



EVALUATION OF UN WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO GENDER- RESPONSIVE BUDGETING IN THE EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA REGION



VOLUME I: EVALUATION REPORT



**UNITED NATIONS ENTITY FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT (UN WOMEN)**

Istanbul, May 2017



Planet 50-50 by 2030
Step It Up for Gender Equality

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CO	Country Office
CORT	Collaborative Outcomes Reporting Technique
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ECA	Europe and Central Asia
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
EU	European Union
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office
ECA	Europe and Central Asia
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GE	Gender Equality
GEEW	Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
HQ	Headquarters
HR	Human Rights
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
LFS	Labour Force Survey
MLLE	Multiple Lines and Levels of Evidence
MP	Member of Parliament
MSC	Most Significant Change
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
PMF	Performance Monitoring Framework
QCA	Quality Comparative Analysis

RBM	Results-Based Management
RO	Regional Office
SAA	Stabilisation Association Agreement
SDA	Structured Document Analysis
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SHG	Self Help Group
SEE	South East Europe
SROI	Social Return on Investment
SSI	Semi-Structured Interviews
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UN WOMEN	UN Women (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women)

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

Collaborative Outcomes Reporting Technique	Participatory review of evidence of how a programme has contributed to outcomes.
Contribution Analysis	Identifying the plausible case for actions leading to the observed changes, and exploring alternative explanations.
Focus Group Discussions	Facilitated participatory discussion among a purposively selected group of stakeholders to explore a range of pre-identified and emergent issues.
Human Rights Based Approach	A human rights-based approach is a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. It seeks to analyse inequalities that lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress.
Most Significant Change Technique	Participatory process of identifying and narrowing down examples of changes that most represent an intervention to its stakeholders.
Multiple Lines and Levels of Evidence	Structured collection, mapping and analysis of sources and insights from diverse ranges and types of evidence
Participatory Video	A set of techniques to involve a group of community in shaping and creating their own film A way of bringing people together to explore issues, voice, concerns or simply to be creative and tell stories.
Semi-Structured Interviews	Open ended interviews with stakeholders that explore pre-determined questions and themes.
Social Return on Investment	Approach to calculating the net social and economic benefits of an intervention through systematic use of financial proxies
Structured Document Analysis	Systematic mining of existing documents to extract and organize relevant insights.
Theories of Change	Identifying the explicit or implicit logic underlying the strategic and operational choices of the organization, and then testing these against empirical evidence.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) has become an internationally acknowledged tool for achieving gender equality. Presently, more than 70 countries all around the world pursue a variety of GRB initiatives that span civil society, academia, parliaments, government and international organizations.

Since the establishment of UN Women, GRB has been one of UN Women's core thematic priorities, as reflected in its Strategic Plan – Development Results Framework – Goal 5: “governance and national planning fully reflect accountability for gender equality commitments and priorities.” Beginning in 2007, GRB initiatives in the ECA region have taken place in 10 countries: Albania; BiH; FYR Macedonia, Moldova; Georgia; Serbia, Kosovo; Kyrgyzstan; Turkey and Ukraine.

More recently, in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, governments *reaffirmed that achieving gender equality, empowering all women and girls, and the full realization of their human rights are essential to achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development and reiterated the need for gender mainstreaming, including targeted actions and investments in the formula on and implementation of all financial, economic, environmental and social policies.*

The primary purpose of this evaluation is to support UN Women to establish a region-wide strategic view on opportunities and challenges faced in GRB; and to be forward-looking in the sense that it should contribute to effective adaptation of UN Women's approach to GRB for different contexts in the region.

The information generated by the evaluation will be used by decision makers in UN Women and its partners to develop evidence-based strategies and programming for addressing the needs of women in the region.

In accordance with the TOR, the **objectives** of this evaluation are to:

1. Assess the **relevance** and **sustainability** of UN Women's contribution financing for GEEW in the ECA region.

2. Assess **effectiveness and organizational efficiency** in progressing towards the achievement of GRB regional project results

3. Analyze how **human rights approach and gender equality principles** are integrated in the implementation of GRB programming.

4. Identify and validate **lessons learned, good practices and examples and innovations** of work supported by UN Women in GRB programming.

