PNH through training sessions for police officers deployed near the camps.

According to interviewees, and the final START project report provided by the country office, the key achievement of the START programme was the institutionalization of collaboration with the PNH at multiple levels. This was particularly relevant as 45 per cent of the 76.8 per cent of women living in the camps and feeling insecure reported they would go to the police in a first instance to report cases of violence or aggression (START Final report). Training the police in appropriate response mechanisms was therefore a key achievement. The report highlighted that, overall, the police had become much more aware of the importance of according particular attention to the different ways in which security problems affect women and men. The final project report also noted that the strategic choice of partner institutions at the community level enabled the programme to achieve its results in the areas of intervention, as these organizations were often well connected and grounded in local communities and hence could best support victims when they sought support.

Key weaknesses of the project included a lack of attention to and engagement with the judicial system, and failure to collect data on SGBV in the camps.

The overall theory of change for the project contributed to strengthening security and peace in Haiti by enhancing the capacity of key response actors (police) to assist victims of violence. It also helped re-establish the support structure for women and girl victims of violence. Prevention strategies were put in place by the local population and committees in some of the areas of intervention. However, much of the focus was on responding to, rather than pre-empting, violence.

The Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment programme was adapted

significantly in response to the earthquake, which occurred midway through the programme. Key results in terms of humanitarian response included:

- An increased visibility of the gender dimensions of the humanitarian crisis through participation in the clusters, including the Protection Cluster SGBV subgroup, and the provision of training to actors involved in this area of work.

- Training camp managers on SGBV response, UNPOL and MINUSTAH military on SGBV, and responding to cases among IDPs in camps and spontaneous settlements in Port-au-Prince.

- Training given to new humanitarian actors on the use of national data on SGBV, in order to improve the evidence base of its incidence.

- Increased national leadership and ownership of the SGBV sub-cluster.

- Participation in working groups to address SGBV in the aftermath of the earthquake.

UN Women also played an active role in discussions on women's security in displacement in Port-au-Prince, and initiated discussions with the PNH to develop a module on SGBV to be included in its national training curriculum.

The final report for the project had not been completed at the time of the evaluation. However, based on a summary of the findings and discussions with UN Women, the programme seemed to have broadly achieved its objectives as outlined in the proposal. One significant departure from the proposal was the adaptation of numerous facets of the planned programme in response to the earthquake, but this took place at the behest of the government of Haiti and donors, and was clearly appropriate.

Overall, the country office made good use of its network of partners at the community level to strengthen capacity, and promote initiative and innovation, using local knowledge and other resources and fostering sustainability. Evaluation of this work would be valuable in informing future strategies and partnership choices. CSOs interviewed by the evaluation team demonstrated high levels of knowledge and commitment, and were appreciative of the country office's support. There is the potential for a greater humanitarian response focus in these activities in the future.

A key challenge lies in enhancing gender sensitivity within government discourse, programming, legislation and policies. Addressing this requires a multi-actor approach, including donors and United Nations entities, which has ramifications for stability and security in the wake of a humanitarian crisis. In the long-term, greater effort should go into disaster preparedness.

The effectiveness of UN Women and UNIFEM's engagement closely related to their modes of engagement, including strategic capacity to adapt to fluid and volatile conditions, to build and broker national and subnational relations and networks with relevant stakeholders, and to harness existing structures, programmes and local institutions to achieve results.

The question of UN Women's experience in the area of humanitarian response was especially noteworthy, especially since this was an area in which the country office had limited capacity. There was much discussion among partners about whether UN

Women should or could work as a humanitarian agency given that it is essentially concerned with development. However, UNIFEM was engaged in humanitarian response during the cyclone of 2008, despite not having an explicit mandate for this at the time.

Most interviewees argued that UN Women has a role to play in humanitarian response – not as a first responder in the emergency but as an advocate and provider of support to other organizations to ensure that women's concerns are mainstreamed across their humanitarian programmes. UN Women's engagement in the cluster was deemed positive by partners, in particular because UN Women provided much-needed analysis, context knowledge and support through its existing partnerships. UN Women also ensured that tools and guidelines for gender mainstreaming developed in response to the 2008 cyclone were used in the humanitarian response. Country office staff interviewed highlighted, however, that UN Women at the time lacked sufficient resources to engage effectively. Lack of funding limited the kind of engagement and the role UN Women could play, as partners demanded to see ideas backed up by funds. Furthermore, UN Women did not have any capacity to quickly increase staff levels to respond to the humanitarian emergency. Instead, for a long time UN Women only had one GenCap adviser who coordinated the work across all clusters.

In terms of programmes and the kinds of engagement in humanitarian response which UN Women could replicate elsewhere, there were some interesting lessons learned from Haiti. Through a food distribution programme, UN Women supported local CSOs reorganize the way food was distributed as initial assessments showed that women were being assaulted after receiving food. UN Women then supported street vendors supply food to a certain number of vulnerable families within the community, hence ensuring regeneration of women's livelihoods opportunities whilst addressing the basic needs of the most vulnerable and ensuring protection against violence as a result of large-scale food distributions. Country office staff characterised these efforts as a more sustainable and efficient way to support livelihoods while at the same time helping to rebuild community dynamics. CSO partners acknowledged the innovative approach of this project which worked well in the local context and could provide future direction for UN Women's engagement in humanitarian response.

Another project piloted in Haiti with regards to humanitarian response, which presented an innovative approach to creating synergies between ongoing projects and adapting them to the local context, was a project aimed at making IDP sites in Port-au-Prince safer using the principles used in the 'Safe Cities' programme. UN Women engaged with international and national partners managing the IDP camps to ensure basic principles regarding the safety of public spaces from women's perspectives were adhered to (e.g. women's toilets were not too remote and sufficient lighting was provided). The results were mixed. Country office staff interviewed said that, while there was considerable positive feedback and interest at the point of discussion, when it came to implementation camp managers did not apply the agreed principles. Although the Safe Cities principles were relevant, the process was too time-consuming, in particular because of the participatory planning exercise envisaged for identifying the location of IDP sites and services. One lesson from this project highlighted by staff was that it would be much easier to lobby other organizations to integrate these principles before a humanitarian crisis rather than during or after. One potential avenue to explore, therefore, would be increased engagement in early-warning and preparedness, as well as working with entities before the onset of

humanitarian crises.

While not equipped to respond to humanitarian crises as such, UN Women can have important inputs in terms of coordination and advocacy for the inclusion of women's issues and protection in other entities humanitarian response programmes.

To what extent was UN Women able to translate global policy/strategies in programmatic work?

With regard to the implementation of global policies at the national level, interviewees commented that, within the Peace and Security Cluster, work on increased awareness of Security Council resolutions was not easily adapted to the Haitian context. The resolutions were viewed as being tailored for a post-conflict context, and in interviews some national partners did not think they really applied to the Haitian context. However, as part of its mandate, UN Women has pursued innovative approaches to making Security Council resolutions more applicable to the local context by, for example, adapting language to reflect context-specific conditions of fragility. Similarly, in the context of the global programme 'From Communities to Global Security Institutions', it was not evident that global policies could always be adapted to the local context. For instance, while the global programme emphasises women's participation in peace and security processes, Haitian women's organizations viewed their programme as being about handling cases of violence.

To what extent were UN Women's programmes tailored to the specific socio-political and cultural and economic context in which they operate? How was this translated into programme design and planning?

The country office programmes looked at in this evaluation were sensitive to the high level of violence (including GBV) in Haiti, as well as women's economic and political marginalisation (partly expressed in the lack of appropriate responses to gender-specific needs) and cultural taboos about discussing rape, sexual abuse and domestic violence. Programmes sought to strengthen weak national and local institutions in the government and security sector, and to enhance gender sensitivity in government programmes and legislation. Programmes were tailored to specific, widely identified needs, such as training people to provide psychosocial support to residents of displacement camps and collecting up-to-date information about GBV in temporary housing shelters and camps. UN Women demonstrated some openness to changes and adaptation to the local context during the execution of projects. For example, a local partner organization commented that UN Women showed flexibility by including the acquisition of land in one of its projects (to establish a school farm during a project working on the links between health, poverty and violence) even though this was not part of the official UN Women policy.

Furthermore, some of UN Women's programmes were adapted to humanitarian response midway through implementation, as discussed above, although this was at times more due to donor pressure and change of priorities rather than the initiative of the country office in response to local demands.

Most interviewees argued that UN Women has a role to play in humanitarian response, although not as an emergency first responder, but as an advocate and provider of support to other organizations to ensure women's concerns are mainstreamed across their humanitarian programmes. As noted above, UN Women

was seen to have the necessary skills and ability to base decisions – including for rapid response and for humanitarian response purposes – on a deep understanding of context.

How effective was UN Women at identifying *and* using key opportunities and partnerships at country level?

As noted, UN Women worked with numerous partners in Haiti. The ability to identify strategic partners, and adapt to changing conditions, was especially commendable. Most respondents from CSOs said they enjoyed good relations with UN Women and felt that they were treated as equal partners, though most of the effort that went into maintaining these partnerships seemed to come from the CSOs rather than from UN Women. That said, the country office is becoming more proactive in this area.

While most partnerships remained consistent throughout the transition of the country office, the discontinuation of programmes due to changes in strategy or lack of funding has often been poorly communicated to partners. Some partner CBOs reported not understanding why their projects had been discontinued and why funding that had been promised for additional project phases had not been forthcoming. Others mentioned that geographic re-orientation of projects was not well communicated in advance leaving the CBO to deal with the fall-out from the cancellation of the project, in particular managing the disappointment of the local authorities initially involved.

UNFPA and UN Women closely cooperated in their work with CSOs at the local level, including work with the same partners but on different aspects. While UNFPA generally works more at the operational level, for example by providing rape kits, UN Women engages more in capacity-building of these organizations and establishing linkages and networks between CBOs and institutional actors at the policy level.

Following the earthquake, coordination became more challenging as number of agencies started intervening in SGBV work and there was overlap in programmes. There were high expectations among other United Nations entities that UN Women would provide support and intervene in programmes across all clusters. However, this was challenging for the country office as it did not coordinate a particular cluster, nor did it have the human resources or the capacity to intervene across all of them.

Interviewees mentioned being initially confused with regards to UN Women's new mandate and the lack of clarity concerning the division of labour among United Nations entities. Even partner agencies such as UNFPA exhibited a fundamental lack of understanding as to what the new UN Women mandate meant in terms of agency cooperation. Although UN Women was not meant to replace other the programmes of other entities, interviewees acknowledged that there was much competition among entities for influence and funding, especially for work relating to SGBV. Local partner organizations reported finding themselves 'stuck in the middle' between UNFPA and UN Women, who were both funding their programmes but were not coordinating effectively.

After the earthquake, much coordination with partners took place at the cluster level. As previously mentioned, after initially participating them all UN Women eventually focused on the protection cluster, and in particular on the SGBV sub-cluster. UN Women positioned itself well, providing advice and leadership to others given its rich institutional and context knowledge. Given the high turnover of agency staff at the cluster level, interviewees noted that UN Women became the cluster's 'institutional

memory'. For example, UN Women advocated for tools for gender mainstreaming which had already been developed during the 2008 cyclone to be used during the humanitarian emergency, rather than starting from scratch.

How effective were UN Women's programmes at fostering/strengthening national ownership through country engagement of intended outcomes regarding improved leadership and participation of women in relevant peace and security and humanitarian response intervention/process?

The country office placed a great deal of emphasis on outreach, capacity-building, awareness-raising and technical support at national and subnational levels with state and non-state actors. It also supported actors in the security sector by providing training for the PNH. Given that all of these programmes involve the participation of national partners, there appeared to be a clear policy within the entity to foster and strengthen national capacity and ownership. While some training of trainers was being conducted, it could be expanded. CSOs and government representatives felt they had benefited from UN Women's capacity-building activities. In relation to peace and security and humanitarian response, capacity was enhanced in terms of the provision of psychosocial support, for example.

In what ways did the new mandate/reorganization provide opportunities to improve programme effectiveness and coherence between UN Women policies and operational engagement?

UN Women is likely to get more core funding and more resources with the adoption of the new mandate, enabling the country office to be less donor-dependent, and develop longer-term strategic plans and priorities that are backed up by funds. Currently, strategic priorities are a compromise between UN Women's global strategy and donors' priorities for in-country support and funding. Interviewees noted that some donors could be very rigid in their prioritization and did not necessarily base their programme design on evidence. With more consistent core funding and less donor dependency there could be a more consistent and strategic application of UN Women's policies at the operational level.

Similarly, in terms of its new mandate for humanitarian response, it is expected that UN Women will increase both its human and financial response capacities to engage in this area of work, which would in turn increase consistency of application of UN Women's global policies. After the earthquake, UN Women came under increasing pressure from local partners to support their re-establishment but UN Women's funding at the time was not sufficiently flexible and the country office had to look for additional donor funding.

How innovative was UN Women in its programmatic approaches and what lessons were learned that can be replicated in different contexts?

UN Women and many of its partners stated that programming innovations often came from partners and not the country office. NGOs and one ministry reported that collaboration was a consequence of an initiative they, and not the country office, had led. This is not necessarily a negative verdict on UN Women: innovation can lie precisely in supporting local initiatives rather than imposing an external agenda. Partners were generally positive about their working relationship with the country

office, finding it supportive and transparent. However, in some areas such as humanitarian response and adapting global projects to the local context (e.g. the Safe Cities programme), UN Women demonstrated a considerably innovative approach.

Other local partners suggested that UN Women was innovative in its approach to working with subnational government actors, rather than just working at the national level. In particular, engaging with and advocating for subnational and local authorities, such as mayors and urban planners, to take up more responsibility regarding GBV and the creation of safer public spaces for women, was seen as innovative by local partners interviewed.

Dimension 3: UN Women's organizational capacities, resources and structures

How adequate were UN Women's human and financial resources to effectively engage in conflict-affected countries?

Challenges remain for the country office to complete programmes in a timely fashion, partly due to a lack of human and financial resources and reportedly slow disbursement rates as a result of limited capacity among the community-level partners. Country office staff highlighted that in Haiti even strong partners with solid accounting and finance systems were finding it difficult to comply with disbursement schedules. As a result, programme completion was often delayed. The decentralization process currently underway in the country office has also lead to delays.

The country office struggled to cope with its workload due to insufficient human resources, and some relevant skills remain weak. For example, the country office would benefit from greater capacity in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of capacity and disaster response, and partner organizations noted that the country offices capacity for M&E and follow-up of programmes was weak. One CSO described having prepared everything for a visit from UN Women, but the person supposed to monitor the programme could not travel due to lack of resources. Similarly, an evaluation could not be conducted due to UN Women's limited capacity. It was noted, however, that between 2011-2012 the country office had recruited more senior national staff, which was having a positive effect.

The country office's local staff capacity (security and car drivers) was adequate to meet the security and logistical needs of Port-au-Prince.

How fit for purpose was UN Women in terms of the technical skills of its staff and its broader capacity to fulfil its mandate?

Country office personnel were highly educated and skilled. They were committed, gender-sensitive and had a good knowledge of issues of concern to the office. Many staff contracts were linked to the duration of programmes or projects as such, apart from the Representative, there were no 'permanent' staff which is source of some instability, and staff members do not plan to make a career with the United Nations. Recruitment announcements to the country office are made on the United Nations websites and through local advertising.

A brief look at the educational and professional profile of some officers demonstrates a high level of formal education. One staff member had a doctorate in gender sociology, and three had masters degrees in social sciences. Other staff members had taken or were following courses in gender studies, and one was a former university

academic. As they were locally recruited, staff have valuable knowledge and experience of the Haitian context. Skills were generally in the area of GBV, violence prevention, community work, broader gender issues (such as gender sensitisation and mainstreaming) and advocacy, rather than specifically related to working in peace and security and humanitarian response.

How effective was UN Women at coordinating gender-related work across United Nations entities and other key partners?

UN Women in Haiti started to coordinate gender-related work across United Nations entities in collaboration with its partners, in accordance with its new mandate and the global strategic objectives of the organization. However, a number of challenges remain. In the aftermath of the earthquake, UN Women participated in the Protection Cluster and the SGBV sub-cluster country office-coordinated by UNFPA and the MCFDF, despite not being a formal member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. As such, its role was effectively limited, while demands from actors across the spectrum increased and expectations were high. As noted, UN Women only had one GenCap adviser at the time, who initially attended to all the clusters but eventually focused more on the protection sub-cluster on SGBV. While UN Women's exact role in humanitarian response is yet to be defined, there may be a more active role for UN Women in the cluster system in the future. Apart from humanitarian response, the country office played a key role in discussions and initiating the coordination of activities on improved response to GBV (in particular with the police, judiciary and health service providers). It also played an active role in initiating gender training for staff within the United Nations system by, for example, conducting training in GBV prevention and response with UNPOL and the military component of MINUSTAH.

How effectively did UN Women manage risks in its operations? What strategies worked best?

The extent to which programmes considered risk in the planning, inception, implementation and reporting phases varied. Where programme reports were available, risk tended not to have been assessed and documented. At least one proposal (funded by DFID) identified three risks, namely: lack of stability in beneficiary communities; lack of continuity within the state apparatus to ensure that reforms would be institutionalised; and lack of continuity in security-sector personnel (police and justice officials) at the community level (UNIFEM, 2010). There was, however, no analysis of how these risks might be managed. While country office staff were aware of 'do no harm' principles, these did not seem to have been incorporated into programme planning.

How fit for purpose were UN Women's M&E and reporting systems? Did they adequately capture lessons learnt on results and impact?

The limited number of reports to which the evaluation team had access showed a lack of quantitative and qualitative indicators by which to assess the impact and effectiveness of projects. Differences between objectives and outcomes were not assessed, or if they were, were not publicly documented. Key stakeholders complained of delays in the submission of reports.

It was important to recognise that, in the emergency phase of the earthquake response,

it would have been very challenging for the country office to conduct M&E assessments, and UN Women was not alone in having weak M&E systems in the midst of an emergency response. UN Women was hoping to increase the resources it devotes to M&E in the future.

Overall analysis and implications for policy, programming and practice

Policy work

UN Women is the lead agency on gender issues in Haiti, and has been involved in elaborating key elements of the United Nations' strategy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. The country office also works with United Nations leadership in Haiti in developing a rights-based and gender-sensitive integrated strategic framework . It is also the key international partner of the Ministry of Gender and Women Affairs and has prioritized strengthening the capacity of the Ministry to engage with local municipal authorities on gender mainstreaming at the local level. It also supports the Ministry develop policies, provides inputs into draft legislation and works to strengthen gender sensitivity in programmatic work. It has also worked with the Ministry in developing legislation to protect women and girls against violence and sexual exploitation. These efforts have been hampered by changes in personnel at the Ministry, and by the Ministry's lack of influence within the government. The country office played a key role in supporting women's leadership and political participation during the electoral period from April 2009 to April 2011.

There was limited success achieved in the area of women's leadership in peace and security and humanitarian response. Within humanitarian response, gender issues were overlooked in the rush to provide assistance. UN Women's policy work was inevitably curtailed following the earthquake, and it was some time before government ministries became functional again. Once they were, they understandably focused on the emergency response.

The country office evidently needs support to develop its next five-year national strategic plan which is overdue, and as ongoing programmes come to an end the country office will be left with a limited portfolio.

Programmatic work

UN Women's programme work in humanitarian response largely centred on providing training and capacity-building to partners at national and community levels by reorienting its ongoing programmes to address humanitarian needs in the wake of the earthquake. The focus of its work has subsequently been around its core areas of expertise, largely in accordance with UN Women's mandate and the global strategy. These activities have mainly been concerned with GBV awareness-raising, violence prevention, data collection about women and violence and supporting the provision of assistance to victims of violence (psychosocial counselling and legal advice). The country office demonstrated flexibility and adaptability in its programmatic approach to humanitarian response.

Operational capacity

UN Women is clearly still in a process of transition. It has grown in terms of human resources and has ambitions to expand further. The country office struggled to complete several projects and deadlines have been missed. Nonetheless, there was a sense of commitment and reinvigoration following recent staff changes, although more assistance and support from headquarters (and from the Panama regional office once the relocation of management authority is complete) would certainly help to address concerns about staff turnover and instability within the country office. The country office did not have sufficient

technical capacity or human resources to complete its work in a timely manner, or to produce reports to the standards required.

UN Women is becoming more collaborative and more certain of its mandate and of the value of its work in Haiti. The country office had made greater efforts to increase transparency and share experiences with other interested actors, and there was greater willingness to engage with other United Nations entities, such as UNFPA. In general, UN Women (and UNIFEM before it) tended to be reactive rather than proactive, although this more passive stance may have helped to foster local initiatives and innovation. There was a greater level of delegation and sharing of responsibility within the country office than in the past which should be commended and encouraged. It is likely that the country office will need greater financial and technical support if these positive developments are to continue. Improved management, greater delegation of responsibility and enhanced job stability would all serve to address the problem of high staff turnover.

6.   Recommendations

Dimension 1: UN Women's policy and strategic direction

UN Women should be more strategic in the way it develops partnerships, in particular at the institutional level. Female decision-makers in Haiti are not necessarily gender-sensitive.

UN Women struggles to influence national government policy due to political instability and high staff turnover in the wake of the earthquake, which also affected its key partner, the Ministry of Gender and Women's Affairs. With the collaboration of strategic partners UN Women should seek ways to encourage the government to strengthen the ministry.

Policy and programmatic engagement with other parts of the United Nations system in Haiti should be expanded. While UN Women has often participated in programmes alongside other United Nations entities, constructive collaboration has been less common.

More strategic planning by UN Women, with support from headquarters (or the regional office) and extensive consultations with in-country partners, would go a long way towards mitigating inter-agency competition for funding and duplication of effort.

Dimension 2: UN Women's policies, programming and operations

The ongoing transition from UNIFEM to UN Women does not appear to have raised significant concerns, though UN Women's mandate and strategic objectives, and how they relate to the specific context in Haiti still need to be clarified. Given the limited funding available, it is crucial that UN Women highlights its specific mandate among United Nations entities working in Haiti.

Generating an accurate analysis of the ways in which violence affects communities, households and individuals is critical for effective policy-making and programming. There are little reliable data on SGBV in Haiti (especially in the post-earthquake IDP camps) and under-reporting is widespread given the cultural taboos regarding sexual violence. UN Women has successfully collaborated in this type of research, and the findings were contrary to the expectations of many actors involved in this area. UN Women could make an important contribution to further research and data-gathering. Several staff members have strong academic backgrounds and a good understanding of research methods.

UN Women should consider ways to link its programmatic and policy work more closely to the specific areas of democratic participation and violence-reduction. The country office could do more in terms of pre-disaster preparedness, and should enhance its capacity in

relation to humanitarian response. Again, this will require collaborative work with partners (in-country and externally), and the development of new partnerships with actors more closely associated with humanitarian relief.

There is a widespread perception in the country office and among partners that the contribution of the UN Women office in humanitarian response should be in sharing its technical expertise, capacity-building and training. This could usefully be extended to training of trainers to enhance local capacity in the long-term. In this way, UN Women could build upon its particular areas of specialisation and expertise to support the humanitarian response activities of partners, both nationally and in communities across the country. The country office has good partnerships with CSOs, and these should be exploited to facilitate these types of activities.

Dimension 3: UN Women's organizational capacities, resources and structures

UN Women could play a more prominent role in voicing concerns about women's issues in Haiti and externally. Country office personnel have extensive knowledge of the issues and experience in addressing them which will help UN Women in its policy and programmatic work, as well as augmenting resources and attracting more talent to the team.

The country office could be usefully supported and advised in developing a medium-term strategy and strengthening programme proposals. In particular, it should be assisted in developing and implementing risk assessments and M&E indicators, and applying 'do no harm' principles in programme/project proposals and reports.

Given that several reports have missed their deadlines in recent years, it would be helpful if the country office examined more thoroughly how this came about and what needs to be done to avoid this in the future. A more efficient approach to report-writing would enhance UN Women's credibility in the eyes of donors.

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Interviews

Organization	Function/ Title
UN Women	National Representative
UN Women	Programme Specialist
UN Women	Four Programme Officers
UN Women	Project Officer
UNFPA	SGBV Coordinator
UNFPA	Programme Officer
UNOPS	M&E Officer
UNOPS	Project Development Officer
MINUSTAH	Advisor, Gender Unit
UNPOL	Team Leader, SGBV Team, Development and Capacity Building
MINUSTAH	Human Right Officer, Protection Unit
IOM	Programme Manager, Disaster Risk Reduction
Embassy of Canada	
Spanish Development Agency (*Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional)* (AECID)	Head of Governance and Multilateral Assistance Projects
Ministry for Women's Affairs and the Rights of Women (MCFDF)	General Director
Prime Minister's Office	Minister in charge of Human Rights and Fight against Extreme Poverty.
Direction de la Planification Économique et Sociale (MPCE)	
Direction de la Planification Économique et Sociale (MPCE)	
Civil Protection Directorate (DPC), Ministry of the Interior and Collective Territories (MICT)	Director
MPCE (*Direction de Suivi et d'Évaluation*)	Minister
National Police of Haiti (PNH)	Police Superintendent, Office for Gender Affairs
Solidarité Fanm Ayisyen	Coordination member

KOSOVO[30]

Country Case Study*

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[30] Hereinafter Kosovo (under United Nations Security Council resolution 1244). This designation is without prejudice to divergent positions on status and is in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and the 2010 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice.

* The Kosovo country case study was conducted by ODI Evaluation Team: Marta Foresti and Ardiana Gashi

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Acronyms

AGE	Agency for Gender Equality
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EU	European Union
EULEX	European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
ICO	International Civilian Office
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KJI	Kosovo Judicial Institute
KP	Kosovo Police
KSF	Kosovo Security Force
KTC	Kosovo Transitional Council
KWN	Kosovo Women's Network
LGEK	Law on Gender Equality in Kosovo
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NAP	National Action Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIC	Officer in Charge
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PISG	Provisional Institutions of Self-Government
RAE	Roma, Ashkaly, Egyptian
SGG	Security and Gender Group
SRGS	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNKT	United Nations Kosovo Office
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
VAW	Violence Against Women
WHO	World Health Organization

1.   Introduction

The Kosovo case study is one of five country case studies for the corporate evaluation of UN Women's contribution to increasing women's leadership and participation in peace and security and humanitarian response. This case study examined UN Women's peace and security work in Kosovo, as well as related programmatic areas such as violence against women (VAW) and broader gender-related work relevant to the peace and security agenda. The evaluation does not give a comprehensive analysis of UN Women's portfolio of work on peace and security in Kosovo. Rather, analysis focused on a selection of programmatic activities and sought to address the specific questions selected for this global/corporate exercise. This report provides a summary of the key findings and recommendations for UN Women in Kosovo and at a global level.

2.   Methodology

The Kosovo case study is one of five country case studies for the corporate evaluation of UN Women's contribution to *Increasing Women's Leadership and Participation in Peace and Security and Humanitarian Response*. Fieldwork for this case study was conducted in Kosovo from 2-8 February 2013 with some follow-up interviews conducted later in February in person or by phone. Preparatory work and consultations were conducted prior to the fieldwork. Some interviews which could not be scheduled during the field mission were conducted by phone or online subsequent to field travel. Fieldwork was carried out by a member of the evaluation team in collaboration with a local researcher, a collaboration which contributed to ensuring triangulation, knowledge of the socio-political context and better coverage of the data.

During the fieldwork, country-level programming with a focus on the peace, security and humanitarian response agenda was examined. More detailed observations of project office work in this area involved looking at a selection of interventions, which was decided with the project office, and the evaluation team leader. For this study, it was possible to visit a very small number of stakeholders outside of Pristina, through a field visit to Gijlan. Site selection was based on distance from the capital, accessibility issues and time constraints, as well as advice from the project office in terms of appropriate field sites. The evaluation team met with a selection of relevant stakeholders at the subnational level.

Qualitative analysis was used during the fieldwork which drew on documentary evidence provided by the project office and other stakeholders, and interviews and focus group discussions. The fieldwork ensured that the range of relevant stakeholders identified in the inception phase, and in collaboration with the project office, were interviewed. Interviews and focus group discussions were semi-structured to address the concrete evaluation questions, but also allowed for unstructured questions as appropriate for the interview, the context and in relation to the intervention/activity under observation.

In line with guidelines in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) handbook, *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation – Towards UNEG Guidance* (2011), the Kosovo case evaluation team took measures to ensure the inclusion and participation of relevant stakeholders, taking care to identify issues of power relations. The context analysis and the stakeholder mapping that was developed took account of the specific balance of power between relevant groups. During the fieldwork, the team was mindful of the relationship between implementers and different stakeholders in interventions, including taking into consideration the role of the evaluation team.

3.   Country context

Context and conflict analysis

In 1974, the Yugoslav Federation adopted a new Constitution which upgraded Kosovo's autonomy and, most importantly, gave it direct representation and connected it with federal institutions (International Crisis Group, 1998). Although it did not become a republic, in practice Kosovo had the same rights and obligations as the other six republics in the Federation, with direct control over the police, territorial defence, education, health, etc.

Following the death of the Yugoslav Federation's President Tito in 1980, the six republics and two autonomous provinces of the Federation were unable to stay together for long. Slovenia and Croatia were in favour of reform and a kind of confederation, but Serbia was opposed to this position. Serbian leaders, especially Mr. Slobodan Milosevic, started to implement their ideals of a Greater Serbia. The first step to achieving this aim saw the revocation of the autonomy of Kosovo and Vojvodina at the end of the 1980s (CIA, 2013). Kosovo Albanians opposed the new Constitution through a massive boycott and organized a parallel system in Kosovo's education and health sectors (Murati et al., 2007).

The revocation of autonomy saw a corresponding rise in human rights abuses and harassment of ethnic Albanians. Kosovo Albanians proclaimed the Republic of Kosovo via a referendum in 1991 and elected Mr. Ibrahim Rugova President in 1992. The parallel government catered to the needs of ethnic Albanians and, for the next eight years, attempted to claim independence through a non-violent resistance movement. Kosovar women became active in economic production, with women's organizations working towards peaceful resolution of the conflict and the provision of support to local women, especially through advocacy on legislation dealing with VAW.

The non-violent resistance did not succeed in gaining independence for Kosovo. Moreover, human rights abuses and violations against Albanians by the Serbian police continued throughout the 1990s. Many young people came to reject the non-violent resistance movement and established the armed Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which was ready to use force to ensure independence for Kosovo.

In 1998, Serbian military, paramilitary and police forces initiated massive attacks in Kosovo against the KLA, using the same tactics as in Bosnia: burning villages and killing and deporting civilians i.e. 'ethnic cleansing'. The conflict escalated and began to threaten the region as a whole, triggering intervention by the international community. Through international mediation, Serbian–Albanian talks to end the conflict commenced, but failed when Serbia refused to sign the Rambouillet Accords in 1999. Killings and massacres continued in Kosovo, and the fear of 'another Bosnia' provoked an international response, culminating in North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) bombing campaigns against Serbia in March 1999 (NATO, n.d.).

During the NATO air campaign, Serbian military and paramilitary forces expelled more than one million Albanians from Kosovo and killed thousands of civilians (Human Rights Watch, 2001). On 10 June 1999, after an air campaign lasting 77 days, NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana announced that he had told General Wesley Clark, Supreme Allied Commander Europe, to temporarily suspend NATO's air operations against Serbia. President Milosevic eventually capitulated, with the signing of a ceasefire agreement leading to the withdrawal of Serb forces. Kosovo was placed under international administration with the adoption of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244.

Operation Joint Guardian was rapidly deployed, mandated by the United nations Security Council with the first elements of this force entering Kosovo on 12 June 1999. By 20 June, the Serb withdrawal was complete and Kosovo Force (KFOR) was well established in Kosovo. As authorised by resolution 1244, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was established as a transitional administration until 2008, when Kosovo declared its independence. The Kosovo Transitional Council (KTC) was created in preparation for the first phase of self-governance. The KTC acted as a consultative forum on policy issues and included representatives from most ethnic groups within Kosovo, but had no female representative.

In December 1999, the Joint Interim Administrative Structure was established, with 17 per cent female representation (UNDG, 2001). By February 2000, it had replaced all previous parallel administrative and security structures. Following this, the Interim Administrative Council (IAC) became the main consultative body for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General's (SRSG), resulting in a loss of status for the KTC, which once again relegated Kosovo's women to the outskirts of decision-making processes. Although the IAC was able to discuss regulations and make public statements, the extent of its power was limited in comparison with that of the SRSG (Hall-Martin, 2010).

Key milestones since 2003

In accordance with decisions of the United Nations Security Council in 2005, the Secretary-General appointed the former President of Finland, Mr. Martti Ahtisaari as Special Envoy for the future status process for Kosovo. After 14 months of negotiations with the leaders of Serbia and Kosovo, Mr. Ahtisaari announced that no consensus could be reached given the divisive position between the two parties. In lieu of a negotiated agreement by all sides, Mr. Ahtisaari proposed that Kosovo receive conditional independence supervised by the international community, primarily the European Union (EU) and NATO and provided strong guarantees for Kosovar Serbs to manage their own affairs within a democratic Kosovo. The plan provided for an international presence which would oversee Kosovo's institutions and monitor the settlement's implementation.

The Ahtisaari plan was accepted by the Kosovar Albanian majority in Kosovo, but the Government of Serbia rejected the plan and called for further negotiations. The Russian Federation opposed the adoption of a Security Council decision to support Mr. Ahtisaari's proposals. Instead, an EU-United States-Russian Federation '*Troika*' was set up to lead new talks between Belgrade and Prishtina (Deutche Welle, 2007). The negotiations ended on 10 December 2007, again without an agreed solution. On 17 February 2008, Kosovo unilaterally declared independence as the Republic of Kosovo. With the entry into force of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo on 15 June 2008, the Kosovo authorities have continued to take steps to assert Kosovo's statehood. Kosovo is currently recognized by 96 countries.[31]

Subsequent to the Declaration of Independence in 2008, UNMIK regulations began to be replaced by Kosovo legislation and ceased to have legal effect, with the EU's role becoming more prominent.[32] The UNMIK law enforcement and justice pillar was taken over by the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX). In March 2008, the EU announced it would do a feasibility study for a Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the EU and Kosovo, which constituted the first formal step towards membership.

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[31] According to the Republic of Kosovo Ministry of Foreign Affairs website http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=1,33.

[32] Legislation in Kosovo consists of laws from former Yugoslavia, UNMIK regulations and laws adopted by the Kosovo Assembly,
http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/ngocontribute/Kosovar%20Gender%20Studies%20Center.pdf.

The feasibility study was concluded in 2012.[33] It examined whether the political, economic and legal criteria for the Stabilization and Association Agreement had been fulfilled. It was concluded that Kosovo had put in place the institutional and legal framework necessary to start negotiating a Stabilization and Association Agreement. It was also pointed out that Kosovo continued to implement all agreements reached between Belgrade and Pristina to date in good faith and that it engaged constructively on the full range of issues with the facilitation of the EU. The conclusion of the study was that Kosovo was largely ready to open negotiations for a Stabilization and Association Agreement, but that further reforms by Kosovo were necessary in the areas of: rule of law, judiciary, public administration, electoral reform and the Assembly, human and fundamental rights, protection of minorities, trade and internal market issues, and phytosanitary and veterinary issues (European Commission, 2012).

With regard to relations with Serbia, the first achievement in negotiations reached so far was an agreement on the regional representation of Kosovo with the denomination Kosovo∗ and a footnote which read: [t]his designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with resolution 1244 and the [International Court of Justice] ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence. The new arrangement, which had considerable practical and economic value, allowed Kosovo to sign new regional agreements and participate in all regional organizations and meetings. Until the agreement was reached on 24 February 2012, UNMIK represented Kosovo in both regional and international multilateral meetings (Lehne, 2012).

Technical dialogues launched in March 2011 were facilitated by Mr. Robert Cooper, counsellor to EU foreign policy chief Baroness Catherine Ashton, and proved fairly productive. Understandings were reached on the return of civil registries and cadaster records, on freedom of movement of persons and cars, on mutual recognition of diplomas, on customs stamps and, most significantly, on integrated management of the border crossings and on Kosovo's regional representation (Lehne, 2012).

The independence of Kosovo was overseen, until September 2012, by a group made up of 23 EU countries, Turkey and the United States. The International Steering Group for Kosovo (ISG), made up of representatives of these States, decided on 2 July 2012 to end the international supervision and close the International Civilian Office (ICO). The end of the supervised independence of Kosovo was celebrated on 10 September 2012. However, because of remaining challenges particularly in northern Kosovo, which borders Serbia, the NATO-led peacekeeping mission, KFOR, was still in charge of security, while EULEX had a certain executive mandate in the country and other international institutions remain, including the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and United Nations entities (Lehne, 2012).

Prishtina has been unable to establish its authority over the north of its territory, where approximately 40,000 Serbs form the majority of the population. While the greater part of the Kosovo Serb population living in enclaves in the south has adjusted to Kosovo's statehood, the northern municipality of Mitrovica still remains in the hands of 'parallel structures' (Lehne, 2012). However, there were hopes that this situation would change with the new agreement reached on 19 April 2013, where the Prime Ministers of both Kosovo and Serbia, Mr. Hashim Thaci and Mr. Ivica Dacic, signed an agreement in the tenth round of negotiations sponsored by Ms. Catherine Ashton (The Economist, 2013). The negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia had begun earlier in 2011 on technical issues, which had been

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[33] Key findings of the feasibility study are available at http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-768_en.htm.

resolved positively. These included free trade, recognizing customs stamps, recognizing university degrees, civil registries, freedom of movement, integrated border management, and how Kosovo was to be referred to in international conferences. The 15-point agreement was considered to have contributed to unlocking the way for both countries to continue on their path to EU integration. The first six points were concerned with an association of Serb majority municipalities in Kosovo. These included the four in the north, but others in the south are free to join. They offered a full overview of economic development, education, health, and urban and rural planning. One of the most contentious provisions allowed for a Police Regional Commander for the four northern Serb majority municipalities. The four mayors will submit a list to the Ministry of the Interior, which will choose the Commander from the list. Another point states that existing Serbian security will be offered places in the equivalent Kosovo structures (Cole, 2013). A further point states that judicial authorities will be integrated and operate within the Kosovo legal framework. The Appellate Court in Prishtina will establish a panel composed of a majority of Kosovo Serbs judges to deal with all Kosovo Serb majority municipalities (Vogel, 2013).

Women and conflict in Kosovo

Between 1998 and 1999, Kosovo saw massacres, murders, rapes and the destruction of entire villages. Women's groups helped displaced people with food, support, medical care, shelter, living necessities and education.

After the war, the focus was on assessing people's needs: going door to door to register women's names, location, number of children, level of education and needs; advocating with aid agencies to prioritize construction of houses for widowed women and households headed by women; and supporting women to cope with the trauma of war. The number of women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) mushroomed and the nature of women's activism began to change, with activities focused on women's empowerment and participation in decision-making and political life.

The first political initiative undertaken by women in Kosovo involved the Platform for Action on which the Albanian Women's League and the women's association of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) were formed in early 1990s. During the years of parallel structures, the LDK was the main political party; thus, its women's association became a vital factor in women's political and civic participation. A relatively large number of women's associations were formed, the most prominent being *Motrat Qiriazi*, Elena, Norma, Aureola, *Legjenda* and the Centre for the Protection of Women and Children. Their primary concerns were raising gender awareness, promoting women's rights and educating women in a traditional and patriarchal society in which women were often poorly educated and seen as second-class citizens (Sterland, 2006).

Despite the many difficulties Kosovo has faced, the country has managed to create a solid legal basis and institutional foundation for achieving gender equality (Kosovar Gender Studies Centre, 2008). Although Kosovo is not party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, the documents served as guides for the development of a legal framework for gender equality in the country. CEDAW was enshrined within the Constitutional Framework - developed by UNMIK and Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISGs), as well as in the current Kosovo Constitution (Kosovar Gender Studies Centre, 2008). In both cases, UN Women supported women's organizations in their advocacy efforts and itself promoted the inclusion of CEDAW within the highest legal act.

With support from UNIFEM and regional women's organizations, the national action plan (NAP) for the Achievement of Gender Equality was finalized in 2003 (Maquire, 2008). It contained a detailed analysis of the current situation and made frequent reference to the need to implement national, regional and international standards on gender equality and women's human rights.

The NAP was closely linked to the Beijing Platform for Action and (less so) to CEDAW. It recommended and laid the foundations for future action, including legislation and policy on gender equality generally, violence against women and children, and women's participation in the public and economic spheres. Violence against women was identified as an area of concern, although less as a human rights issue than one of social welfare (Maquire, 2008). The Plan was adopted by the Government in 2004 and led to the establishment of the Office for Gender Equality in the Advisory Office for Good Governance, Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Gender Issues in the Office of the Prime Minister. It led to the Law on Gender Equality in Kosovo (LGEK), promulgated on 7 June 2004, which contains provisions on gender equality with regard to political parties, the economy, property, and employment, and defines monitoring mechanisms and sanctions in case of violations of the law. An important development in terms of women's representation in politics and decision-making was the introduction of a legislative gender quota reserving 30 per cent of seats on the lists of candidates running for national and local elections and in national and local assemblies. Since the 2010 election, 40 of the 120 members of the Kosovo Assembly are women. Of these, 14 per cent were elected directly, as opposed to entering on the basis of the gender quota. In the Cabinet in 2013, two out of six deputy prime ministers are women, and two out of 19 ministers are women. However, all municipal mayors and most deputy mayors are men and in the latest local elections only 353 out of 1,084 representatives elected were women.

Other important legal and policy documents related to gender and security are the Kosovo Programme for Gender Equality (KPGE) 2008-2013, the Action Plan for the Economic Empowerment of Women, the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence and the Kosovo Programme against Domestic Violence and Action Plan 2011-2014. The most recent document, still in draft form, is the National Plan for the Implementation of resolution 1325. The Plan has three objectives: to increase the participation of women in decision-making as well as peacebuilding processes; to integrate gender perspectives and increase women's participation in security structures; and to provide and ensure access to functional mechanisms of protection, access to justice, rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of sexual violence, torture and forms of violence associated with war. The Plan also includes the budget for each activity and clearly shows implementation-related costs.

Institutions and actors focused on gender equality at national level include:

- The Agency for Gender Equality in the Office of the Prime Minister, which was initially established as the Office for Gender Equality in 2005 after the Law on Gender Equality was passed in 2004. In September 2006, it was transformed into the Agency for Gender Equality, as an executive agency responsible for promoting the equal participation of men and women in political, economic, social and cultural life, which are important determinants for the democratic functioning of institutions;

- The Advisory Office for Good Governance Division for Gender Issues, Office of the Prime Minister;

- The Unit for Gender Equality within the Ombudsperson Institution in Kosovo (OIK);

- Officers for gender equality in ministries; and

- The Inter-ministerial Council for Gender Equality.

Institutional mechanisms for gender equality at the local level include:

- Officers for gender equality in municipalities; and

- Municipal committees for gender equality.

Regarding representation of women in the security sector in Kosovo, recruitment of women has increased since the country was established. In 2012, women made up 14.8 per cent of the police force and some were in top decision-making positions, ranging from the ranks of Sergeant to General (UN Women, 2013). The Kosovo Police (KP) has several structures through which it aims to address women's human rights and gender equality (see below).