5. Provide **actionable recommendations** with respect to UN Women's work on GRB in the ECA region.

While the focus of the evaluation was the GRB regional project (implemented between 2013 and 2016 in Albania, BiH, FYR of Macedonia and Moldova), it also aimed to systematise lessons from all the different GRB initiatives supported in the region.

The GRB Regional Project is funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). This regional project represents the largest effort UN Women has contributed to support GRB in the ECA region, with a total budget of 2,157,929.42 EUR.

Whilst governments of the four project countries have repeatedly affirmed their commitment to gender equality and the advancement of women through the above-mentioned laws, policies and strategies, progress has been uneven due to a number of socio-cultural factors. These have included persistent patriarchal attitudes and gender stereotypes about men and women's gender roles, responsibilities, and capabilities which have perpetuated discrimination against women. Concern over such stereotypes and the impact on the full realisation of gender equality was voiced by the CEDAW Committee in its Concluding Observations for the four countries.

Evaluation Approach

The overall structure of the evaluation is based on Collaborative Outcomes Reporting Technique (CORT), an extension of contribution analysis designed specifically for maximizing the participation of stakeholders in situations where outcomes are diffuse and complex. CORT is a theory-based approach.

Within this framework, applied Outcomes Harvesting (OH) – an approach to capturing unintended, intended, positive, and negative outcome level results of interventions within complex contexts. To strengthen the depth and utilization of the analysis, the evaluation also attempted to calculate a Social Return on Investment (SROI) for GRB.

The evaluation adhered to “Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation” with human rights approaches integrated into the scope and conduct of the evaluation. It was guided by the work of Diane Elson and Debbie Budlender on defining gender responsive budgeting, along with the corporate theory of change for the flagship programme “Transformative Financing for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment” and a reconstructed theory of change for the Regional Project. Four case studies were undertaken involving interviews with 181 stakeholders (146 women, 35 men) representing both institutional duty bearers and rights holders. The evaluation culminated in a participatory summit workshop with members of the Evaluation Reference Group.

- No assessment of attribution for impacts using statistical techniques;
- The reductionist nature of all theory-based approaches that cannot be fully overcome, but can be mitigated through being fully transparent about evaluative reasoning and judgments;
- Constrained involvement of large numbers of rights holders and marginalized women in the commissioning and design of the evaluation, or as data collectors and interpreters; and
- The potential for bias in the Outcome Harvesting, which was mitigated through triangulation in the summit workshop and critical analysis by the evaluation team.

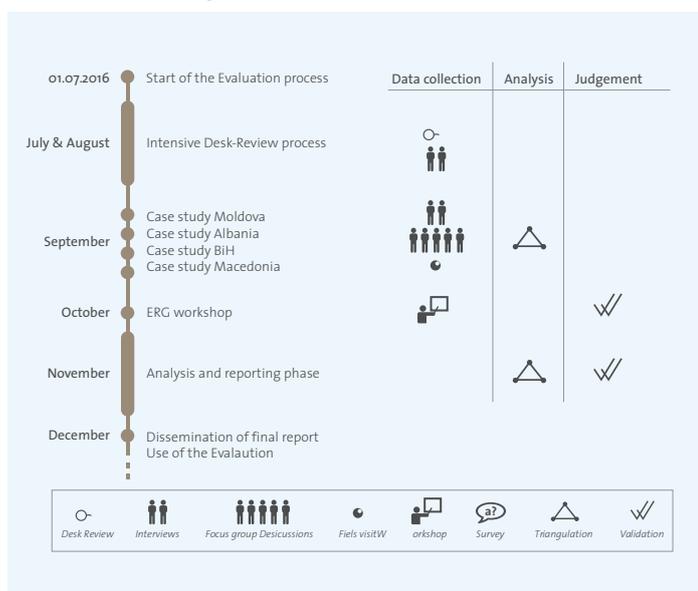
Effectiveness

Based on extrapolation of the evaluation case study observations and a set of assumptions, the evaluation finds that, in the context of productive and reproductive time use, the GRB Regional Project intervention has delivered a very high social return on investment; and that it would also represent a positive social return on investment for project countries to finance GRB directly.

The GRB Regional Project Phase II illustrates the type of institutional contributions being made by UN Women’s current interventions on GRB. Highlights from the Regional Project include integrating GRB into 38 national programmes, training 397 elected representatives and 319 public officials, and institutionalising 5 academic syllabi on GRB. As a consequence of the Regional Project Phase II, 50 municipalities are now implementing GRB in their budget planning processes, and 10 have benefited from watchdog reports from local CSOs.