Women were employed for the first time by the Kosovo Protection Corps, a civilian emergency service agency, in 1999. In 2009, this was restructured into the Kosovo Security Force (KSF). Representation of women in the KSF is 8.1 per cent, including 32.5 per cent in civilian positions and 6.4 per cent in uniformed positions in the Ministry of the National Security Force (UN Women, 2013). Overall, women's representation in the security sectors in Kosovo is the highest within the Balkans, but much remains to be done to increase representation of women in leadership and decision-making positions. Technical dialogue with Serbia was headed by a female deputy Prime Minister which was a major achievement and was particularly notable since Kosovar women were excluded from important talks and dialogues during the war, including the final negotiations on Kosovo's status.

With regard to implementation of resolution 1325, a comprehensive study strongly criticised the progress Kosovo has made, directing a great deal of the blame towards UNMIK (Martin, n.d.). Martin concluded that, by failing to apply resolution 1325, UNMIK and the international community served to delegitimize women's voices in the political process and that implementation of the resolution occurred predominantly within grassroots civil movements. Poor progress in the implementation of resolution 1325 in government institutions occurred as a result of financial constraints and lack of political will. Martin highlights the vital role played by UNIFEM in the implementation of the resolution, and in raising awareness among civil society through capacity development of local women's organizations and support to the Agency for Gender Equality (AGE).

Key stakeholders/aid environment

After the conflict, Kosovo began to develop legal framework and institutions starting from zero. As outlined above, resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security served as the basis for the development of Kosovo's key gender legislation, strategies and policies and for the inclusion of civil society, especially women's organizations, in political processes and decision-making. However, as stated by Leest (2009), there was no clear policy or strategy which practically defined the linkages between gender and security. An overview of the main stakeholders in the field of gender and security is presented in this section. The three key players are: government institutions, international organizations and civil society.

Following the NAP and the Law on Gender Equality in 2005, the AGE was established. Its mandate was to implement and monitor the Law on Gender Equality; draft policies and strategies regarding gender equality; and promote equal opportunities for men and women in all spheres of life.[34] UNIFEM provided assistance to the AGE to draft and monitor the implementation of gender-related legislation, including the preparation of the government's

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[34] www.abgj.rks-gov.net

report to the CEDAW Committee (Leest, 2009). Other government bodies include the Advisory Office on Good Governance (AOGG) established in 2002; the Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Gender Equality and gender offices/officers at each ministry and municipality whose role is in monitoring and reporting on the internal implementation of gender equality legislation, policies and strategies. However, there was no budget line for the gender officers in municipalities, which limited their engagement (UN Women, 2012).

An important body at national level in the security area is the Kosovo Security Council. The Law on the Establishment Kosovo Security Council[35] grants it a 'strategic planning' function, particularly with regard to systematically identifying and assessing security threats and risks, with further executive powers in situations of emergency. Working groups of the Council also include women's NGOs. The Kosovo Security Force, launched on 21 January 2009, is tasked to conduct crisis response operations within and outside Kosovo and civil protection operations, and to support the authorities in responding to natural disasters and other emergencies. About 8 per cent of the Kosovo Protection Force is female.[36] Due to financial and human constraints, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare was unable to fully implement the law. Instead, it relies on non-governmental organization (NGO) shelter services to provide assistance protection to victims of domestic violence, but provides only 50 per cent of costs.

According to Maquire (2008), the KP was strongest at the regional and international levels in terms of the recruitment of women and its response to VAW. As a result of UN Women's partnership with the KP, since 2008 gender equality and women's human security issues have been mainstreamed in the KP academy and training on gender is a mandatory part of the curriculum (Stickings, 2011). Gender focal points have been established in each police station with a responsibility to report to headquarters on emerging or outstanding gender issues (Maquire, 2008).

The Human Rights and Gender Affairs Office within the Ministry of Justice monitors the implementation of human rights and gender-related legislation, including the LGEK. It is also responsible for reporting on human rights and gender issues, including to international agencies and mechanisms. The Ministry of Justice has established a Victims' Advocacy and Assistance Division (VAAD) within the Department of Civil Affairs/Access to Justice. The VAAD supports access to justice for victims of crimes and promotion of their rights, with a special focus on the rights of victims of domestic violence and human trafficking.

The Kosovo Judicial Institute (KJI) is an independent professional agency responsible for the training of current and candidate judges and prosecutors in Kosovo, as well as related issues. Capacity development is conducted for actual and potential judicial office holders and related professionals on human rights standards and criminal law. In addition, the KJI assesses and organizes the preparatory exam for judges and prosecutors and implements training programmes related to promotion, training of lay judges and practical skills development.

The Ombudsperson Institution, established in 2000, was mandated to support and protect the rights and freedoms of persons according to international standards regarding human rights, including gender equality.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) in Kosovo played an important role in the process of developing laws and national plans, strategies and gender-related advocacy. The main CSO in Kosovo is the Kosovo Women's Network (KWN), an established and self-managed

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[35] Law on the Establishment of the Kosovo Security Council, 03/L-050 (2008). Available from http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/?cid=2,191,257.
[36] UN Women, Summit, 2013

organization with a self-set agenda and a wide range of local members. Programmatically independent from external support, KWN is able through its outreach to collect and analyse information relevant for women's security, women's human rights and peacebuilding, which is an important asset for security sector monitoring and public oversight (Stickings, 2011). As part of the advocacy group on the NAP, KWN was able to play a catalytic function in the passing of the Gender Equality law and in the setting up of the AGE. Through the gender mainstreaming they promote, these institutions are the engine driving the implementation of resolution 1325 in Kosovo.

A more research-focused NGO is the Kosovar Centre for Gender Studies (KCGS), established in 2002. The KCGS provided a sound contribution to filling this gaps in data and research in the field of gender and supporting advocacy on women's issues. The Kosovo-based NGO, NORMA, has provided free legal aid since 1998. NORMA works in close cooperation with local institutions and has organized various trainings for the judiciary as well as seminars, roundtables and workshops for women on their human rights. *Medika Kosovo* is an NGO providing psychosocial counselling, health services, counselling and legal assistance contributing to the reduction of traumatic symptoms caused by the war - especially to victims of violence - as well as victims' integration in social and public life. The Kosovo Rehabilitation Centre for Tortured Victims was founded in 1999 to provide treatment and rehabilitation for victims of torture. In 2008, UNIFEM supported the official registration of the RAE Women's Network.

There are several international organizations in Kosovo active in the field of gender and security. According to Maquire (2008), a central, defining feature of the international community's achievements in Kosovo is the involvement of women's civil society, whose engagement led to impressive achievements. Besides UN Women, EULEX OSCE, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNMIK are among the most important organizations.

OSCE played a key role in the development of the legal framework on human rights and associated legislation including legislation and policies related to trafficking and gender-based violence. It supported security sector development by providing human rights and advanced training of police, lawyers and judges; specialised courses and outreach programmes to develop community-policing; and established municipal and local safety councils. Police and legal system monitors were active across five regions in Kosovo. The Mission has also supported the AGE in drafting their report on the implementation of CEDAW. In turn, UNFPA's aim was to enhance the rights of women and young girls by working to eliminate gender-based violence (GBV). UNFPA activities included: building institutional capacity of the health sector; conducting community-based outreach to increase population awareness on the negative and harmful consequences of GBV; cooperating with CSOs working on GBV-related issues and building their capacities; and undertaking advocacy efforts to policymakers on GBV issues.

EULEX became fully operational in 2008 and within the framework of resolution 1244 to support key EU aims with regards to the visa liberalization process, the Feasibility Study for a Stabilization and Association Agreement between the EU and Kosovo, and the Pristina–Belgrade Dialogue. Since June 2012, EULEX has two main mandates: an advisory mandate to strengthen Kosovo's institutions and an executive mandate on politically sensitive legal proceedings, such as those related to corruption, crime and war crimes. Gender advisors direct and oversee mechanisms for monitoring, implementation and evaluation of relevant international instruments, including resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security; perform research and analysis in the field of gender and prepare opinions, briefs and reports;

and liaise with other departments within the Mission and with Kosovo Institutions as well as local and international NGOs and civil society to promote gender equality. Furthermore, gender advisors provide assistance where necessary to Kosovo institutions for proper implementation of international and national documents on gender-related issues.

UNDP's activities have been framed within its Gender Equality Strategy and the Eight Point Agenda (UNSCR, 1325). While advancing gender security and justice remains the principal priority, there has been an emphasis on protecting women's social, economic, political and cultural rights within a context of sustainable livelihoods. Targeted programmes promote the accountability of government and institutions to implement gender-sensitive laws and ensure that resource mobilization, aid coordination, budgeting and funds allocation are fully gender-responsive. Finally, UNDP Kosovo aims to increase women's roles in decision-making. Following Kosovo's declaration of independence in February 2008, UNMIK was reconfigured and moved back from an executive role to one of monitoring and support to local institutions.

The ICO was active from 2008 to 2012 and assisted in fulfilling the mandate of the International Civilian Representative, Mr. Pieter Feith, who was appointed by the International Steering Group for Kosovo on 28 February 2008. The ICO aimed to 'ensure full implementation of Kosovo's status settlement' and 'support Kosovo's European integration' by providing advisory services to Kosovo's government and leaders. European Union Special Representative tracking measures focused on: a) the development of a monitoring mechanism to control training attendance on gender issues and assess follow-up (staff willingness to integrate a gender dimension into their work); b) ensuring the integration of the gender perspective in Policy and Security Advisory units in particular; and c) ensuring gender was mainstreamed internally as well as in the external guidance the ICO provided to Kosovar institutions.

As can be noted, there are many institutions and organizations which are active in the gender and security field, which implied that there may be duplication of activities or conflicting activities among stakeholders. However, this issue has been less of a problem since 2007 when the Security and Gender Coordination Group (SGG) was established. The role of the SGG has been to enhance coordination and information sharing between international and local organizations engaged in security issues and promote joint strategic actions aimed at increasing women's safety and security in Kosovo. The current members of the group include representatives of the EU, EULEX, KFOR, OSCE, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNFPA, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and government representatives appointed by the Deputy Prime Minister, in particular a Political Adviser to the Deputy Prime Minister, the head of AGE, the head of the Police Board for Gender Equality and representatives of women's organizations such as KWN, Kosovo Gender Study Centre and *Kvinna till Kvinna*.

4.   UN Women strategy and programming in Kosovo

Background and thematic priorities

UNIFEM was present in the Western Balkans from 1999, when an office was opened in Kosovo, until the creation of UN Women in 2011. Over the years, UNIFEM sought to advance the conditions and capacity for gender equality in Kosovo, with work focused on fostering women's leadership for civic participation and local governance, later shifting

towards a focus on institutional capacity-building. More recently, emphasis was placed on strengthening the capacity of partners in government and civil society to advocate and network for the implementation of public policies related to gender equality. In parallel, under its South East Europe programme framework, UNIFEM also supported work focused on promoting women's engagement in peacebuilding processes, guided by resolution 1325. While also rooted in Kosovo, this work included a strong subregional component and focus on inter-ethnic peacebuilding, within Kosovo and across borders.

UNIFEM's work in Kosovo focused on women, peace and security. Since 2005, Kosovo has been part of and managed the two first phases of the regional project focused on implementing resolution 1325. The project was implemented in three phases: the first, Implementing United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2005–2007) also covered Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The second phase was Women Building Peace and Human Security in the Western Balkans (2008 – 2011). The third phase, Advancing the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in the Western Balkans (2011-2013), was still underway at the time of the evaluation. The Kosovo project office was also involved in two additional projects on women, peace and security: a joint EU, UN Women and UNDP programme on Women, Peace and Security (2012-2013) and a joint United Nations Kosovo team (UNKT) programme (2011- 2013) implemented by OHCHR, UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF.[37]

The key features of the three phases of the project in relation to Kosovo, including main activities and objectives, are summarized in the boxes below. However, this evaluation focused only on the period 2008-2012 and, more specifically, the activities analysed as part of the fieldwork mostly relate to the current third phase of the project (see below).

Box 1: Implementing resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (Phase 1: 2005-2007)

The overall development aims of the project were to strengthen democratic governance and promote and protect women's human rights in the Western Balkans by:

- Strengthening the capacity of United Nations, international, regional and national security actors (as duty bearers for the fulfilment of women's human rights), to integrate gender perspectives within their institutions and agendas (in south-east Europe, with a particular focus on BiH, Kosovo and Serbia); and

- Supporting women as rights holders to claim their rights to participate in peace negotiation and peacebuilding processes, and to influence the agenda of security actors (in SEE, with a particular focus on BiH, Kosovo and Serbia).

Main outcomes:

- Mechanisms, policies, practices strengthened by security actors to ensure women's participation in peace negotiation processes (focusing on the future status talks on Kosovo);

- Gender equality advocates and women political leaders are positioned to influence peace and security agendas in their countries and the subregion; and

- Women's regional peace networks are strengthened to contribute to major ongoing

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[37] These two projects were not considered as part of the Kosovo case study, which focused on selected activities, mainly of phase three of the project implementing resolution 1325.

political processes at national and subregional levels.

Phase 1 was supported by the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and development agency.

Source: *Implementing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in South-East Europe* - Final Report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Austria and the Austrian Development Agency (UNIFEM, 2008).

Box 2: Women Building Peace and Human Security in the Western Balkans (Phase 2: 2008-2011)

The overall development objective of Phase 2 was to contribute to democratic governance and women's rights in the Western Balkans by advancing the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security.

The expected outcomes of the project were:

- Security sector and relevant government institutions demonstrating increased gender sensitivity in responding to the security needs of women in the Western Balkans; and

- Strengthened capacity of gender equality advocates, including youth, to influence peace and security agendas towards increased democratization at national and regional levels in the Western Balkans.

Phase 2 was supported by the governments of Austria, Iceland and Norway.

Source: *Women Building Peace and Human Security in the Western Balkans: Implementing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 Phase II: 2008-2011* - Courtesy report to the Government of Austria (UN Women, 2011b).

Box 3: Advancing the Implementation of resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in the Western Balkans (Phase 3: 2011-2013)

The programme development goal is to contribute to sustainable and democratic state building in the region. The overall aims are improving capacity of key security actors and organizations and building networks of gender equality and human rights advocates to implement and monitor the commitments under resolution 1325 in national laws, policies, strategies and/or plans in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Kosovo and in the Western Balkans regionally.

Project activities are grouped under three outputs, two focused at the national level (on key security actors and women's organizations) and one mainly regional (collaboration among both government agencies and NGOs):

- Output 1: Improved individual and institutional capacities of the key security actors at different levels to formulate, implement and effectively monitor the commitments under resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889 (and CEDAW);

- Output 2: Increased capacities of women's organizations to effectively advocate for women's and girls' human rights and needs in conflict and post-conflict situations and monitor commitments under relevant international and national frameworks (CEDAW, Security Council resolutions, national laws, strategies and action plans); and

- Output 3: Enhanced regional cooperation, coordination and networking among

specialized governmental and non-governmental actors towards fulfilment of women's and girls' human rights and security needs in South East Europe/ Western Balkans.

Key partners and primary beneficiaries include security actors such as the ministries of defence, police, judiciary, parliaments (selected committees and women's caucuses), women's and human rights organizations and networks working to protect and promote women's human rights, security and women's participation in public life and decision-making. Ultimate beneficiaries of the project are women, victims of war (including those who experienced sexual violence), women exposed to interethnic and religious frictions/multiple discrimination and women in the security sector (and in decision-making positions).

Phase 3 is funded by the Government of Norway, together with in-kind contributions provided for the first year of project implementation by the Government of Iceland. Additional funds have been secured from the Government of Hungary and the Austrian Development Agency.

Source: *Advancing the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in the Western Balkans (Phase 3: 2011-2013)*. Second Progress Report to the Government of Norway (UN Women, 2011a).

Transition from UNIFEM to UN Women

While the formal transition to UN Women was completed as of 2011, there was still a certain level of confusion and uncertainty both within the UN Women-Kosovo office and amongst national partners (see below). In particular, neither the new staffing arrangements nor the new organization structure vis–à-vis the regional office (likely to be based in Istanbul, though this was not certain at the time of the fieldwork) have been finalized. It was relatively clear, however, that UN Women-Kosovo will not be an independent country office and that the funding environment will not substantially change (if anything, the expectation was that there will be even more need to secure external funding as a result of reduced core funding).

Most external stakeholders were not aware of this transition. From interviews, a range of views were expressed about the risks of 'moving away' from the UNIFEM model and experience, which in the main was perceived as very positive and effective. There was confusion as to what the new arrangement would entail and no sense as to what the new mandate would bring in terms of inter-agency dialogue and collaboration. Most respondents lacked a clear understanding of precisely what the changes might be, and of UN Women's current priorities and planned future work, highlighting a lack of visibility of the transition process itself. These issues are further explored below.

Description of selected programmes/activities

The Kosovo case study focused on some specific activities of the project Advancing the Implementation of resolution 1325 on women, peace and security in the Western Balkans (Phase 3), including:

- Security sector reform (and collaboration with the KP in particular);
- The support and leadership of the Security Gender Co-ordination Group, formed by key national stakeholders as well as international agencies;
- Capacity-building and support of national NGOs and CSOs;
- Training and support for the judiciary (to a limited extent); and
- Support and implementation of NAPs on gender.

Given the integrated nature of the programme, the case study also looked at a number of programme-level issues and priorities and engaged with a variety of stakeholders. However, the case study did not focus at all on issues of regional collaboration, as the focus was on the country experience and UN Women-Kosovo presence. On reflection, this was a limitation, as the regional dimension is a distinctive feature of this project and of UN Women strategy in the Balkans.

5. Findings

Theories of change

Clear theories of change were not explicitly articulated at either the overall programme or activities/project levels, as noted by a number of previous programme evaluations and confirmed by the evaluation team's analysis of the programme documents. Before the field visit it was hard to get a general picture of what the logic underpinning the programme was, based on documentary analysis only. Yet the interviews with key stakeholders and a few in-depth conversations with the UN Women-Kosovo Officer in Charge (OIC) revealed a fairly distinct, if implicit, approach to the work on women, peace and security.

It was generally agreed that UN Women-Kosovo played a pivotal role on all kinds of gender-related policies and processes on Kosovo, and on peace and security in particular. However, it did not achieve this by 'leading' the sector in any particular way. Rather, it focused on:
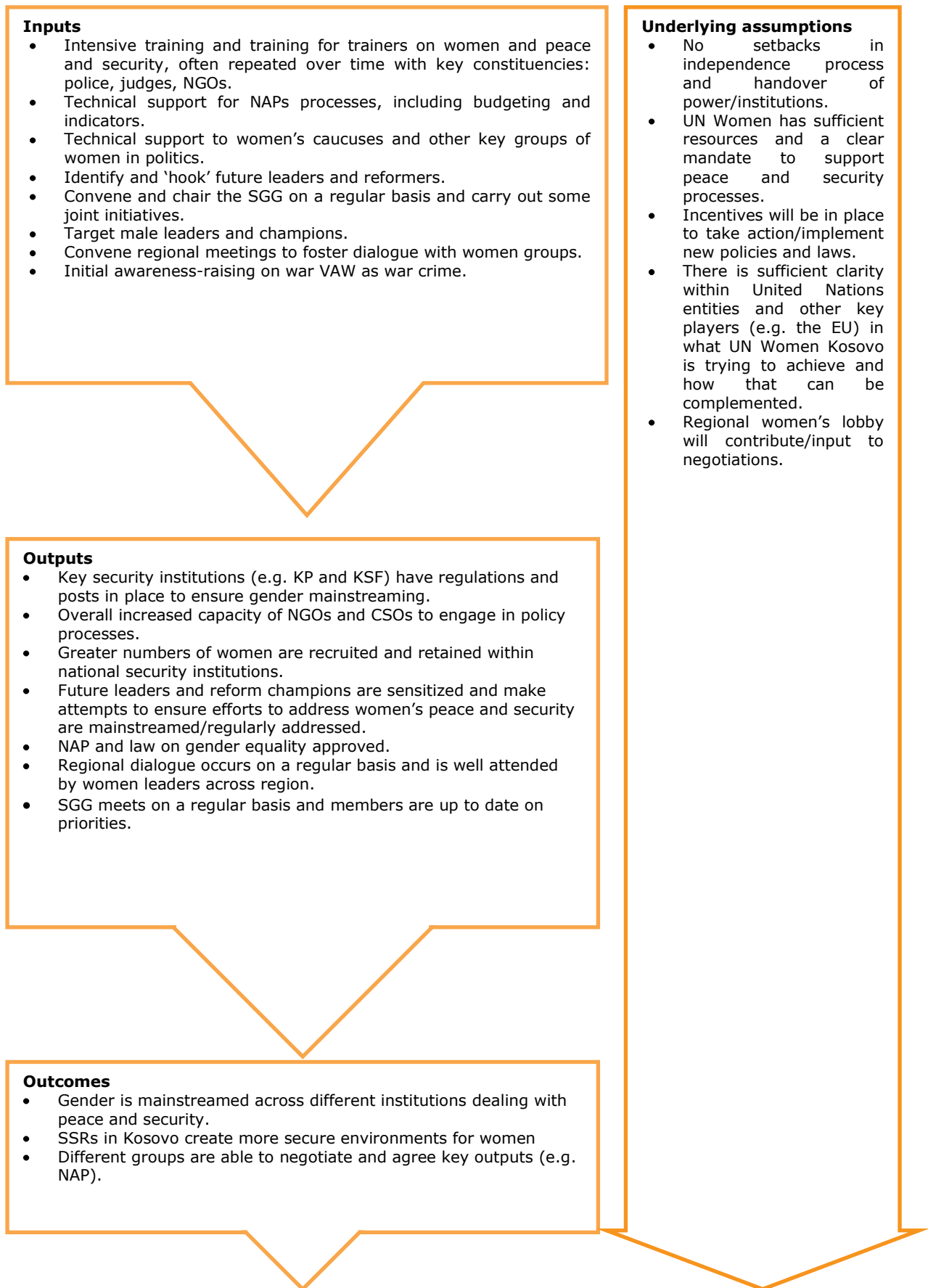
- Brokering a productive dialogue between different, often divisive, constituencies working on women's issues in Kosovo, especially between frontline NGOs/activist women's groups, politicians/policy makers and international agencies (especially UNMIK in the post-war years). An example of this approach in relation to peace and security programming on women's leadership was the regional dialogue between women's leaders (and specifically between Kosovo and Serbia representatives), which was actively supported by UN Women-Kosovo;

- Adopting an independent/neutral yet politically savvy approach to engaging in political and policy processes. In practice this meant proactively seeking opportunities to influence not only policy processes, but crucially to identify gender champions and change brokers at different levels. In relation to women's participation and leadership, longstanding collaborations with women, men, leaders and politicians were developed, initially through intensive training and capacity-building, followed by more direct support and partnerships;

- Adopting a deliberate strategy of supporting and collaborating with local organizations and actors behind the scenes, ensuring local ownership and commitment to reform. As a result a network of influential individuals was developed who have been engaging with UN Women-Kosovo over the years and are now in positions of power or influence, including the Deputy Prime Minister (and regional negotiator), prominent Members of Parliament (MPs) and advisors to the President;

- Maintaining high levels of flexibility and adaptability throughout the programme cycle to be able to respond to the fluid political processes and to seize opportunities when they arose. In Kosovo this was particularly relevant when considering the evolution from the immediate post-war years to the early 2000s, through to the state formation period leading to

independence in 2008, all the way to the current negotiations in the region and beyond to achieve full recognition; and

- 'Knocking on doors' which was a persistent strategy of intensive engagement with key players and actors to ensure that change was enforced and embedded in practice. Even if it was not formally recorded in reports, this constituted ongoing monitoring of programme activities.

None of these features were explicitly described or captured by programme documents or previous evaluations. As such, this case study presented an opportunity to put them to the test and for UN Women-Kosovo to build on this analysis and refine it in future strategies/engagement. The diagram below represents the salient features of the UN Women-Kosovo approach and how they related to one another in a potential theory of change underpinning the regional programme on peace and security.

Figure 1. Theory of change for UN Women's peace and security work in Kosovo

Inputs
- Intensive training and training for trainers on women and peace and security, often repeated over time with key constituencies: police, judges, NGOs.
- Technical support for NAPs processes, including budgeting and indicators.
- Technical support to women's caucuses and other key groups of women in politics.
- Identify and 'hook' future leaders and reformers.
- Convene and chair the SGG on a regular basis and carry out some joint initiatives.
- Target male leaders and champions.
- Convene regional meetings to foster dialogue with women groups.
- Initial awareness-raising on war VAW as war crime.

Outputs
- Key security institutions (e.g. KP and KSF) have regulations and posts in place to ensure gender mainstreaming.
- Overall increased capacity of NGOs and CSOs to engage in policy processes.
- Greater numbers of women are recruited and retained within national security institutions.
- Future leaders and reform champions are sensitized and make attempts to ensure efforts to address women's peace and security are mainstreamed/regularly addressed.
- NAP and law on gender equality approved.
- Regional dialogue occurs on a regular basis and is well attended by women leaders across region.
- SGG meets on a regular basis and members are up to date on priorities.

Outcomes
- Gender is mainstreamed across different institutions dealing with peace and security.
- SSRs in Kosovo create more secure environments for women
- Different groups are able to negotiate and agree key outputs (e.g. NAP).

Underlying assumptions
- No setbacks in independence process and handover of power/institutions.
- UN Women has sufficient resources and a clear mandate to support peace and security processes.
- Incentives will be in place to take action/implement new policies and laws.
- There is sufficient clarity within United Nations entities and other key players (e.g. the EU) in what UN Women Kosovo is trying to achieve and how that can be complemented.
- Regional women's lobby will contribute/input to negotiations.

Evaluation questions

Dimension 1: UN Women's policy and strategic direction

In what ways did UN Women influence policies and practice (within the United Nations system as well as in key external agencies) in relation to women's political participation and leadership in peace and security?

UN Women-Kosovo influence on Kosovo policy development

UN Women undoubtedly influenced policy development in relation to women's political participation and leadership in Kosovo, with the clearest example being UN Women-Kosovo's role in supporting the process for the development and implementation of NAPs and laws. It was widely agreed that UNIFEM played a crucial role in the support, development and negotiations leading up to the adoption of the first Kosovo Action Plan for the Achievement of Gender Equality, which was agreed by the Kosovo Council of Ministers in 2004 and paved the way for subsequent reforms. Of particular note was the adoption of the LGEK[38] in 2004 and, in 2005, the creation of AGE within the Prime Minister's Office. UN Women Kosovo also supported directly the establishment of the Unit for Gender Equality within the Ombudsperson Institution in Kosovo; municipal committees for gender equality; the Inter-ministerial Council for Gender Equality, which in turn supported the establishment of gender equality officers in ministries; and finally, supported UNMIK Office of gender affairs on the establishment of the Officers for gender equality in municipalities. UN Women-Kosovo also supported and provided technical assistance to the working group recently responsible for developing the Kosovo NAP to implement resolution 1325, which was nearing completion.

The adoption of plans and laws, the UN Women-Kosovo role in the negotiating processes leading up to it, and the highly successful participatory approach adopted by UN Women-Kosovo which focused on process as well as intended policy outcomes, were all of interest to the evaluation.[39]

Most respondents agreed that UN Women-Kosovo played a pivotal role in NAP processes in a number of ways, consistent with the theory of change described above. In practice, UN Women played a key role in facilitating the development of the NAP for the implementation of resolution 1325 in Kosovo by ensuring (i) a high level of political support for development of the NAP (the NAP itself was initiated through the Office of the Prime Minister while development was being chaired by AGE; and (ii) the application of a multi-stakeholder approach in the development of the NAP which featured a high level of interministerial and civil society collaboration within the context of the working group appointed by the Deputy Prime Minister of Kosovo. The working group was comprised of 28 members including representatives of the government, the judiciary, CSOs and security actors.

Although assessing the impact of the NAP and other polices and legislations adopted with the support of UN Women-Kosovo was beyond the scope of this evaluation, respondents agreed that the 2004 NAP and law on gender equality represented a critical juncture for policy development in which UN Women-Kosovo had been instrumental in brokering a productive

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[38] The LGEK was adopted by the Kosovo Assembly on 19 February 2004 (Law No. 2004/2) and promulgated by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in UNMIK Regulation 2004/18 on 7 June 2004 (UNMIK/REG/2004/18). Among other things, the law specifically mandates the development of a Kosovo Programme for Gender Equality.
[39] The approach was replicated in Serbia, Montenegro, Albania and Macedonia (2005-2007) and the Kosovo OIC was directly involved.

dialogue between women's activist groups and UNMIK. It was too early to judge the effectiveness of the new NAP on resolution 1325, as it had not yet been approved. It was also difficult to gauge the expectations of the key stakeholders in terms of its potential relevance.

UN Women-Kosovo influence on United Nations and EU policies and practices in Kosovo

The main mechanism for engagement with other United Nations entities and key players on women in peace and security is the SGG, which is chaired by UN Women-Kosovo. The SGG was composed of representatives from national institutions (KP, AGE, Ministry for the KSF, Office of the Prime Minister and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister), women's organizations (KWN, Kosovo Gender Studies Centre and *Kvinna till Kvinna*), international organizations (the EU, EULEX, OSCE, NATO/KFOR, UNMIK) and nine United Nations entities (UN-Habitat, UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA, OHCHR, UNICEF, UNOPS, UNHCR and WHO). The group aims to enhance coordination and information sharing between local and international organizations engaged in security issues and promote joint strategic actions aimed at increasing women's safety and security in Kosovo.

Overall, the SGG members interviewed agreed that the group was a very useful mechanism for coordination and information exchange, as well as an effective forum to agree joint activities (including joint initiatives for international days and other campaigns) or for compiling joint positions/statements (for example in relation to the Kosovo Security Strategy), despite members having different mandates and levels of engagement.

While very successful in its coordination and information function, in the main the SGG was not meant to be a channel for UN Women-Kosovo to influence the policies and practices of other United Nations entities. Yet according to respondents, it was the only concrete mechanism in place for inter-agency coordination, and in practice it achieved a number of strategic functions related to progressing gender issues in Kosovo way beyond its intended mandate.

UN Women-Kosovo was clearly very effective at building coalitions with national (and regional) organizations and institutions and was considered the lead agency on women and peace and security issues by national stakeholders. Given its limited human and financial resources, this was a particularly impressive achievement for UN Women Kosovo. Some respondents suggested that, with more capacity and resources, the office could be even more influential vis–à–vis other international key players, including United Nations entities, UNKT and especially the EU. In turn, this would allow UN Women (as a whole, not just the Kosovo country office) to have a greater impact on broader political processes (for example, the regional women's dialogue and negotiations), although a much more joined up approach with other key international agencies in Kosovo and in the region would be required.

How sustainable were the efforts and results of UN Women policy influencing/engagement?

Most international agencies have been downsizing or leaving Kosovo since independence in 2008 and there was a clear trend of handing over power and authority to the new national institutions. Against this context, issues of sustainability, downsizing and 'exit strategies', including for UN Women-Kosovo, arose. In light of a potential draw-down, there are at least two ways to consider the office's achievements.

First, it achieved significant results in terms of women's leadership and participation in peace and security (see below). Much of what has been achieved is now integrated into either law or practice in a manner that no longer, or only partially, requires direct UN Women support. For example, UN Women-supported reforms of the KP included the creation of gender

advisor positions/focal points, rules and regulations and very well embedded practices (e.g. regular monitoring of numbers of female officers and their reasons for leaving the force).

Second, and perhaps the more important consideration, concerned the UN Women's deliberate strategy to ensure sustainability through strategic identifying and collaborating with key players and organizations who were seen as 'reform champions' and committed to sustainable change. In practice, UN Women supported a network of organizations and individuals at the forefront of the reform agenda for women's leadership in peace and security, including national coalitions and NGOs such as the KWN, and individuals such as the Deputy Prime Minister.

In many ways the key features of this approach, including informed political approach and taking a back seat, were interlinked with ownership and sustainability. Again, this was a remarkable achievement given the small size of the office. From an institutional perspective there were some risks in terms of sustainability, as most of the staffing arrangements appeared to be very short-term and subject to external funding availability.

To what extent did the current policy/strategic direction reflect the lessons learned from policy engagement on peace and security and humanitarian response since 2008 and how fit for purpose was it for the new UN Women mandate?

The current portfolio of UN Women-Kosovo's work on peace and security has evolved over the years in line with political and security developments in Kosovo. In particular in the lead-up to and aftermath of independence in 2008, a number of opportunities have opened up to engage and shape political processes and institutions, as well as new legislation and 'rules of the game' of the newly created state. However, it was important to recognise that the United Nations' neutral position towards the status of Kosovo also created significant challenges for UN Women-Kosovo, including balancing the instructions from the UN Women headquarters on the one hand and the requests of the newly created Government of Kosovo on the other (for example in relation to what logo and official terminology to use when describing the newly created state). In practice, this situation restricted the work of the country office with several ministries and other state institutions (for example, with the Ministry of Security, KSF and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

Despite these challenges, UN Women-Kosovo was able to increase and diversify its portfolio of activities, increasingly building on an initial focus on civil society support and training. While the activities of the third phase of the project had certainly evolved and adapted to the fluid political context where it operated, it was not clear whether this was the result of 'learning lessons' from policy engagement (or at least, not only), or a natural evolution of the project and the relationships with its various stakeholders. For example, the project is now focusing on issues such as VAW during the war as a result of a certain broadening of interests and a political commitment that only recently developed in Kosovo.

While this 'adaptive' approach produced a number of positive results (see below), it may fall short of recognizing and addressing problems/limitations as they arise, as no formal mechanism was in place to monitor and review existing theories of change and related assumptions.

In relation to the new mandate and policy direction of UN Women, the Kosovo regional peace and security programme was firmly grounded in the direction and priorities set out in resolution 1325 (and previously on CEDAW). The strategic role played by UN Women-Kosovo in the processes leading up to the NAP on gender equality and the current efforts to see through the approval on a NAP on the implementation of resolution 1325 were both

examples of UN Women-Kosovo's capacity to translate global policy direction into national policy engagement.

Dimension 2: UN Women's policies, programming and operations

To what extent did UN Women programmes achieve the expected results? What explained variations?

All three phases of the resolution 1325 regional project (implemented between 2005 and 2013) were monitored or evaluated by independent evaluators and regular reports were submitted to the donors, including the Austrian Development Agency, the Norwegian Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. A number of these evaluations pointed to the absence of an overarching programme logic and explicit results chain (Hancilova, 2011). For this reason it was difficult to identify clear 'expected' results in programme documents or assess the extent to which the observed results were in line with the original objectives. However, it was important to recognise that, although not explicitly, the programme was underpinned by a fairly clear and context specific, relevant theory of change, which helped to ensure that some concrete and sustainable results were achieved.

An assessment of results in all areas of the programme is beyond the scope of this evaluation. What follows is therefore a selection of the most relevant findings in relation to specific activities/interventions of relevance for this exercise, followed by some considerations on limitations/constraints of effectiveness.

With the support of UN Women-Kosovo, a number of results were achieved in terms of mainstreaming gender in the organizational structures of the KP, and more broadly ensuring that the security sector's activities reflected the needs of women in their communities:

- The KP established a Gender Unit and gender focal points in many provinces. The number of female police officers has been growing for several years. When this trend was changing due to female officers leaving the KP, a monitoring system was developed to better understand the reasons behind this and corrective measures were put in place (for example, by changing the terms of maternity leave).

- Gender training was institutionalized and is now a core component of the Police Academy curriculum which has resulted in an improved capacity of the KP to better address gender issues (for example, it contributed to the drafting of the Domestic Violence Law).

- Establishment of coordination mechanisms for domestic violence in three pilot municipalities. The coordination mechanism includes all institutions that address domestic violence and support domestic violence survivors. For example, the municipality of Gjilan committed to assigning a person to coordinate the range of efforts and processes to address domestic violence.

- Perhaps most significantly, the gender equality training for the KP made a significant impact on key actors' attitudes to dealing with GBV and improved the prospects for close collaboration between security actors, local authorities, judges, prosecutors and women's NGOs, helping to

ensure a holistic community response to women's security needs.

- Identification of key male and female champions in the management and leadership of the KP. Critically, these key individuals continued to champion gender mainstreaming in security policies and institutions beyond their terms with the KP, as lead politicians and parliamentarians, for example.

- UN Women-Kosovo support was phased out from most of these areas as they became institutionalized in the KP. The current focus is on supporting the creation of the first Women's Police Association, which will be an important next step to ensure the sustainability of what has been achieved to date.

As a result of these changes, the ability of the KP to deliver security as a public service significantly improved and other key security institutions, such as the Kosovo Protection Corps, were also supported by UN Women-Kosovo for mainstreaming gender within their structures and programmes. The KSF, while not directly supported by UN Women-Kosovo, also benefited from the broader lessons and results.

The increased capacity and visibility of some of the main women's groups/organizations in Kosovo, especially in terms of policy engagement and institutional dialogue, was another concrete result of UN Women-Kosovo support. In practice, it contributed to a much more vibrant and capable sector as a whole, which is today able to contribute and influence the policy agenda in a number of key areas. Examples include:

- Collaboration with *Medica Kosova*, a specialised NGO working on issues of sexual and gender-based violence and VAW. UN Women-Kosovo has supported and contributed to strengthening the capacity of this organization since 1999, in particular on issues of GBV which have been prevalent in Kosovo since before the war. Many years of experience in medical, legal and psychological/social support have given *Medica Kosova* significant credibility, as well as a presence in many parts of the country. As a result, they have raised awareness of VAW, the stigma attached to domestic violence and, together with other key actors, generated a national dialogue/process to recognize and start to address the problem. Also, as a result of the progress made over the years on issues of VAW and GBV, opportunities have arisen recently to start to address the complex issue of wartime sexual violence and redress/reparation for rape survivors which was particularly significant. There is work towards improving access to justice for rape survivors, prosecution of perpetrators, as well as exploring different reparation options (for example, the recognition of rape survivors as civilian victims of war and entitlements to war pensions). This is a key and extremely complex area for the peace process in Kosovo and certainly a priority when it comes to issues of women in peace and security processes.

- UN Women-Kosovo supported important inter-ethnic dialogues within Kosovo and in the region. Of particular note was its collaboration with the Roma, Ashkaly, Egyptian (RAE) Women's Network. Started in 2006, RAE Women's Network was a good (and rare) example of a long-term strategy and investment in citizens who were routinely excluded and marginalized, including by education and professional organizations.

Given the time and human resources needed and the relatively low results they are likely to achieve, international organizations rarely focus on building such local structures, characterized by highly informal networks and rules. Through a combination of hands-on support, intensive and tailored training, and especially the brokering of relationships to ensure that RAE women had the capacity and opportunity to engage in policy dialogue and other activities, UN Women-Kosovo helped RAE Women's Network develop into an autonomous organization able to fundraise with major international organizations and to meaningfully engage in a number of processes/programmes (for example, commenting on and contributing to EU reports). UN Women-Kosovo achieved this by explicitly designing and implementing an exit strategy to ensure the final objective of supporting the development of a self-reliant organization.

In addition to these specific examples of results on the ground, UN Women-Kosovo (and UNIFEM) achieved a strategic and yet often overlooked result. It created and fostered a network of reformers and champions, women and men across the political spectrum, from the highest level of national leadership (e.g. the Deputy Prime Minister, who has been working with UN Women-Kosovo since just after the war), to grassroots activists and women's groups. UN Women-Kosovo plays a pivotal role in keeping this network alive by convening activities, brokering dialogues and fostering partnerships, mostly behind the scenes. There was consensus amongst the respondents that this was made possible by the relentless hard work, commitment and vision of the very small UN Women-Kosovo staff, and particularly the OIC. The level of trust and credibility that she enjoys amongst all key actors is remarkable and an invaluable asset for UN Women-Kosovo in the country and region. While this is a somewhat intangible result, it was too often overlooked by evaluations and yet was instrumental for more concrete changes to happen in practice.

Despite these results and achievements, there were some constraints and limitations to UN Women-Kosovo's strategy and approach in Kosovo that prevented the achievement of some key objectives. The two most important were:

- The risk of efforts being spread too thin, probably due to a lack of explicit strategy at the programme level, which on the one hand allowed enough flexibility to adapt to emerging priorities, but on the other did not achieve sufficient focus on the most pressing ones. Going forward, especially in a less predictable funding environment, prioritizing fewer interventions in key strategic areas (for instance, in Serbia negotiations and in war crimes against women) will be important; and

- The somewhat limited capacity of UN Women-Kosovo to influence change at the 'higher' level of policy and political engagement. Most of UN Women-Kosovo's work focused on issues of women and peace and security in relation to policy and practice at the national and local level, with a strong emphasis on building the capacity of local organizations, especially NGOs and women's groups. There were only a few notable examples of collaboration with key politicians and leaders, yet there was a sense that more could be done to engage with a wider range of actors and individuals (for example, women in academia, but also international networks beyond the regional networks with which UN Women-Kosovo already engages). Engaging with these actors would ensure more direct influence over key political processes (such as peace negotiations at the

regional level and political processes to secure international recognition) which, at present, but also in the more immediate post-war period and negotiations, did not sufficiently focus on gender. In practice, while the regional women's network and dialogue holds the potential to address some of this and actors involved find it valuable, progress has been slow.

While both of these issues were potentially important to ensure that UN Women-Kosovo had the greatest possible impact in Kosovo peace and security processes, it was important to recognise that the second constraint goes far beyond what UN Women-Kosovo as a project office can achieve on its own with its limited capacity. As such, this is something to be tackled by the international community as a whole, under the leadership of the UN Women at the international (not only regional) level, but with the involvement and backing of key players such as the EU. It was unclear what the mechanisms within Kosovo (or the region) could be for this to happen in the short- and medium-term.

To what extent was UN Women able to translate global policy/strategies into programmatic work?

As noted above, the regional programme on peace and security aimed at implementing resolution 1325, which provides the overall policy framework for the activities. The current phase focuses on the following key dimensions of the resolution 1325/UN Women global strategy:

- Increase women's leadership and participation;

- Increase women's leadership in peace, security and humanitarian response; and

- A comprehensive set of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment that is dynamic, responds to new and emerging issues, challenges and opportunities, and provides a firm basis for action by governments and stakeholders at all levels.

In practice, the technical support to the working group responsible for developing the NAP on implementing resolution 1325 was perhaps the most tangible example of UN Women-Kosovo effort to translate global strategies in programmatic work. In the past UN Women-Kosovo also played a critical role in supporting CEDAW reporting.

Despite these links with global policies and corporate strategies, the focus of the Kosovo programme was very much responsive to the specific political, security and social context in which it was developed. What was perhaps unique about this programme was its regional dimension, all the more relevant given the regional drivers of the conflict, peace processes and ensuing political processes, especially Kosovo independence in the context of Serbia/Kosovo relations. However, the regional programme and strategies were not the focus of this case study, so it was not possible to assess the results in any more detail here.

To what extent were UN Women programmes tailored to the specific socio-political, cultural and economic context in which they operate? How was this translated into programme design and planning?