Based on the overall budget for the Regional Project, it cost an average of \$24,000 per municipality or national programme to instigate GRB. This has the potential to influence at least €200 million per year in expenditure. In Albania, an additional \$61 million was leveraged specifically to advance GEEW policy: this alone represents a return on investment for the entire regional project of €26.40 for each €1 spent.

FIGURE 1
Evaluation design, methods and process



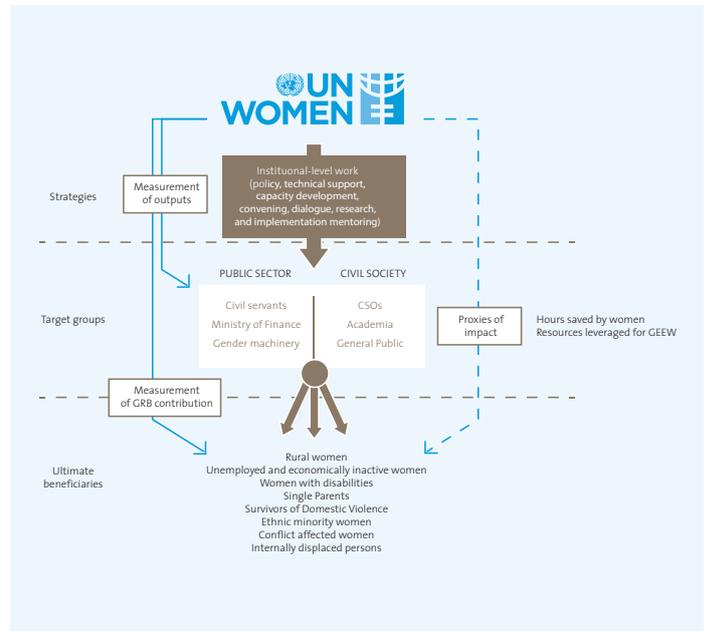
The utilization-focused design proposed for the evaluation has many comparative advantages within the purpose, objectives and scope of the evaluation. It also can only partially be, overcome:

Most expenditure was observed by the evaluation case studies to be on investments that save women’s time either indirectly or through increased access to safe public spaces. In addition to having a direct impact on women’s rights to security of person, the change in mind-set of local authorities and marginal time savings from activities executed because of GRB aggregate represent a considerable contribution to the enabling conditions for the advancement of women’s human rights.

The evaluation revealed a strong case for better capturing the direct and indirect outcomes of GRB interventions through three lenses:

1. Contributions to changes in the lives of women through enabling better efficiency in achieving sector outcomes (e.g. education, health, WASH) – which requires strengthening gender responsive sector monitoring frameworks
2. Contributions to sustained changes in knowledge, attitudes, skills and practices of individuals and institutions touched by GRB interventions
3. Contributions to women’s economic rights using the 10-priority framework elaborated in Progress of the World’s Women 2015-16, including where contributions are not being made due to the absence of interventions in the macroeconomic and revenue

FIGURE 2
Measuring pathways to outcomes on the lives of women and men



Adapting regional approaches to GRB programming to national (and sub-national) contexts has been an important factor in the results that were identified in the evaluation. Allowing for localisation is likely to increase in importance as the range of GRB-implementation status increases among countries. spaces.

TABLE 1
Main factors influencing GRB identified by UN Women staff from across ECA region

Positive influences	Negative influences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Transition to Performance Based Budgeting ✓ Support of elected representatives ✓ Political priorities of local governments ✓ International commitments to GE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X Political and economic context X Media and popular culture X Social and cultural patterns between gender groups

Localisation of programming highlights the importance of high levels of participation from country-level stakeholders – especially UN Women country staff, ministries of finance, and civil society representatives – in the design of regional projects. This was not optimised in the process of designing the Regional Project Phase II, partly due to time and resource constraints. A further chance to support localisation would be to allow for country-specific outputs to be included in any multi-country monitoring frameworks.

The challenge for localising the implementation of GRB programming is finding the means to capture the overall contribution that UN Women is making, and packaging this in ways that support both accountability and resource mobilisation. Whilst an attempt to do this was made with the Regional Project performance monitoring framework, the predominant use of institutional narratives in the indicators inhibited the aggregation of a concise-but-meaningful overall storyline. This points to the need, at the level of the RO, for a small number of carefully designed key-indicators for GRB that can be aggregated across the ECA region.