Tailoring of the programme was a very clear area of success for UN Women in Kosovo, at least in relation to its engagement with the national context (the case study did not consider the regional component). All programme activities that were observed during this case study revealed a very sound understanding of the political and social context in which UN Women-

Kosovo operates, including realistic approaches on how best to identify opportunities for reform and on how to seize them. Such approaches include the capacity to adopt very politically aware strategies and reasonably calculated risks in terms of programmatic decision-making. In practice, and as noted above, this often translated in UN Women-Kosovo adopting a very specific, often behind the scenes brokering role between key national stakeholders, both within and outside the state, combined with an explicit strategy of directly targeting and engaging the most influential individuals with a strong commitment to reform.

Most respondents confirmed that UN Women-Kosovo was highly effective at tailoring and adapting their programmes to the actual needs, priorities and opportunities that were most relevant and pressing in Kosovo, as well as to the rapidly changing institutional environment of the post-war years. Such flexibility should not be interpreted as short termism, however, as the programme relied on well-established collaborations, often in place since the early 2000s. Long-term commitment is a key ingredient of being able to respond to context and work politically, as it forms the basis of trustworthy relationships with local actors.

The same strategy of behind the scenes support and profile was, to some extent, also adopted vis-à-vis the international community in Kosovo, although here the results in terms of capacity to influence policies and practice were more mixed (see comments under Dimension 1).

It was worth noting that, while much of this 'political economy analysis' informs programmes and activities, it was not clearly laid out in programmatic documents. Rather, it tended to remain implicit in the minds of UN Women-Kosovo key staff (and partners). However, the logic (and the history) behind current programmatic approaches and choices were revealed during the interviews and are certainly an area worth documenting in more detail in future research and evaluation efforts, as it would provide useful lessons across different UN Women-Kosovo programmes.

How effective was UN Women at identifying *and* using key opportunities and partnerships at country level?

AND

How effective were UN Women programmes at fostering/strengthening national ownership through country engagement of intended outcomes regarding improved leadership and participation of women in relevant peace and security and humanitarian response intervention/process?

In stark contrast to the feedback on international agencies which have been active in Kosovo in significant capacity since the war, UN Women-Kosovo enjoyed a very high degree of credibility and trust with all local and national stakeholders at different levels. This was a direct result of the implicit theory of change underpinning much of UN Women-Kosovo activities: a combination of (i) long-term meaningful partnerships and collaboration with key organizations and (ii) vision and deliberate strategy of targeting influential individuals and future leaders (including male champions). Some respondents reported that UN Women-Kosovo very effectively used the array of roles available to international actors to engage with partners and shape the relationships.

Existing partnerships included at least three types of organizations/institutions:

- Women's NGOs and CSOs (including KWN, KGSC, Norma, *Medica Kosova*, RAE Women's Network, etc.);

- Issue specific institutions (e.g. KP, KJI, AGE); and

- Networks and coalitions (e.g. the SGG, caucuses of women Members of Parliament, Regional Women's Lobby, etc.).

In relation to individuals, as mentioned above, UN Women-Kosovo had longstanding collaborations with influential decision-makers who were able to progress the women's peace and security agenda in different institutions. They included the Deputy Prime Minister and lead negotiator with Serbia, the former head of the police (now a Member of Parliament) and some of the advisors in the inner circle of the President, as well in the Prime Minister's office. These relationships were not surprising as such, as most international agencies in Kosovo were likely to have contacts at the highest institutional and political level. What is striking, however, was how these relationships were deeply rooted. Since none of these individuals were in such positions of power was testament to UN Women-Kosovo's ability to spot leadership skills and potential change-makers in the very early days of their engagement in the country.

All these relationships were underpinned by very strong ownership on the partner side of all activities and interventions. As noted above, UN Women-Kosovo adopted a fairly low key/behind the scenes role with partners setting the directions.

Improvement here can be made, especially in relation to broadening collaborations with other key groups/actors (e.g. academia and stronger links with international groups) to ensure greater reach of UN Women-Kosovo activities and to gain better support for increasing UN Women-Kosovo effectiveness. It was also worth noting that, until recently, there was very little in terms of formal screening and selection of partners. Recent attempts to scrutinise proposals more closely and select partners/project proposals on the basis of competitive tendering were not welcomed by all existing partners, but were a necessary correction to existing practices.

Assessing the regional component of UN Women-Kosovo work was beyond the scope of this exercise, even though it was almost certainly a significant factor in UN Women-Kosovo's ability to achieve its objectives on women in peace and security across the region.

> In what ways did the new mandate/reorganization provide opportunities to improve programme effectiveness and coherence between UN Women policies and operational engagement?

The transition to UN Women was not complete at the time of the evaluation and the confusion (and some apprehensions) around it made it difficult to assess at this stage whether or not it will provide opportunities. Partners lacked information and/or understanding (some NGOs associated the transition to UN Women with tighter regulations on funding processes, for example), together with some expectations about what the new entity would be able to achieve, (for example, in terms of greater influencing capacity with the United Nations and vis-à-vis other United Nations entities). One respondent expressed concern that the transition to UN Women would not address the substantial lack of strategic vision at leadership level of the entity, mainly in New York, reflected down to all other levels. There was an urgent need to communicate with partners the details of the transition process and what it would entail in practice at the country level due, in part, to UNIFEM being considered 'trusted' brand in Kosovo. The change therefore carried some risks in terms of reputation and perceptions amongst national stakeholders.

Uncertainties within the UN Women-Kosovo office about the employment arrangements of key staff, their status within the United Nations system, their relationship with the new

regional office (as Kosovo will not be a country office and it is likely to be managed by a different regional office) etc., were also evident. These issues were not explored in any detail during the case study, partly because changes were taking place during the team visit. The evaluation team noted the commitment of an overworked team going through what appeared to be substantial changes.

The office will need to continue fundraising in order to implement its activities and the transition to UN Women will not bring about significant changes on this front.

How innovative was UN Women in its programmatic approaches and what lessons were learned that can be replicated in different contexts?

As mentioned above, the distinctive feature of UN Women-Kosovo is the 'trusted broker' approach, combined with a vision and determination to identify future leaders and reform champions able to embed changes at the heart of institutions, behaviour and practices. UN Women-Kosovo demonstrated an ability to spot and seize opportunities for change very early on, for example, in their lobbying strategy for the gender equality law. Combined, these features suggested an innovative approach that was quite rare to see working effectively in practice, even though it was often recognized as a potentially good strategy for success. However, in reality, the approach was difficult to operationalize because it required long-term commitment in the country and in-depth knowledge of its structures, institutions and history. It also required being able to develop and nurture relationships at different levels, which required trust and legitimacy, neither of which were easy to find in the relationship between international agencies and national institutions or actors.

The experiences and achievements in Kosovo in this respect were certainly worth documenting more thoroughly, with a view to sharing lessons in different contexts. However, some caution is needed in terms of 'exporting or replicating the model', for at least two reasons:

- UN Women-Kosovo project office enjoys very high levels of trust and profile among the Kosovo institutions due to the strong leadership of an OIC who was supported by a very small group of project personnel with high turnover. In practice, it was the profile, credibility, political skills, knowledge of the context and, above all, personal commitment of the office staff that made the difference, not the model as such, which in itself carries some considerable risks (staff turnover, uncertainty of resources and morale, overwork, etc.); and

- However generic the features of the model may have been (brokering, credibility, etc.) the way it worked in practice was very context specific and not necessarily easy to replicate in other contexts/countries. The combination of leadership, knowledge and the ensuing level of trust and profile in the countries were unique features of the Kosovo case.

Finally, the potential trade-off between the adaptive and flexible model adopted by UN Women in Kosovo and the need to establish clear strategic priorities and directions was worth reemphasizing. It was certainly made more difficult by the challenges of reconciling global and subregional strategies with a volatile political environment, uncertainty of funds, and the unclear institutional and staffing arrangements of the project office.

Dimension 3: UN Women's organizational capacities, resources and structures

How adequate were UN Women's human and financial resources to effectively engage in conflict-affected countries?

UN Women-Kosovo has always been a project office, with an uncertain staffing structure and funding. For years the office was not allocated any United Nations staff and was entirely run by service contractors, including the OIC, often supported by UN Volunteers (UNVs), experts on mission and/or interns. The office is programmatically and operationally supported by the regional office in Bratislava (Slovakia), which closed in 2013. The OIC represented UN Women in the UNKT and other personnel actively contributed to United Nations country team work. The 'quasi country office' status was a significant challenge to the day-to-day operations of the team, as well as to any realistic chance to scale up the impressive results achieved thus far and achieve greater and more sustainable impact in terms of women's leadership and participation in peace and security policies and practices across the country.

Staff were overstretched and there was an overall sense of urgency underpinning most activities. Most respondents recognized the commitment and hard work of the team and how much it was able to achieve with such limited resources.

In terms of financial resources, the Bratislava regional office played a critical role in securing the funding for the three phases of the regional resolution 1325 project and, more generally, it played a critical support role for the Kosovo project office. There were concerns among the UN Women-Kosovo staff that they will be under even more pressure to fundraise for all activities.

UN Women-Kosovo successfully engaged a number of different donors. However, these relationships were somewhat ad hoc and short-term, with different agencies funding different phases of the programme (Austria, Norway and Sweden). Even though Norway has funded UN Women-Kosovo since the second phase (2007), there was little sense of this being a key partnership or a long-term engagement.

How fit for purpose was UN Women in terms of the technical skills of its staff and its broader capacity to fulfil its mandate?

All UN Women-Kosovo service contractors, UNVs, interns and secondees appeared to have very sound technical and administrative skills and were all very committed. As mentioned above, the OIC possessed fairly unique political and negotiating skills, as well as many years of experience of grassroots engagement and training. Perhaps what was most lacking were additional research and analytical skills to ensure that some of the ideas underpinning the programmes were adequately captured and reflected upon throughout programme design and implementation.

Finally, in order to fully implement and make the most of the new mandate, additional skills and knowledge of the United Nations and international system, ideally at the higher level, would be extremely beneficial.

How effective was UN Women at coordinating gender-related work across United Nations entities and other key partners?

Overall, there was a sense that the gender and peace and security sector was well organized in Kosovo and that UN Women-Kosovo played a pivotal role in ensuring this, mainly through the SGG as a common platform for collaboration and information sharing. If the office had greater capacity and a clearer mandate to lead on gender issues at the country

level, even more crucial strategic coordination could be achieved, especially in terms of the peace process and key negotiations with Serbia. Collaboration with UNDP existed, but it was mainly at the project/operational level.

> How effectively did UN Women manage risks in its operations? What strategies worked best?
>
> How fit for purpose were UN Women M&E and reporting systems? Did they adequately capture lessons learned on results and impact?

Formal mechanisms to assess risks, other than the traditional logframe, did not exist. However, the politically shrewd approach adopted by UN Women-Kosovo entailed a certain amount of risk taking, especially in terms of brokering 'deals' between very divisive groupings or engaging with politicized processes.

Regular reporting was submitted to donors, but was not structured to facilitate internal learning or sharing lessons with partners. There were plenty of publications which described different components of the programme and to some extent results and achievements, but again they did not offer much reflection on lessons learned,[40] what worked well and why, and what could be done about it. Improvements in this area would help strengthen and build on the current work.

Overall analysis, and implications for policy, programming and practice

Overall, UN Women-Kosovo had a sound approach on women's leadership and participation programming in peace and security. Some of the most salient features of the underlying (and mostly implicit) theory of change included being able to broker a productive dialogue between different, often divisive, constituencies working on women's issues in Kosovo and adopting a politically informed approach to building long-standing relationships with leaders and decision-makers. To ensure local ownership and commitment, UN Women-Kosovo adopted a deliberate strategy of operating behind the scenes, whilst still clearly maintaining its role as lead organization in the field. Above all, UN Women-Kosovo staff enjoyed significant trust and credibility amongst all key national stakeholders which, combined with fairly out of the ordinary commitment and motivation, positioned UN Women-Kosovo in a unique role as a pivotal 'deal broker' in many legislative, policy and operational changes.

Significant results were achieved in a number of programmatic areas, including SSR and addressing GBV, as well as meaningful policy development and implementation in relation to gender equality, both in general and on peace and security, through the process of development of the NAPs. In the future, it will be important to focus on key priorities such as gender-based war crimes and the political talks and negotiations with Serbia and others to finalize the independence process. At the time of the evaluation these negotiations and political processes did not appear to be tackling women's issues in any significant way and the role and presence of women in the process itself was still very marginal.

While the results outlined in this report form the basis for greater strategic engagement not only at national but also at regional and global levels, in order to achieve this some of the constraints and limitations identified by this case study need to be addressed. These include:

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[40] With the exception of the 2011 publication *Networking and network-building in support of women, peace and security: Experiences from the Western Balkans UN Women Subregional Office for Central and Eastern Europe* (Martha Stickings). The publication focused on lessons learned, but was mostly confined to issues of partnership and networking.

- The lack of an overall, explicit strategy and direction for the project on implementing resolution 1325 in the medium and long-term.

- Related to this is the risk of addressing too many issues with too scarce human and financial resources. There was a pressing need to identify and select key thematic, political and operational priorities to maximize the efforts that were needed to support them.

- The need to better coordinate, but also influence and shape, the agenda of other key international actor*s* working on women in peace and security in Kosovo, mainly other United Nations entities and the EU. This clearly cannot be achieved with the current level of human and financial resources. In addition, the 'project office' status of UN Women-Kosovo represents a real blockage to step up the influencing agenda on the issue of women's leadership in peace and security, as it formally lacks the necessary authority and independence.

- The need to scale up efforts to engage more effectively in regional, and later global, policy debates on women's leadership in peace and security contexts. In particular, there is a need to specifically address issues of gender in relation to peace negotiations, and Kosovo/Serbia talks. While the current focus on supporting the process of regional dialogue was certainly valuable, there is a need to ensure that it can be better integrated into the main negotiations.

- The need to diversify the skills and knowledge of UN Women-Kosovo staff and partners, to ensure that the programme is supported by sufficient analytical capacity and expertise and that it reaches out to all key constituencies working on peace and security (for example, women in academia).

- The urgent need to finalize the new arrangements emerging form the transition to UN Women; reassure and motivate UN Women-Kosovo staff; ensure key stakeholders and partners are aware of the transition and what it entails; minimize risks associated with losing out on the trusted UNIFEM brand; and initiate a new and different dialogue between UN Women-Kosovo and other United Nations entities and international bodies in light of the new mandate.

6. Recommendations

In light of the analysis above, the evaluation team made the following recommendations:

Dimension 1: UN Women's policy and strategic direction

For UN Women at the global level

There is a need to better articulate global, regional and country strategies and a long-term vision for engaging in peace and security programming and processes in the Balkans, and to communicate these effectively to key partners and stakeholders.

More investment in the Kosovo office is needed if it is to be more effective at engaging and influencing international agencies such as the United Nations and the EU (which was not collaborating with the United Nations a great deal even though it was the major player in the country).

The current engagement in regional dialogue and talks with Serbia need to be strengthened by a broader commitment by UN Women at the regional and international level to ensure that women's issues are adequately addressed; women are engaged in the process; and their views are represented. There is a limit to what can be expected of such a small project office with limited authority and resources.

For UN Women-Kosovo

UN Women-Kosovo needs to better articulate and make explicit the underlying theories of change currently in use, to ensure that the linkages envisaged between different activities and dimensions to realise long-lasting change are explicit and shared within UN Women-Kosovo and with partners.

There is the scope and need to invest in and further develop the work on war gender crimes and support of rape survivors, building on the experience and achievements of many years of engagement on domestic violence and broader VAW issues.

In terms of national policy development, the support for the NAP process should be followed up with concrete plans to collaborate with key national actors to monitor and ensure implementation.

A review of current partnerships, collaborations and level of influence within them would help to identify strengths, weakness and current gaps. In particular, there should be a review of the strategy for engaging with other United Nations entities, the EU and other international bodies, and opinion makers and women's leaders in different arenas, such as academia.

Dimension 2: UN Women's policies, programming and operations

For UN Women at the global level

The key milestones and implications for the transition to UN Women need to be better articulated, first and foremost within UN Women-Kosovo, to address the current lack of clarity and to provide staff with a clear sense of direction and the changes ahead. There is also a need to communicate clearly the terms of the transition to national and international partners and to relaunch the dialogue with other United Nations entities in light of the new mandate.

For UN Women-Kosovo

There is an urgent need to review the current portfolio of activities, partners and themes to minimize the risk of doing too much on too many fronts with too limited resources. A limited number of priorities should be identified. While maintaining a flexible and adaptive approach to programming has its benefits, this should not be at the expense of a clear articulation of priorities rather than a focus on general outcomes.

These priorities should be part of an overall strategy for the medium- and long-term. Crucially, this strategy should not be formulated for donor/funding purposes only, but should also be targeted at national partners and stakeholders as well as the broader international community.

Related to this, there is a need to better document and communicate the programme strategy as well as its key results and achievements. The document *Networking and network-building in support of women, peace and security: Experiences from the western Balkans* (2011) was a good start, but shorter and more analytical outputs are needed. It would also be useful to document the overall strategies, decision logics and underlying political analysis that have been successful in the Kosovo context, with a view to sharing the experiences more widely

and learning lessons from them. This might be particularly relevant as part of UN Women-Kosovo regional engagement.

Once the key priorities for the current programme have been reviewed and established, the current partnerships and collaborations should be reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose. In particular, there is a need to strengthen partnerships and collaborations in key areas such as war crimes and rape survivors and political talks and negotiations with Serbia (here collaboration with the Deputy Prime Minister is key, but more strategic collaborations like these are needed), as well as inter-agency collaboration.

Dimension 3: UN Women's organizational capacities, resources and structures

For UN Women at the global level

The current level of financial and human resources should be reviewed in light of the identification of priorities and overall strategy outlined above. Rather than fundraising to ensure the survival of the programme, the financing strategy should switch to a more targeted approach, ideally with some dedicated resources. UN Women-Kosovo needs more support and direction from the regional office and headquarters to achieve this.

As the programme becomes more focused specifically on security and peace and state-building challenges, it will be important to ensure that staff, collaborators and partners have the relevant operational and analytical skills.

There may be scope for greater higher-level coordination and proactive engagement within the United Nations system in Kosovo to ensure that issues of women's leadership and participation in peace and security are sufficiently profiled and taken seriously as part of the broader policy engagement on the newly formed institutions and, crucially, in the regional and international negotiations on independence.

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Interviews

Organization/Entity	Function/Title
UN Women-Kosovo	Officer-in-Charge; Governance and Peace Advisor
Expert on mission Governance and Peace Advisor (seconded by Government of Iceland)	Governance and Peace Advisor (seconded by Government of Iceland)
Deputy PM Office	Deputy Prime Minister
Kosovo Police (KP)Gender Advisor at KP	Gender Advisor at KP
Kosovo Assembly	MP (previously in KP)
Kosovo Judicial Institute (KJI)	OSCE Special Advisor
Kosovo Judicial Institute (KJI)	Programme Coordinator
Kosovo Police (KP)	Head of Domestic Violence Unit
Agency for Gender equality (AGE)	Executive Director
Kosovo Prime Minister's Office	Director of the Legal Office at the PM
Kosovo Assembly	Advisor to the Women Caucus
Kosovo Gender Study Centre (KGSC)	Executive Director
Roma, Ashkaly, Egyptian (RAE) Women Network	Executive Director
Roma, Ashkaly, Egyptian (RAE) Women Network	Assistants
NORMA – Women's Lawyer Association	Executive Director
Medica Kosova	Executive Director
UNDP/UNKT	Resident Coordinator/United Nations Development Coordinator
EULEX	National Gender officer
UNDP	Gender Programme Associate
OSCE	Gender Advisor
OSCE	Senior Auditor
OSCE	Gender Focal Point
UNMIK	Human Rights Officer
UNMIK	Senior Human Rights Advisor
UNFPA	Programme Specialist, OIC
UNFPA	Project Associate
Kosovo judicial system	Judge in Appeal Court
Kosovo judicial system	Judge in Appeal Court

LIBERIA

Country Case Study*

Acronyms

BIN	Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
EU	European Union
GTG	Gender Thematic Group
LNP	Liberia National Police
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoGD	Ministry of Gender and Development
NAP	National Action Plan
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OGA	Office of the Gender Adviser
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SSR	Security Sector Reforms
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia

1. Introduction

The Liberia case study is one of five country case studies for the corporate evaluation of UN Women's contribution to increasing women's leadership and participation in peace and security and humanitarian response. The case study examined a selection of UN Women's peace and security work in Liberia, as well as some aspects of its portfolio concerned with violence against women and governance work relevant to the peace and security agenda. The evaluation also examined related operational and capacity issues as they arose, in agreement with the evaluation matrix areas of inquiry. The case study provides a summary of the key findings and recommendations.

2. Methodology

Fieldwork for this case study was conducted in Liberia from 18-22 February 2013. Preparatory work and consultations were conducted prior to fieldwork being carried out. Some interviews that could not be scheduled during the fieldwork mission were conducted by phone or via online telecommunications subsequent to field travel. Field work was carried out by a member of the evaluation team in collaboration with a local researcher which contributed to ensuring triangulation, knowledge of the socio-political context and better coverage of the data.

During the fieldwork the country-level strategy and programming which focused on the peace and security and humanitarian response agenda was examined. More detailed observation of country office work in this area involved looking at a selection of interventions, which were decided with the country office and the evaluation team leader.

Stakeholders outside of Monrovia were interviewed through field visits to Weala and Totota (Margibi county) and Gbarnga (Bong county) which allowed the evaluation team to meet with a selection of stakeholders from across the group of relevant stakeholders at the sub-national level. Site selection was based on distance from the capital, accessibility issues and time constraints, as well as advice from the country office in terms of appropriate field sites.

Fieldwork was based on qualitative analysis, drawing on a combination of documentary evidence provided by the country office and other stakeholders, as well as interviews and focus group discussions. The fieldwork ensured that the range of relevant stakeholders identified with the country office in the inception phase were interviewed. Interviews and focus group discussions were semi-structured to address the concrete evaluation questions, but also allowed for unstructured questions appropriate to the interview, the context and in relation to the intervention or activity under observation. Interviews were guided by the evaluation matrix.

In line with guidelines provided in the handbook Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation prepared by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), the country case evaluation team ensured the inclusion and participation of relevant stakeholders, taking care to identify issues of power relations. The context analysis and the stakeholder mapping that was developed took account of the context-specific balance of power between relevant groups. During the fieldwork, the team was mindful of the relationship between implementers and different stakeholders in interventions, including taking into consideration the role of the evaluation team.

The country visit was relatively short and the evaluation team were only able to review a limited number of interventions. Therefore, the analysis in this report does not represent a full picture of the work of UN Women's Liberia country office. Where broader reflections have

been gathered, these are noted, but do not represent a full evaluation of the office and its position within Liberia.

3.   Country context

Context analysis

Liberia is located on the west coast of Africa, with an estimated population of 3.5 million. Liberia was established as an independent country in 1820 by free African Americans and freed slaves from the United States and became the Republic of Liberia in 1847. Its economy was based on extraction, which worked to benefit the small Liberian elite of American descendants (known as the Americo-Liberians) largely based in the capital, Monrovia (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2011). The centralisation of power around these elites led to the exclusion of large sections of the population from political decision-making which created perceptions of historic injustices and inter-ethnic tensions, which have been a longstanding source of conflict in Liberia.[41]

In 1980, these grievances culminated in a military coup led by indigenous leader, Samuel K. Doe. Under his rule, he increased investment in previously neglected areas and extended infrastructure beyond the capital. However, he also created a governmental system that benefited one ethnic group, Krahns, over others (OECD, 2011). Unrest continued in the late 1980s, furthered by an invasion led by Charles Taylor from Côte d'Ivoire in 1989 which led to a militia occupation which splintered into multiple competing factions. Doe was ousted in 1990 and the interim Government of National Unity was installed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) under which Dr Amos Sawyer served as Interim President. Despite the formal ceasefire, the period saw ongoing conflict between warring factions, including those led by Charles Taylor, who was eventually elected president in 1997. Civil war broke out again in 1999, with two rebel groups, the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia, in control of large parts of the country by 2003 (ICG, 2011).

Following protracted peace talks, a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was agreed in Accra in 2003. The CPA provided for a national transitional government which would be backed by the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), a peacekeeping mission, for two years to oversee its implementation. The CPA brought to an end the 14-year civil war, which had resulted in the deaths of more than a quarter of a million Liberians and the displacement of another million. During the period, women and children were particularly vulnerable. An estimated one child in 10 was thought to have been abducted during the conflict, either to become a combatant or as forced sex slaves for combatants (Blaney et al, 2010).

Key milestones since 2003

Key milestones since the signing of the CPA include:

- Multi-party elections in 2005, with a government formed by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, with no overall majority in the legislature. Upon her election, President Johnson Sirleaf established an inclusive cabinet comprised of members of rival political parties and civil society actors, in order to ensure some tribal, religious, political and regional representation across government (ICG, 2011). She also ensured that high numbers of

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[41] The ethnic groups in Liberia are: Bassa, Belle, Dei, Gbandi, Gio, Gola, Grebo, Kpelle, Kissi, Krahns, Kru, Loma, Mandingos, Mano Mende, Sapo and Vai.

women were appointed to ministries and other high-profile positions.[42] Many former warlords and those close to Charles Taylor remained in the legislature, however. President Sirleaf was re-elected in a second round of elections in 2011.

- The CPA also established a Truth and Reconciliation Process, with widespread consultation around the country, mandated to set out a road map for future reconciliation processes. It produced a final report in 2009, although its recommendations were seen as controversial (Weah, 2012).

- The first poverty reduction strategy, Lift Liberia, ran from 2007-2012. Following national consultation, it was replaced in 2012 by the Agenda for Transformation, which is Liberia's medium-term economic growth and development strategy, 2012-2017. The strategy has a number of pillars including: peace, justice, security and rule of law; economic transformation; human development; governance and public institutions; as well as cross-cutting issues such as gender inequality and child protection.

- In 2012, the Government of Liberia and its partners established the Strategic Roadmap for National Healing, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation (2012-2030) which set an 18-year timeframe to transform mindsets, rebuild relationships and rebuild social, political and economic institutions to sustain reconciliation and peace. Implementation is organized in six three-year programme cycles, with the first two programme cycles consistent with the Liberia Peacebuilding Programme and the Agenda for Transformation.

Women and conflict in Liberia

Cultural life in much of rural Liberia has been governed by intricate systems of traditional chiefs and elders in the *Poro* and *Sande* secret societies (particularly found in central and western Liberia) (Government of Liberia/United Nations Joint Programme on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence [SGBV], 2011). These societies have been the main institutions for initiating young boys and girls into adulthood. For men, the emphasis is on hunting skills, how and when to initiative sexual activity, and how to provide for a family. For women, the emphasis is on teaching them how to take care of the home and to satisfy the needs and abide by the rules of their husbands. Such a system has facilitated sexual activity at an early age, something which is reinforced by findings from the 2007 Demographic and Health Survey, which found that childbirth usually began early (average age at first birth was 19 years of age, with a quarter of girls aged 15 and 19 years of age already having one child) (DHS, 2007).[43] Female genital mutilation practices have also been a core part of initial ceremonies, while marriage dowries are commonplace which reinforce women's perceived position as the property of men.

During the civil war, women and children were particularly vulnerable. Different surveys produced a range of statistics, but there seems to be common agreement of the prevalence of SGBV. For instance, a survey on gender-based violence by the World Health Organization (WHO) found that almost 94 per cent of women and girls from six of Liberia's 15 counties had experienced some form of sexual abuse. Other reports suggest that, by the end of the war,

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[42] Women have headed some strategic government ministries, including Commerce, Justice, Gender and Labour, although representation of women in the legislature has remained comparatively low (falling from 17 to 13 out of 94 seats in total). Additionally, the Inter-Parliamentary Union data puts Liberia at 101 out of 139 countries analysed in terms of women's representation.
[43] A 2013 DHS is currently being carried out, but results were not available for this report.

an estimated 40 per cent of the population were thought to have been subjected to sexual violence, with men often forced to either witness sexual violence or to commit acts (Government of Liberia/United Nations Joint Programme on SGBV, 2011; Chandler, 2010). The forced displacement of communities further increased risks for women and girls. Men were often confined to the home because of the threat of violence or abduction by militia groups. Women were therefore forced to venture outside to provide for their families, exposing themselves to increased risks of violence, trading sex for food or becoming combatants themselves.

Since the end of the conflict, legacies of trauma and violence have persisted, especially among victims of SGBV and related health problems (including rates of sexually transmitted diseases). The impacts of disruptions to traditional gender roles have also been felt: 'whereas men were previously regarded as the "provider of the family", this responsibility now shifted to women' (Government of Liberia/United Nations Joint Programme on SGBV, 2011: 34). As a result of these legacies, SGBV in Liberia has persisted, usually committed by someone known to victims and with particularly high rates among young people (Small Arms Survey, 2012). The Liberia Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2007 also found that 44 per cent of women between 15 and 49 years of age reported that they had experienced violence since 15 years of age, with the main perpetrators identified as current or former husbands or partners; 18 per cent of women reported some form of sexual violence (Liberia DHS, 2007).

Interviews for a study into SGBV found that 'the persistence of domestic violence, female respondents argued, is directly linked to the increased status of women, on the one hand, and men's perceived loss of power and authority, on the other' (Government of Liberia/United Nations Joint Programme on SGBV, 2011), although this has not been emphasized to the same level in other reports (Chandler, 2010; Small Arms Survey, 2012).

Prior to the signing of the CPA, the peace process was seen largely to exclude women from the main negotiations, although several groups and movements emerged, often from the grassroots, to mobilise for peace (Wamai, 2011). One well-known example was the Mass Movement, initiated by Liberian women affected by the war. It was an all-women movement of around 1,000 local women, characterised by peaceful protests (including sit-ins at the peace talks themselves) and spearheaded by Leygmah Gbowee, who went on to win the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of her efforts. As a result of the war, women's roles have changed to some degree, as is the case in many conflict-affected states (Pillay et al, 2002).

Several international conventions have been ratified by Liberia to address SGBV.[44] Liberia is also seen as something of a pioneer since the war. It was the first post-conflict country to develop a national action plan (NAP) for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325, and UNMIL was the first United Nations peacekeeping mission with a mandate to mainstream resolution 1325. Within the Ministry of Gender and Development (MoGD), the National Secretariat oversees implementation of the NAP. Several important policy initiatives have been undertaken including:

- Legal reforms, including on inheritance and amendment to the law on rape, which addressed property rights for women and ramifications of violence against women and girls, including stronger definitions of rape and increased penalties for perpetrators;

- Efforts to reform the security sector, including improved training and procedures; and

- Judicial reforms, including the creation of the special Court E and the fast-track court processes to deal with cases involving women and children.

Nonetheless, progress remains slow. SGBV violence remains high, with low prosecution rates (Chandler, 2010; CSO, 2011; Government of Liberia/United Nations Joint Programme on SGBV, 2011). New programmes, policies and laws have not yet signified any fundamental changes for women. For instance, rural communities still turn to customary justice institutions to resolve disputes, including matters of domestic violence, rape and other forms of sexual violence. This can result in processes of reconciliation (including the admission of wrongdoing, public apology, the imposition of a fine) which, although relatively fast, accessible and cost-effective for many are based on patriarchal belief systems and fixed gender norms and values. Moreover, the justice sector as a whole faces acute shortages of trained personnel, as well as instances of corruption (Government of Liberia/United Nations Joint Programme on SGBV, 2011) which demotivated some women and girls from seeking to take cases to court.

Finally, there was little widespread economic improvement, especially for rural women. With constrained state resources, there was insufficient support to address women's experiences and trauma from the war (as both survivors and combatants). Moreover, quotas on female representation in the security sector (especially in the armed forces and the police) set out in the NAP have not yet been met, although this takes time and indicators suggest it is progressively increasing.[45]

Key stakeholders

Key government ministries that lead on issues of women's peace and security include the MoGD, which has worked closely with the President's Office on a range of initiatives for women. Other important ministries include the Ministry of Justice, the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN), the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Liberia National Police (LNP) and the Armed Forces of Liberia. Historically, security institutions have had very poor reputations in Liberia, and since independence, have been viewed as having 'mostly served as political instruments of the respective government and oppressed major sectors of Liberian society'. During the civil war, both the Armed Forces and the police committed 'grave atrocities' which led to low levels of public confidence following the end of the war (Jacob, 2009: 53). Since the CPA, there is a perception of improved scrutiny, and improved quality of personnel and efforts to professionalise the armed forces, including progress in increasing the representation of women within the armed forces.

The women's movement in Liberia continues to grow, especially following international recognition of women's mobilization around the peace process and because of the need to continue to support women and girls who have historically been marginalised. UN Women works with a number of key women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including the Women's NGO Secretariat, and networks which operate at the subregional level (e.g. Mano River Women Peace Network) and regional levels (such as the Women's Peace and Security Network/ Women's Peace and Security Network-Africa, Women in Peacebuilding Program/ Women in Peacebuilding Programme). UN Women also works with a number of community-

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[45] Current representation of women includes: Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization 30 per cent, LNP 17 per cent, Ministry of National Security 13.4 per cent, Ministry of Justice 13 per cent and Armed Forces 3.7 per cent (DCAF Workshop Report, May 2011).

based organizations in the key regions in which it delivers programme activities.[46] It also partners with organizations which do not exclusively focus on women, such as Action Aid Liberia. These organizations may be involved in advocacy, as well as offering a range of services to women in the areas of peacebuilding, economic empowerment and so on.

In general, nationally based organizations are much more present in urban parts of the country, while few have a constant presence in rural areas (although other UN Women partners, not listed here, would have more presence). The growth, development and expansion of women's organizations dates back to the early stages of the crisis in Liberia, but they have faced numerous operational challenges including: limited human resource capacities to provide the services needed to contribute to the overall recovery process and to hold government accountable; poor coordination among women's organizations and other civil society organizations (CSOs) in the country, narrowing opportunities for information sharing and lesson learning; and limited capacity-building which significantly undermines performance. At the local level, there are a number of rural structures and locally based groups and networks which also lack capacity and have been prioritized for support by the MoGD.

UN Women's engagement with women's peace and security takes place within the context of an integrated mission and where a number of United Nations entities contribute to elements of the peace and security agenda. There is a perceived lack of understanding among stakeholders about what the new mandate involves for UN Women, and the implications for how it engages with relevant stakeholders. This is a potential source of tension with other United Nations entities (such as the Department for Peacekeeping Operations [DPKO]) and where there is a multiplicity of stakeholders with an interest in women's peace and security. However, these are evolving relationships – and notably as regards UNMIL, the Office of Gender Advisor (OGA) and UN Women. Currently the United Nations Gender Thematic Group (GTG) is country office-chaired by UN Women and UNMIL/OGA as part of the One United Nations approach.

Some have argued that this multiplicity of actors in the past led to a lack of comprehensive strategy for the reform process (with little coordination, harmonisation and cooperation between different reform areas and within the donor community), and specifically for the lack of an overall strategy for bringing gender into the security sector. Thus, Jacobs notes that 'OGA activities referred to particular aspects of gender concerns, but without a clearly defined overall vision' (Jacobs, 2009: 58). Some interviewees felt that it had been challenging for UNIFEM to play this role, where other United Nations entities and UNMIL had greater overall resources and a higher profile in relation to peace and security more broadly and gender specifically, through OGA. The transition to UN Women, therefore, represented an opportunity for the new entity to take a more proactive coordination role on gender, although required close engagement with OGA as drawdown of UNMIL proceeds. Moreover, informants noted that UN Women at the corporate level needed to provide clearer instructions on how to conduct the new coordination role at country level, including clarifying this with the Special Representative and other United Nations entities. This is particularly important in the context of Liberia as a Delivering as One United Nations country.

Usefully, there were signs of some United Nations entities already recognising this changed mandate and UN Women's niche within the Delivering as One approach. Specifically, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) recently reviewed its programmes in line with

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[46] A full list is not provided in this section. The UN Women country office maintains an approved list of organizations, from which it identifies specific local partners for projects/programmes.

changes to its global strategy, and refined its focus to aspects of sexual and reproductive health (with SGBV covered where it relates to this), in part in recognition of UN Women's defined role on women's leadership, peace and security. There appeared to be greater complexities in defining mandates in relation to other entities (e.g. DPKO), and greater support at the corporate level could be directed towards this, including to clarify mandates of the different entities. UNMIL is mandated to report to the Security Council, through which it reports on gender as part of the integrated mission. At the time of the fieldwork the division of labour between entities was unclear – therefore resulting in insufficient coordination on activities.[47]

A number of bilateral donor agencies also provide assistance in Liberia. One of the largest of these is the United States, (through the United States Agency for International Development [USAID] and other State Department funds) which, due to its historic ties, has maintained a significant presence in Liberia. In 2011, it had estimated spending of $218 million[48], spread across various programmes including support to the Economic Support Fund and for global health and child survival, food aid, peacekeeping operations and military assistance.[49] Other significant donors include Denmark, the European Union (EU), Germany, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Italy, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom (UK). Since 2005, assistance has averaged 114 per cent of gross national income, making Liberia highly aid dependent (OECD, 2011). The evaluation team did not have access to any specific evaluations of the work of these agencies for women's peace and security, and review of these was beyond the scope of this evaluation.

4.   UN Women strategy and programming in Liberia

Background

UN Women has been working in Liberia since 2004, in line with the UN Women Global Strategic Framework and the West Africa Regional Strategy. UN Women country office-chairs the GTG with UNMIL/OGA, comprised of all United Nations entities in Liberia.

Thematic priorities and programme work

UN Women's programme in Liberia currently focuses on three pillars of work:

1 Economic empowerment;

2 Women's peace and security, including women's leadership; and

3 Gender mainstreaming of public policies and programmes.

There appears to have been a clear evolution in UN Women's priorities and focus in Liberia in recent years. The most recent strategic plan (2012/2013) identifies two clear areas of focus, women's economic empowerment and women's leadership in peace and security, which represents a narrowing of focus for the UN Women country office (UN Women Liberia, 2012).

The 2011 Country Strategy emphasized enhancing women's access to and participation in decision-making in peacebuilding, as well as strengthening women's economic empowerment, supporting key ministries to engender their national policies, strategies and guidelines, and providing greater leadership for gender equality within the United Nations

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[47] UNMIL was not interviewed during the fieldtrip, but a telephone interview was conducted in June 2013.
[48] Unless otherwise stated, currency refers to United States dollar.
[49] The USAID factsheet is available from http://transition.usaid.gov/locations/sub-saharan_africa/countries/liberia/liberia_fs.pdf .

system. Based on interviews conducted in Monrovia, UN Women's work on economic empowerment was well known within Liberia.

UN Women also leads a number of joint programmes including the Liberia Joint Programme for Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment; Liberia's Joint Programmes on Food Security and Nutrition, Adolescent Girls; and Prevention and Response to SGBV. The country office has also supported the establishment of the Association of Women in Cross Border Trade, active in all 15 counties and with over 1,000 members.

UN Women's work on women's peace and security reviewed for this evaluation focused on a three-pronged approach. Firstly, it sought to build on a 'peace huts' model which empowers community women for conflict resolution. Secondly, it worked with some security institutions, especially the LNP and the BIN, to develop gender policies and training. Thirdly, it supported the development of the NAP for Liberia and aspects of its implementation (for example, through support to the National Secretariat), as well as providing support to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Liberia process. UN Women also provided support to the UN country team to ensure gender was prominent in the development of Liberia's 'One Programme' United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) which are looked at below.

Support provided by the country office was in line with the West Africa regional strategy (UNIFEM, 2010) which recognized high levels of political commitment across the region, and highlighted the importance of a focus on implementation of commitments to gender mainstreaming and on strengthening the capacity of national gender machineries and sectoral ministries. The focus on local-level peacebuilding usefully complemented this focus on operationalizing gender commitments, and was in line with the regional-level commitment to support gender-sensitive post-conflict strategies, including reconciliation.

Transition from UNIFEM to UN Women

The process for transitioning to UN Women is still underway. Progress has been made in refining strategic priorities, with the appointment of a new Country Representative, and with new staffing (the country office should comprise a workforce of 20 by the end of 2013). In addition, as set out in the section above, there is evidence (from UN Women strategic documents and confirmed by interviews in Monrovia) that this transition was perceived as helping refine UN Women's strategic focus. For instance, a UNFPA representative recognized that UN Women now has a refined focus in relation to women's peace and security, and was recognized as a United Nations leader in this field. The perception of a strengthened and clearer mandate for UN Women, compared to UNIFEM, was recognized in a number of other interviews too.

At the strategic level, there was recognition that the entity is evolving from a role as a fund with investment and responsibility for aspects of women's peace and security, to an entity where such issues are unequivocally in its mandate. As previously noted, this requires a shift in approach and resourcing for both the country office and other United Nations entities which is likely to take time and may be challenging, particularly in terms of how to define the space for UN Women in relation to others (such as DPKO and OGA) and in the context of an integrated mission. Given that internal gender mainstreaming activities of the mission were directly related to mandated priorities affecting the external political/peacebuilding process, informants noted a need for clarity and agreement on the coordination and division of responsibilities between the UNMIL/OGA and UN Women. The shift towards a more focused mandate seems to be seen by the key stakeholders interviewed as a positive one which could help address some of the coordination challenges identified in the past (see

below). However, there may be a need for greater support from headquarters and at the corporate level, including support for the country office as it moves to take on its new mandate and also in terms of how to communicate and work effectively with other United Nations entities.

The new focus on women's peace and security seemed to be a strength for the Liberia country office, which had been working on these issues for several years and was now able to focus on and refine this work. It also seems well suited to the Liberia context, given levels of need and available resourcing, where a more in-depth, long-term focus on select core issues may be more sustainable. Review of the previous West Africa regional strategy (UNIFEM, 2010) and the UN Women Strategic Note 2012/2013 (UN Women, n.d.) suggests a long list of priority areas for country offices in the region, including women's leadership and political participation, economic empowerment, women in peace and security, gender issues in national and local planning, and budgeting and supporting local women's organizations to influence global policies. The Liberia country office appeared to be prioritizing the areas of women in peace and security and economic empowerment (although this was not examined as part of this review), and a narrower focus on some core, and often interlinked, areas seemed to be a helpful approach given the prevalence and damaging nature of these dynamics.

At the administrative and financial level, a number of changes were already underway, and the priority appeared to be embedding these. The country office now has delegation of authority; it is a decentralised office and is nearing its full complement of staffing. With these changes, it was envisaged that the office would have greater programme management capacity, including financial management, which would help address some of the implementation challenges identified as historic weaknesses (see below). It would also allow the office to operate more independently and with increased delegation of authority, although further support may be needed, including for capacity-building to adjust to new roles and systems. There was some sense that this process was relatively drawn out, including from UN Women partners who felt, for instance, that funding decisions and disbursements were still delayed due to the need to go through the regional office.

Most external stakeholders were aware of the transition process at the general level (for example, change of name). Some, particularly those who were not UN Women partners, lacked a clear understanding of precisely what changes were underway, and of UN Women's priorities and planned future work. The lack of visibility of the transition process beyond UN Women's immediate partners and stakeholders was therefore highlighted, which could have been addressed through wider communications.

Description of selected programmes and activities

The evaluation focused on experiences of one global programme and one joint programme, namely:

- From Communities to Global Security Organizations; and
- The EU, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Women joint programme on women, peace and security.

It also briefly looked at support for the development and implementation of the Liberia NAP and explored general perceptions of UN Women's strategy, partners and impacts. These areas were identified by the country office staff and the evaluation team, in part because of the focus on community peacebuilding (not covered in other country case studies) and as an

example of how a global programme, also implemented in other countries reviewed for the overall evaluation, was adapted at local level.

The global programme, From Communities to Global Security Organizations (UNIFEM, 2009), runs from March 2010 to March 2013 (with a no-cost extension to March 2014). It's objectives are:

- To ensure that women (including the most marginalized in conflict contexts) are able to contribute to and benefit from security measures and peacebuilding, peacemaking processes at the community, national, regional and global levels, through:

  o Actively engaging women in peacebuilding initiatives on a community and national-level, by strengthening community approaches to prevent SGBV and respond to the needs of survivors.

  o Using security sector reforms (SSRs) in Liberia to create more secure environments for women by way of protection, access to justice and local reforms.

The EU, UNDP and UN Women joint programme runs from February 2012 to January 2014 and has the following objectives (UN Women, 2012):[50]

- To ensure greater participation of women in peacebuilding and post-conflict planning, including through:

- Strengthening the capacity and coordination of the relevant EU and United Nations institutions and actors (through supporting a technical committee and harmonised accountability frameworks for resolution 1325, as well as knowledge-building events);

- Support to CSOs and women leaders to participate in peacebuilding and post-conflict planning processes, conduct inter-ethnic peace dialogues, gain access to peacebuilding funds and micro-grants and lead high-visibility advocacy initiatives.

The global and joint programme have a shared core emphasis on supporting the establishment of 'peace huts' at the local level to support community women's participation in peacebuilding. A wide range of activities have been associated with these programmes including construction of some of the peace huts, training for community women in peacebuilding and economic empowerment activities, sensitisation in communities, and in some cases, support for saving and loans or micro-credits at the local level.

In addition, under the global programme, technical support was provided to develop gender policies, handbooks and training for national security institutions (principally BIN and LNP), as well as for improved recruitment and retention of female staff within these agencies. For the joint programme, there as also a commitment by the partner agencies to ensuring they would work more effectively together.

In relation to the development of Liberia's NAP, support was provided to the MoGD, including capacity support to the national Secretariat, to develop communication strategies, production of accessible materials and other awareness raising support.

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[50] UN Women (2012). 'Women Peace and Security Implementation'.

5. Findings

Theories of change

UN Women Liberia's support to women's leadership, peace and security had an overall theory of change which focused on improved accountability for women's security and rights and increased voice in peacebuilding. It did so through creating demand at the community level (working with communities to strengthen their voices and agency) and working at the macro level to build the capacity of state institutions to respond through improved services for women, increased accountability and recognition that women's security is a public security issue. UN Women is therefore committed to working at these two levels to achieve change.

Drawing on project documents and interviews, the figure below attempts to articulate the general theory for change in a diagrammatic form which cuts across the individual programmes evaluated and brings together the two strands identified above. Not all inputs and underlying assumptions were explicitly outlined in project documents, so some have been extrapolated from interviews with UN Women staff, other partners and various project documents.

Inputs
Macro level:
- Technical assistance to national security institutions (e.g. LNP, BIN) to develop gender policies and manuals.
- Support for improved recruitment and conditions for female staff within security institutions.
- Purchase of some equipment for LNP (e.g. motorbikes, mobile phones) and community women (e.g. sewing machines).

Community level:
- Construction of peace huts in select locations.
- Peacebuilding training and economic empowerment training (e.g. sewing or baking skills) delivered to community women.
- Sensitization and engagement of male leaders.

Outputs
Macro level:
- Key security institutions (e.g. LNP, BIN) have increased capacity to develop and implement gender policies.
- Greater numbers of women are recruited and retained within national security institutions.

Community level:
- Community women have increased voice and capacity to address women's peace and security at the community level, including through greater economic independence.
- Male leaders (e.g. police, elders, etc.) are more supportive of efforts to address women's peace and security.

Outcomes
1. Women are actively engaged in peacebuilding initiatives at a community and national level.
2. SSRs in Liberia create more secure environments for women.
3. Greater partnerships are facilitated among external and national actors.

Strategic Plan Goals
UN Women Global Strategic Plan DRF:
Goal 1: Women's increased leadership and participation in the decisions that affect their lives.
Goal 4: Women's leadership in peace and security.

Underlying assumptions:
- Government of Liberia and other parties to the conflict are amenable towards or supportive of the inclusion of women in peacebuilding processes.
- UN Women has the capacity, credibility and expertise to support women's engagement in these processes.
- Improved gender policies will be operationalized within security ministries.
- Women want to work within current security institutions and can be supported to do so.
- The concept of peace huts is universally understood and well accepted by local leaders.
- Women's economic empowerment and peace and security will be mutually reinforcing.

The approach above was in line with the new strategic priorities set by UN Women globally, and recent strategic documents for the Liberia office show a clear and consistent focus on these two dimensions (UN Women Liberia, 2011; 2012). At a general level, this theory of change seemed to resonate well with the Liberian context and the particular challenges for women. In particular, it is striking that the global programme (of which Liberia is only one country) was adapted to draw upon locally relevant understandings and institutions, focused on historical notions of the 'palava huts' in Liberia as somewhere to resolve conflict, and using this as a base for community engagement. At a national level, support to particular security institutions capitalized on a conducive enabling environment, with strong political will from the President to key individuals and champions with whom UN Women has worked, including senior women within relevant ministries.

A number of innovative aspects of this theory of change stand out (and are discussed in more detail in the following sections) namely that it:

- Built on pre-existing local institutions and understandings, through the traditional 'palava hut' system;

- Adopted a process-driven approach, with investment particularly at the community level in facilitating and supporting women's agency and voice to collectively address issues of peace and security

- Linked peacebuilding and economic empowerment activities, providing an additional incentive for women to participate.

This adaptation to local realities appeared to be particularly impressive in the context of implementing a global programme where initial priorities and objectives were set at the global level.

While the general objectives and envisioned outputs and impacts for programmes therefore seemed to be well defined, there were remaining gaps in terms of how effectively programmes were implemented. In part, this reflected capacity gaps within UNIFEM and, as the transition process is underway, UN Women. Crucially, it also reflected gaps in terms of the overall management of the global programme. One particular reported challenge was the prevalence of project rather than programme funding and the substantive gap (of around one year) between funding for Phase I and Phase II. The absence of bridge funding had significant knock-on effects in terms of maintaining links with partners, maintaining core activities and the sustainability of activities overall. It was particularly challenging where a process-driven approach had been adopted, particularly at the community level, which required ongoing and longer term investment, and was severely disrupted by shorter periods of funding and gaps in the process.

Moreover, while implementation was identified as a key priority in the 2008-2009 and 2010 West Africa regional strategies for UNIFEM, there did not appear to have been sufficient guidance (including tools, lesson sharing from other countries, capacity-building support and so on) to support the country office implement the programme, something which was particularly needed as the Liberia office transitions to UN Women, in the process refocusing some programmes and continuing with commitments to deliver.

There have been some knock-on impacts for the ability to implement programmes. For instance, support was provided to establish (and often to construct) peace huts in communities, and women were given some training in peacebuilding to strengthen their ability to mediate and resolve conflicts, contributing to reductions in SBGV and increased voice and participation. However, field visits in Weala and Totota revealed differences in the

mandates of the peace huts, how women themselves understood their roles within these mandates, and differences in the wider enabling environment (levels of support within the community, from the police and male leaders and so on).

These challenges reflected the lack of resources for embedding this approach (and the funding gaps described above). It was particularly challenging where local-level implementing organizations did not have strong skills in peacebuilding at the outset and, as a result, levels of training and familiarity with related issues were diverse and needed greater attention, even in the limited number of field sites visited. In recognizing some of these gaps, UN Women has prioritized more standardised approaches for peacebuilding training (from which one could more easily compare results/outcomes) in Phase II through which a shared understanding of the mandate and remit of the peace huts themselves could be developed as part of an implementation strategy (and could be facilitated by lesson sharing of similar community peacebuilding efforts in other countries in the region).

It also reflected the need for UN Women to manage its partnerships at the national level and to have greater flexibility in how resources were deployed. For instance, the MoGD prioritized support to rural structures, including for women's peace and security which influenced the selection of local partners and operations at local levels. In practice, it meant that in some regions support for peace huts has been based on pre-existing processes in communities, whereas in others, the approach was developed in communities identified by the Government and lacked this pre-existing capacity or agency. Deploying additional resources and capacity to support areas which had weaker capacity was useful, but was not possible where there were gaps in funding and fairly prescribed project funds. The need for greater flexibility in how resources can be used and deployed is therefore emphasized.

In addition, the country office sought to innovate by combining peacebuilding activities with support for women's economic empowerment, another key priority for the UN Women office which brought together two key aspects: high levels of economic need and threats and vulnerabilities for women. UN Women staff stated that this linkage was also demand driven, as the country office responded to requests for greater economic empowerment activities in its work with women in River Cess communities.

However, how these two dimensions link together, including within the project documents and overall theory of change, was not explicitly explained. The reporting requirements for this global programme were a challenge as they focused on reporting against the original log-frame (often in quantitative form) and did not allow much space for flexibility or for capturing emerging issues within the programme cycle.

A key priority should be allowing for greater reporting of qualitative issues which arise as part of programme implementation. It would enable fuller reporting of the range of possible impacts and facilitate more purposeful monitoring of any unintended impacts or potential risks. For instance, a recent report on SGBV highlighted how women's increased economic independence in Liberia may have in part contributed to greater risks and vulnerabilities of women (as men feel their roles changing and react against this, including through violence) (Government of Liberia/ United Nations Joint Programme on SGBV, 2011). The evaluation team were unable to determine whether these risks were being monitored, which could be worthwhile, even if to disprove the statement. Moreover, at the local level, women involved in the peace huts initiative (from the select field sites visited) did not always have a clear understanding of the remit of the huts: some felt it was economic empowerment, others that it was women's peace and security. Refining understanding of how these sit together, and communicating this to a range of partners including at the local level, may therefore be useful.

Finally, it may be useful to review UN Women's choice of partners as part of the transition process. The country office appeared to have a strong relationship with the Minister for Gender and the MoGD, as well as some good links to champions within the BIN and the LNP. However, questions were realized as to whether and how UN Women had effectively engaged with the full range of women's CSOs also working on these issues (something also noted in Wamai [2011] as a general challenge across the international community). A lack of effective engagement could lead to missed opportunities, considering the significant profile of these organizations and their innovative approaches to women's peacebuilding and leadership efforts in Liberia. These are discussed further in sections below.

Evaluation questions

Dimension 1: UN Women's policy and strategic direction

In what ways had UN Women influenced policies and practice (within the United Nations system as well as in key external agencies) in relation to women's political participation and leadership in peace and security?

There have been significant reforms for women's peace and security in Liberia over the last decade. Rightly, these have largely been internally driven, through the leadership of the President and key ministries, and work of key women's organizations. The role of external agencies has been secondary, through facilitative roles, which is testament to the political will and momentum fostered within Liberia in the post-conflict period.

During the interviews, UN Women partners and implementers confirmed that the country office was seen as being largely supportive of their agendas, helping to facilitate local and national priorities rather than imposing an external agenda. In so doing, UN Women contributed to a range of recent reforms, from the creation of specific gender policies to the creation of a national Secretariat, to support the Liberia NAP for resolution 1325.

Nonetheless, identifying the specific strategic impacts of UN Women on these significant areas of reform was challenging in a context which has remained dominated by the integrated mission and the presence of UNMIL who had its own mandates and remits as a peacekeeping mission. Some interviewees felt that the UNMIL's OGA had historically been more visible in promoting women's participation and leadership in peace and security, including through integrating gender into support for SSR. Concretely, support for the revision of the LNP gender policy was initiated by OGA, which resulted in the first LNP gender policy in 2006. However, other observers noted that, in practice, UNMIL's effectiveness was mixed, citing delays in considering gender issues for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), such as the specific needs and issues for women combatants (Wamai, 2011). However, UNMIL was commended for its work in global peacekeeping, through which the eligibility criteria on access to DDR support was revised to include the category Women Associated with Fighting Forces, a first in peacekeeping practice.

Despite moves towards a Delivering as One approach, interviews suggested that there was still a general picture of largely fragmented approaches and the need for greater support at the corporate level in terms of both supporting country office transition and in communicating this effectively to other United Nations entities. In this context, there were particular challenges for UNIFEM, who received less overall resourcing and staffing than other agencies with one interviewee indicating that UNIFEM had to 'fight for a seat at the table'. Thus, the transition to UN Women was seen as being very positive, but one which could benefit from greater support to institutionalize these changes across the United Nations system.

Other United Nations entities already appeared to recognise potential complementarities between their work and that of UN Women. UNFPA, for instance, noted that its strategic priorities have shifted towards reproductive health, allowing greater space for UN Women's niche in governance and leadership. Entities seemed eager for UN Women to build a specific niche in, for example, women's leadership and participation and building key strategic alliances for influence around these, rather than women's issues more broadly.

In this respect, it was important to note that, despite international attention to women's mobilization in Liberia (including around the Mass Action movement), there was a very limited sense that donor agencies (including but not only UNIFEM) had helped support or facilitate this.[51] In fact, interviews and focus group discussions suggest some within civil society felt sidelined in the past due to perceived preferential relationships with government. Interviews suggested the need for UN Women to have a strong understanding of some of the political sensitivities within and between various women's groups and movements, and that as part of the transition process, there may be new opportunities for it to play a more facilitative, brokering role, including between women's groups and government. There may also be real potential for UN Women to support greater collaboration among women's groups with several interviewees suggesting the challenge would be to encourage civil society to collaborate to realise change rather than compete for funds. Other research supported this assertion and noted gaps in building more collaborative approaches within and between women's groups and networks to ensure longer term effectiveness (Caeser et al., 2010).

How sustainable were the efforts and results of UN Women policy influencing and engagement?

Assessing issues of sustainability remain a challenge in Liberia, as the focus on women's leadership for peace and security is relatively new (since the late 2000s), in line with UN Women's transition and changing global strategies.

There were, however, some positive signals. As noted above, most interviewees felt that UN Women (and UNIFEM) had provided support to facilitate their own strategies and plans, allowing for a strong sense of local ownership (particularly within key Ministries). Ownership was further reinforced through the knowledge transfer from external consultants, funded by UN Women, for instance through the development of gender policies in partnership with security Ministries. Moreover, community-level support usefully built on locally grounded concepts, such as the *palava* huts concept, which connected ideas already familiar at the local level which will likely contribute to greater sustainability as opposed to approaches seen to be enforced from outside or follow the interests of external funders.

Interviews also highlighted some sustainability challenges. Across the programmes, support appeared fairly piecemeal and limited by constrained resources (staffing and funding), particularly where support had been reliant on project funding and where there had been significant gaps between phases of funding. As a result, partners reported that funding was often for short periods of time (i.e. three to six months) and spread thinly across activities. In addition, there were reports of significant funding delays, forcing partners to pre-finance some of their activities. Taken together, this appeared to have undermined the ability to really embed approaches and programmes in communities.

Furthermore, sustainability was also questioned where resourcing gaps contributed to inconsistencies in the approach taken, including at the community level (which should feed

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[51] The lack of international assistance for aspects of the women's movement was discussed in Gbowee with Mithers (2013).

back into national level engagement), as discussed above. In practice, at the community level, this resulted in a wide range of activities occurring around the peace huts but no clearly agreed understandings of the mandates and roles they should have. Without this, there were risks of a proliferation of models, many of which were poorly understood within communities, and which did not prove to be sustainable beyond the life cycle of the individual programmes.

One aspect which could be explored further, and where sharing of lessons from other countries and technical support from headquarters would be beneficial, pertains to data collection. The need to address data gaps and reporting on SGBV was identified in the West Africa regional strategy (2010) and gaps in data were identified by several interviewees for this evaluation. Some very useful baseline data was captured as part of individual programmes but, according to interviews, UN Women does not currently have access to broader SGBV reporting (collated by the MoGD). As far could be determined, partners have not routinely collected and shared data, for instance on SGBV incidences and follow-up at the local level. Supporting partners' efforts to improve their data collection and working with MoGD to improve the dissemination of data that has been collected, including aggregating information from different organizations, could be particularly useful for supporting sustainable and long-term responses, and could benefit from technical support on data collection as well as support for engaging with government to strengthen transparency and information sharing.

> To what extent did the recent policy/strategic direction reflect the lessons learned from policy engagement on peace and security and humanitarian response since 2008 and how fit for purpose was it for the new UN Women mandate?

Liberia has, in many ways, been at the forefront of reforms for women's peace and security in the post-conflict period, as seen in its progress in electing its first female President, developing the first NAP for resolution 1325, and in innovations like the secondment of the all-female police unit. However, as previously discussed, there were challenges where there were perceived to be fragmented or uncoordinated responses across United Nations entities, and no overall lead on these issues. Moreover, there were several criticisms of the extent to which support given for SSR and the initial peace talks allowed space for women's active participation (including in negotiations around the CPA, and initial reform programmes for the army and the police) (Wamai, 2011).[52] During the transition period, UN Women can build on this experience by addressing core historic gaps in coordination and leadership on women's peace and security, but its ability to do this depends on the effectiveness of the Delivering as One approach and the willingness of other United Nations entities to recognize and respond to this changed mandate. Greater support will be required, as emphasized above, and it will take time for changes to become embedded.

In addition, UN Women's approach to link national level reforms to local-level peacebuilding efforts is particularly innovative, and could be a useful source of learning for other country offices as part of a renewed focus on the implementation of existing commitments. Efforts to bring together work at multiple levels into one overall theory of change seemed well suited to the country context, which reflected the need for longer timeframes and recognized that change needed to occur at several levels for improvements in women's peace and security to be realized.

For the future, and to enable greater lesson learning for other country offices, it may be particularly useful to articulate more explicitly the potential linkages and areas of connection

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[52] Since then, support by UN Women/UNIFEM and others sought to address this, particularly through gender policy development and support for training and recruitment of women as part of SSR. However, perceptions of this historic weakness remain.

between these two levels. At present, implementation relies on treating community and national-level support as two separate components. However, looking ahead, there may be opportunities for greater coordination or opportunities for shared learning between the two. For instance, UN Women partners at the local level provided examples where personnel within security institutions (such as BIN) perpetuated forms of sexual harassment against women; were not aware of the support for gender policies or codes of conduct; nor did they have channels to share this feedback with UN Women or with BIN or other government actors. Facilitating links of these kinds, and facilitating information sharing between different levels at which UN Women support operates, may therefore be key. One potential platform would be to work through and with prominent women's CSOs and groups, to help aggregate feedback from the local level which could then be used for advocacy and monitoring at the national level.

Finally, although the evaluation did not look in depth at the process around the NAP for resolution 1325, several interviewees gave feedback on this process. The overriding view was that the NAP had been too ambitious, seeking to include a long 'wish list' of issues, and was not well grounded in assessments of what was practicable or feasible in a given timeframe. Several interviewees felt that it lacked an *implementation* plan, in terms of both an analysis of the costs of implementation and identification of the key responsibilities of different actors to implement it. At present, the National Secretariat (based within the MoGD) lacks sufficient capacity to address these issues effectively, and has focused largely on a coordination function, including the organization of meetings for various committees. Later this year, discussions will begin on the next NAP. Here, there is a potential role for UN Women to support greater discussion on a smaller set of action points, grounded in what is implementable and can be monitored, and building on its experience, for example around the peace huts initiative, to ensure greater attention is paid to issues of how to operationalize these plans.

Dimension 2: UN Women's policies, programming and operations

To what extent did UN Women's programmes achieve the expected results? What explains variations?

As noted above, the evaluation examined a global programme, aspects of a joint programme with the EU and aspects of support for the NAP for resolution 1325. Overall, experiences and achievements were mixed, although many programmes are still underway, and overall, it is hard to assess or predict likely outcomes and impact.

Some of the key achievements identified so far have mainly focused on the input level (i.e. delivery of specific activities). The results of outputs were still emerging, as progress was still needed to support implementation of key policies and strategies, and embed clear understandings of the mandates and roles of the peace huts themselves which partly reflects the different phases of the programme and the current stage of implementation. Outputs achieved to date included:

- Establishment of a national secretariat, to support greater coordination of the NAP;

- Development of gender policies for BIN and LNP, and more gender-sensitive human resource strategies;

- Creation of new meeting spaces for community women, including physical construction of peace huts in some locations;

- Strengthened capabilities of community women, through training in both

peacebuilding, conflict resolution and economic empowerment skills; and

- Some improved sensitisation, for instance of local male leaders (chiefs, village elders, policemen).

Key factors which are likely to contribute to greater effectiveness include:

- The focus on a *process* driven approach, which invests in facilitating and supporting local women's groups and communities to come together to discuss (and address) issues of women's peace and security. Such an approach usefully built on locally appropriate, grounded structures such as notions of the peace hut. There were also key features of a broader enabling environment, which were conducive to ensuring greater effectiveness and impact including high-level political support for women's peace and security from the President and key ministries (e.g. MoGD). After the transition process, and as part of the Delivering as One approach, there will be greater opportunities for UN Women to play more pivotal roles in these issues going forward.

- As noted above, the majority of the partners and implementers interviewed (those already receiving or who had received support in the past) felt that UN Women had worked effectively with them and had been aligned to their priorities and plans which was important for effectiveness.

Key potential challenges which have been referred to in previous sections can be summarised as follows:

- Broadly, some of the key features of the main theories of change in use seemed sound and well grounded in the local context. However, implementation gaps have resulted from the prevalence of short-term project funds and gaps between funding phases, which have undermined the possibility of embedding a more process-driven approach. Reporting requirements constrained reporting on how different inputs needed to interact to realise change (described above), including the links between different levels (local, national, peace/security and economic empowerment).

- These gaps have contributed to differences in terms of how peace huts were understood, and the types of activities perceived to be within their mandate. In some cases, they appeared to be operating almost as courts, with their own powers of arrest and punishment (e.g. Totota), whereas in others, they were primarily sites for shared economic activities. Such a lack of clarity facilitated the creation of a range of parallel structures in an environment already characterised by institutional multiplicity (i.e. adding new layers to customary and legal structures that already existed). Instead, clearer understanding seems to be needed of the mandates, roles and responsibilities of the peace huts and how they should relate to other legal and customary processes.

- Development of a clearer understanding has been further undermined by various logistical delays, in part reflecting the reported delays in funding, contributing to delayed starts to programme activities and poor coordination between partners.

The global programme analysed for this evaluation was effectively adapted, in its activities and approach, to key features of the country context (and is discussed in further detail below). The useful assistance and support provided by individual staff at headquarters as part of this programme was recognized.

UN Women staff reported challenges of adapting globally set programmes to diverse local contexts and undertaking significant efforts to appropriately adapt and modify to the country context. They also reported challenges of fairly fixed templates for reporting, which focused predominantly on quantitative reporting rather than allowing for more qualitative assessments and reflection on the underlying theories of change and how to adapt these within the programme cycle. Furthermore, they did not feel that the current global policy adequately addressed key local issues, such as issues of economic empowerment in relation to women's peace and security. UN Women country office staff indicated that a more flexible reporting system would be preferable, as well as reporting on both quantitative and qualitative results, and reporting on processes of implementation and adaptation.

As discussed in several sections above, funding delays and piecemeal funding undermined the country office's ability to effectively translate global programmes in programmatic work. A particular issue identified related to the timeframes for programming and the timeframes in which change is thought to be observed. Given the multiple barriers and multiple levels at which support was needed, there was a strong sense of a need for longer timeframes for resourcing and for reporting on impacts (of at least five years or more).

To what extent were UN Women's programmes tailored to the specific socio-political, cultural and economic context in which they operate? How was this translated into programme design and planning?

There was evidence of important efforts to adapt programmes to the local context in Liberia, for instance through building on pre-existing institutions (such as peace huts), cultivating strong strategic partnerships with some stakeholders (e.g. MoGD) and working with local structures (such as local rural structures, chiefs and village elders, local police).

However, gaps remained, for instance in how this is adapted at very local levels. While UN Women reported that it had selected communities in partnership with the MoGD and followed MoGD policy to support local rural structures, not enough support (in terms of resourcing and capacity-building) was available to engage with the realities of very low capacity at this level. This was particularly evident where UN Women supported partners who lacked some of the relevant skills, for instance working with those with skills in economic empowerment but not peacebuilding.[53]

As previously noted, one of the key strengths of the programme was its process-led approach, despite requiring strong implementing partners, and sustained support and funding. It may also benefit from greater involvement of umbrella groups or those with core capacity in peacebuilding activities (for instance, scaling up work with women's groups like the Women in Peacebuilding Programme, the Mano River Women's Peace Network and, to a lesser extent, the Women's NGO Secretariat of Liberia).

Finally, a detailed baseline was carried out in 2011, in part in response to an independent

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[53] Capacity-building support was provided to these partners to build the appropriate skills, but may have overlooked other organizations which already had expertise in this area.

evaluation for DFID, which noted the lack of baseline information for monitoring as part of the programme monitoring framework (McLean and Kerr-Wilson, 2009; Atsu et. al., 2011). This was used to support Phase II of programme implementation. However, it was not clear whether this information had been effectively shared or discussed with local partners (those interviewed were not aware of it).

How effective was UN Women at identifying and using key opportunities and partnerships at country level?

Issues of partnership were examined in detail above. As noted, UN Women appeared to have cultivated some strong government partners (principally with MoGD and BIN), which have had influence at the national level. However, there were remaining challenges in terms of embedding the Delivering as One approach and ensuring that other entities recognized UN Women's changed mandate and role.

In addition, there may be greater opportunities to engage with wider networks of civil society and various women's movements, given their recent history in Liberia and contributions to women's peace and security. While some key opportunities were identified – such as support to the national Secretariat for the NAP – others include making connections and facilitating information sharing between community and national levels, and supporting greater coordination and collaboration within and across civil society groups and networks.

How effective were UN Women programmes at fostering and strengthening national ownership through country engagement of intended outcomes regarding improved leadership and participation of women in relevant peace and security and humanitarian response intervention?

UN Women was clearly seen to support fostering national ownership, specifically through the MoGD. However, there were two gaps to date. Firstly, opportunities were missed to build wider partnerships, including with civil society which affected UN Women's reputation in some places. Secondly, support appeared to be largely piecemeal (especially at national levels) to the specific interests of a select number of stakeholders, which did not allow for optimal strategic planning and positioning of these issues with key stakeholders.

Moreover, there may be greater scope for UN Women to play a more 'critical friend' role with some of key allies. For instance, MoGD information currently collated on SGBV as part of the work of the SGBV Task Force is not made publicly available, nor is it shared with key partners like UN Women. MoGD reports that it only releases information to those who contribute to the dataset (in order to incentivise compliance), which significantly reduced opportunities for the data to be used more effectively. Supporting key partners to be more transparent and share information more effectively would therefore help to utilise existing strong partnerships in effective ways.

In what ways did the new mandate and reorganization provide opportunities to improve programme effectiveness and coherence between UN Women policies and operational engagement?

As the UN Women office was still in a process of transition, it was too early to identify the ways in which the new mandate provides new opportunities to improve effectiveness and coordination. However, early signs point to the following as potential entry points:

- The clearer, more focused vision may allow for more strategic engagement and a clearer sense of the added value of UN Women in Liberia. However,

additional support may be needed to ensure that other stakeholders (including other United Nations entities) fully recognise this new role and increase the visibility and awareness of the new entity;

- Some interviewees hoped that the new mandate and reorganization would help address bureaucratic constraints, including delays and challenges in processing funding, although this process was not yet complete; and

- An increased staff presence and new leadership will open up new opportunities to build relationships with, for example, key civil society groups.

Dimension 3: UN Women's organizational capacities, resources and structures

How adequate were UN Women human and financial resources to engage effectively in conflict-affected countries?

Partners and staff believed that poor staffing and financial resourcing and the country office's reliance on project funding significantly limited operational capacity in Liberia, in particular when there were significant funding gaps or lags. With the transition towards a more focused mandate, the country office may need further support to strengthen its own skills and capacity vis-à-vis different peacebuilding approaches, political analysis, relationship building and brokering.

The UN Women country office identified key priority areas for the future in terms of communications and advocacy skills. Recruitment should focus on those with adequate technical skills and expertise and key political and relationship-building skills, who can help embed and take forward both the new mandate of the office (through strong networks and relationships with other agencies and partners) and the process-driven approaches already developed by the country office.

How fit for purpose was UN Women in terms of the technical skills of its staff and its broader capacity to fulfil its mandate?

It was difficult to assess how 'fit for purpose' UN Women was from the relatively short evaluation visit and review. Overall, there were clear signs that the office was moving in the right direction, with some key foundations for it to build upon. Looking ahead, it is likely to be important to continue strengthening the strategic vision of the office so it can make better use of a range of strategic partnerships and links between different areas of support. Interviewees suggested that the new Country Representative already has a good reputation in some of these areas, which could usefully be built upon.

There may be greater scope for support at the global level and in headquarters to better facilitate effective working of the UN Women country office including more flexible reporting systems to allow for fuller two-way feedback and learning, particularly around programme implementation, and greater involvement in developing programmes that speak to country needs. There were also requests for stronger support in tracking implementation, including through increased technical assistance around monitoring and evaluation (M&E), which should be linked to changes in funding models and timeframes to ensure effective resourcing, particularly for more process-driven approaches.

Resource constraints and the stronger visibility of other United Nations entities (such as UNMIL) have historically limited the ability of UN Women/ UNIFEM to ensure that work on women's peace and security was coordinated and that there was accountability for women's rights. There may be greater opportunities for this through the Delivering as One approach and where other entities have refocused their mandates (e.g. UNFPA), as well as through UN Women's growing visibility following its transition to a stand-alone entity. Greater corporate support would be useful in communicating changes to other United Nations entities and the Resident Coordinator, and to ensure that the new mandate is recognized and responded to.

However, expectations for UN Women's ability to coordinate gender-related work should remain realistic given the likelihood of ongoing resource constraints, and UNMIL's continued presence in Liberia. Stakeholders noted the need for clearer corporate guidance on UN Women's coordination role, which was unclear at the country level. Moreover, concrete recommendations were made about the need for an agreement between UN Women and the DPKO on the coordination of women, peace and security activities in the field. Specifically in Liberia there appeared to be good reason for UNMIL/OGA and UN Women to better clarify the division of labour regarding programming areas, and the nature of the relationship between UN Women and UNMIL/OGA.

In this context, UN Women in Liberia may be more effective in clarifying its specific niche (e.g. around women's leadership for peace and security) and seeking to exploit it further, both through greater coordination across United Nations entities and through widening the set of key stakeholders with whom it engages.

In country office-chairing the GTG with UNMIL/OGA, there were also good examples of coordination. For example, in 2012, a Gender and SSR Task Force was established in response to the need to improve United Nations coordination regarding gender-sensitive SSR. According to stakeholders, the Task Force could facilitate the transition of UNMIL-led gender-related SSR to the United Nations country team, and coordination between UNMIL and UN Women would be important in this process.

How effectively did UN Women manage risks in its operations? What strategies worked best?

Despite significant signs of progress and upholding of the peace process, there continued to be high levels of risk for women in Liberia, including a lack of support for dealing with the effects of the conflict (e.g. trauma, reproductive health problems as a result of sexual violence and the prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDs). High levels of SGBV have also persisted following the war and, whereas during the conflict they were perpetrated by combatants, recent reports suggest they are now committed by someone known to victims, with young girls particularly at risk. It was suggested that this reflects changes to established gender roles, combined with the legacies of violence (Government of Liberia/ United Nations Joint Programme on SGBV, 2011: 44; Small Arms Survey, 2012).

In this context, very careful risk analysis and monitoring is required to ensure that any support helps ameliorate these risks and does not unintentionally exacerbate them. At present, these risks do not seem to be systematically monitored, either within specific programmes or across key portfolios.

While detailed baseline information was mapped in 2011 (Ame Atsu, 2011), it was not clear how the trends in sexual violence identified were used for follow-up monitoring (i.e. there was

no information as to whether these trends have moved in a positive or negative direction since then, based on the documents reviewed). There may also be unintentional risks which implementers and programme staff need to be aware of, for example whether the increased economic empowerment of women further increases their risks or vulnerabilities, as it cannot be assumed that these will always work together.

UN Women staff acknowledged that, historically, there had been gaps in risk management and monitoring, in part due to a lack of sufficient resources (including gaps in project funding) and staffing. With the transition process underway, it was hoped that these would be addressed and that, with corporate support, efforts could focus on more strongly embedding systems of risk management and monitoring as core parts of programme implementation at all levels.

> How fit for purpose were UN Women's M&E and reporting systems? Do they adequately capture lessons learnt on results and impact?

The evaluation team did not receive any full evaluations of the programmes analysed and only a limited number of monitoring reports. Monitoring systems currently in place appeared to be largely isolated within each programme, with varying degrees of comprehensiveness and coverage. In general, current donor and headquarter reporting focused more on quantitative reporting than facilitating robust internal systems which allowed for tracking of broader effectiveness. Corporate support could therefore be further directed towards embedding learning and reflecting on theories of change in use, including as part of regular reporting.

Even where programmes were implemented over three or more years (as was the case for the global programme), there were limited opportunities for the country office to learn and adapt the global programme approaches, although there were signs that this was beginning to happen, e.g. linking economic empowerment to women's peace and security. Flexible and adaptable funding and reporting models which can support more agile programming will be required.

Overall analysis, and implications for policy, programming and practice

UN Women Liberia's support to women's leadership, peace and security analysed for this evaluation focused on a theory of change which usefully combined working at multiple levels. On one level, it sought to facilitate mechanisms for women's mediation, conflict resolution and oversight at community levels in order to strengthen women's voice and reduce their vulnerabilities, with a focus on SGBV. On a related level, it works to strengthen the numbers and positions of women within particular security institutions, as well as specific support for the implementation of the Liberia NAP.

The approach was in line with the new strategic priorities set by UN Women at the global level and resonated well with the Liberia context and the particular challenges for women. It was especially striking that the global programme had been adapted to draw upon locally relevant understandings and institutions, focused on historical notions of the 'palava hut' in Liberia, with a strong focus on supporting women's agency to address security problems.

Supporting women-led initiatives in this way was innovative and a useful source of lesson-learning for other country programmes. Furthermore, the locally grounded, agency-focused approach could prove more sustainable than those which are externally imposed or without such a clear, process-driven approach which aimed to mobilise women's own actions. At a national level, support to particular security institutions has effectively capitalized on an enabling political environment, with strong political will from the President and key individuals and champions within relevant ministries.

Innovative aspects of this programme included:

- Building on pre-existing local institutions and understandings, such as the traditional 'palava hut' system in Liberia;

- The process-driven approach which has facilitated and supported local level women's groups and communities to come together; and

- Linking peacebuilding and economic empowerment activities, to create added incentives for women to participate.

Although strong foundations for UN Women's transition have been laid, gaps (in terms of how effectively programmes have been implemented) should be addressed to maximise the possible outcomes and impacts. These gaps were discussed in detail above and can be summarised as follows:

- There are significant challenges as a result of funding gaps and short-term project funding, which constrain the ability to effectively implement a process-driven approach over the long-term;

- Variances and inconsistencies in the overall implementation strategies of programmes therefore arise, as shown by the differing understandings and mandates of peace huts in different areas and differing types of peacebuilding training, as well as the different skills and areas of expertise of implementing partners;

- There have also been historic gaps in the articulation of and reporting on different elements of the theories of change used, and of the connections between different levels of dimensions. These include interconnections between community and national levels and between support for women's economic empowerment and women's leadership in peacebuilding. Rather than focusing predominantly on quantitative measures of impact, reporting requirements should actively encourage reporting on implementation processes, unintended or arising issues and impacts, and more qualitative data,.

- The country office appeared to have struggled to influence and coordinate with others, particularly in the context of an integrated mission, and support may be needed to ensure that other United Nations entities are aware and recognise the changed mandate of UN Women.

- There may also be greater opportunities, particularly with the new mandate, to widen the scope of UN Women's partnerships and engagement with a range of stakeholders including those in civil society. Resourcing and support may be useful in supporting this process of reaching out to others.

6.   Recommendations

In light of the analysis above, the evaluation proposes the following recommendations:

Dimension 1: UN Women's policy and strategic direction

UN Women Liberia should be supported to more clearly articulate its vision, which should then be communicated effectively to key partners and stakeholders in Liberia in order to raise its visibility (through meetings, events and short publications). UN Women at the corporate level should provide clearer instructions on how to conduct the new coordination role in

Liberia, including communication from headquarters to the Resident Coordinator and other United Nations entities on this changed mandate.

As part of articulating its vision, support for a strategic review of the current theories of change in use should be prioritized so that the linkages envisaged between different activities and dimensions can be more clearly articulated in order to realise long-lasting change. This is relevant both for UN Women's overall policy and strategic direction in Liberia and for individual programmes.

Overall, there is an ongoing need and appetite for further policy guidelines, capacity-building support and tools to support the country office to take on the new UN Women mandate. Support should focus on how to work with others, including within the United Nations system; a more focused remit; and prioritizing the implementation of existing commitments (with sharing of tactics, ideas and lessons on how was done across a range of contexts).

A strategic review of partnerships would be useful to explore potentially widening the types of key partnerships currently managed by the UN Women office, in line with the new mandate. Women's groups interviewed for the evaluation, who were not UN Women partners, suggested it could engage in more ongoing exchanges and engagement with relevant stakeholders to explain its current priorities and programmes. It would also be an opportunity to hear the priorities and plans of other organizations; explore strategic opportunities to facilitate women's groups' participation in key reform processes; and explore ways to support the collective action of women's groups and networks, including facilitating links and networks (within civil society and with government). A focus on implementation could help facilitate links with civil society, to support their monitoring and advocacy efforts to hold decision-makers accountable for commitments made thus far.

Dimension 2: UN Women's policies, programming and operations

In relation to the specific programmes examined:

- Ensuring programme rather than project funding, linked to longer timeframes (five years or more) in recognition of the likely timeframes involved in supporting process-led change processes is a key priority for the country office.

- Long-term programme support would help build links across community and national-levels and between different dimensions (economic empowerment and women's peacebuilding). There was limited scope for the office to report on these linkages (for instance, in reporting to headquarters) and as a result, they were not always clearly articulated.

- Existing programmes should be reviewed and consideration given to including new implementation partners to ensure that programmes have the necessary expertise (for instance in peacebuilding) and capacity. It also help to identify priority areas where increased resourcing and support might be needed, and should be linked to more flexible funding approaches which allow resources to be redirected as needed.

- As part of the transition, ensuring a delegation of authority, including improved financial processes, was identified as a priority, to ensure more timely disbursements of funds and greater flexibility for the office.

- More support may be needed to further adapt global programmes to local contexts with a particular emphasis on implementation and operationalization of proposed reforms.

Dimension 3: UN Women's organizational capacities, resources and structures

Key priorities for strengthening the organizational capacities of the office include:

- Increasing its work on data collection and transparency (for its own programmes and for those of key partners, for instance in government). There seem to be high information gaps and asymmetries, including a lack of data collection at local levels for women's peace and security, which UN Women programmes and partners could usefully help to address. Technical support and advice on working with others would be particularly useful here.

- Bringing in greater communications expertise and experience including skills in networking, brokering and relationship-building in order to navigate the multiple types of partnerships and coordination roles necessary around issues of women's peace and security.

- Acknowledging the need to strengthen monitoring and risk management systems at the level of individual programmes and across portfolios. This should be part of support to improve on project management, including management of funds (and timely disbursements), as well as stronger project level monitoring, evaluation and learning methods. It will require increased staff time and resourcing, and could be usefully supported by technical assistance, and mentoring and advisory support from headquarters. It should be grounded in reflections on the core theories of change and their effective implementation, with a strong learning component so that programming can be adapted over time to lessons learned.

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Interviews

Organization	Function/ Title
Action Aid Liberia (women rights, advocacy, capacity-building)	Country Director
Bassa Women's Development Association (phone interview); (focus on women's rights and economic empowerment)	Coordinator
Bureau of Immigration and Naturalisation	Commissioner
Children's Smile (Psychosocial counselling, skills trainings)	Executive Director
DEN-L (Development Education Network Liberia) with Finance and Administration, Assistant Director of Programmes (educational development, capacity building, policy advocacy)	Executive Director
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	Political Officer
Liberian National Police	Chief of Gender Affairs and Deputy
Communications Office, Liberia National Police	Director
Liberia Women's Media Action Committee (media development for women journalists, policy advocacy)	Director
1325 National Secretariat, MoGD	Coordinator
Research/Technical Services, MoGD	Deputy Minister
MoGD	Former Minister
UNFPA	Gender Adviser
UNMIL (2004-2008) and current Director, *Medica Mondiale*	Former Gender Adviser
UN Women Liberia	Country Representative
UN Women Liberia	Programme Officer
Weala, Margibi County	District Commissioner
Women's NGO Secretariat of Liberia (a membership organization of women	Executive Director

NGOs, CSOs and CBOs involved in advocacy, capacity-building and networking)	
UNMIL	Senior Gender Advisor

Focus group discussions:

- Meeting of approximately 35 women in the Weala peace hut, including the chair person.
- Meeting of eight women and one man in the Totota/ Women in Peacebuilding Programme: peacebuilding, advocacy, skills training peace hut, including the assistant chairperson.
- Group of five women from the women's cross border trade association: economic empowerment Gbargna (Bong county) including the President and Vice-President.
- CSO focus group discussion with 22 women from approximately 20 organizations, identified through an e-mail circulated to the membership of the Women's NGO Secretariat of Liberia, requesting participation in a focus group discussion. Organizations represented included:[54] Touching Humanity In Need of Kindness (empowerment programmes, support to adolescent girls, skills training); Society of Women with Aids in Africa-Liberia (HIV and AIDS support and advocacy); Mano River Women Peace Network (peacebuilding, advocacy at the regional level); Community Sustainable Development Organization (economic empowerment); Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (legal aid, policy advocacy, legal support); Women's NGO Secretariat of Liberia (women's NGO network); We For Self (economic empowerment); Women In Peacebuilding Network (peacebuilding); Center for Liberian Assistance (support to adolescent girls); Liberia Needy Women and Children Organization (economic empowerment, advocacy); Liberia Girl Guides Association (work with adolescent girls); Liberia Women Media Action Committee (media development, support for female journalists); Islamic Women Development (skills training, economic empowerment); Aiding Disadvantaged Women and Girls, Medina Women (skills training, economic empowerment); Voice of the Voiceless (faith based, working with women in the Church); *Medica Mondiale* Liberia (health and legal support for SGBV, psychosocial counseling, advocacy and awareness raising); Liberia Women Empowerment Network (network for HIV-positive women); West Point Women for Health and Development Association (women empowerment, conflict resolution)

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[54] Not a complete mapping of the range of activities these organizations were involved in.