Relevance

UN Women GRB programming documents reflect systematic mapping of and alignment to normative gender frameworks at the international and country level. It also takes account of regional gender commitments. Consequently, activities were found to be highly relevant to institutional conditions in each country, and the presence (and relationships) of UN Women country staff also supported adaptation to changing contexts (such as unplanned elections).

In the case of Albania, UN Women has been successful in leveraging this alignment to gender norms to support gender mainstreaming (including GRB) in pre-accession work by the government and EU delegation. Similar opportunities are being actively explored in other countries within the EU-orbit, and the evaluation summit workshop identified the opportunity for UN Women to expand on synergies between gender equality facilities and GRB (GEF contributes to increasing government accountability at the level of policies and action plans; GRB strengthens budgetary accountability of governments to citizens).

In addition, there are forthcoming opportunities for UN Women to support national institutions across the region in responding to the demand for gender statistics to establish baselines and reporting on the SDG indicators. Through the global flagship programme initiative on data and statistics, there is the potential to release ‘seed resources’ for GRB as a tool for utilising the evidence generated by statistical systems. The budget process itself, if it is participatory, may also be considered as a vector for generating SDG reporting data – but needs to be communicated as such. A ‘corporate package’ based on statistics and GRB may be a relevant entry point for more globally-orientated countries or those outside of the EU accession process.

One of the perspectives that UN Women needs but is currently missing to agitate for GRB a macroeconomic level is an approach that orientates GRB within a larger economic framework. Given the centrality of equity to Agenda 2030 – no one left behind – the evaluation summit workshop concluded that ‘inclusive growth’ is the most promising way of reframing GRB. The evaluation agrees that inclusive growth is likely to resonate and have meaning with policy makers and power brokers outside of those aware of and motivated by gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Given that this evaluation is published at a time in which Authoritarian Populism is showing signs of outflanking liberalism across the ECA region (including in some donor countries), it must be concluded that framing GRB in terms of economic growth and security concurrently with its existing framing within women’s human rights may be a necessary factor in ensuring its future relevance.

Efficiency

The Regional Project has benefited greatly from the opportunities countries have had to share regional resources and experiences, through exchanges, study tours, the project manager, and informal networking. More could be made of such opportunities in the future, especially given the changing context. The evaluation identified, for example, a wealth of experience in ECA countries outside of the Regional Project that could be more systematically captured and shared. Regionally, the RO can strengthen the knowledge-hub for documented lessons, tools, and guidance for GRB translated into other national languages.

Furthermore, given that a body of experience now exists on a sub-regional basis, the evaluation finds that there is now a stronger case for exchange events than there is a need for study tours. Study visits can now be more often undertaken to neighbouring countries or sub-national regions in the same country that are demonstrating GRB in action. There is also scope for the systematic use of GRB professionals from within the region to be engaged in country-to-country technical cooperation facilitated by UN Women.

Whilst the presences of regional project and technical staff facilitated knowledge exchange management at country level, the introduction of multi-country layers of project management was not seen to offer sufficient value to offset additional administrative costs. Future project management would be more efficient, therefore, if it was to be decentralised to country level – with regional project staff focused on knowledge exchange, partnership brokering, political influencing, and resource mobilisation.

This finding assumes the provision of sufficient human resources at country level, and takes note of the finding that the provision of 50 per cent of a country-level project coordinator was most likely a case of false-economy. Such an assumption is particularly fragile in programme presence countries without full delegation of authority or institutional budget. Given the need to invest in GRB consistently over a long period to cover and socialise changes within the full budget cycle, this vulnerability is of particular concern.

The strategy for future regional approaches to GRB thus depends on whether UN Women corporately considers, and positions, GRB as a core value proposition that serves and advances its other objectives, including Agenda 2030. If it were considered a core business function, UN Women should be required to know – and make provision for – the minimum level of staffing required to keep GRB supported in all its programme presence countries during periods when project financing is not available (this may be a proportion of time from a programme officer). A key advantage of regionality could be to share guaranteed provision for this minimum requirement across countries; and to support individual countries (and regional projects) to make the case for full cost recovery of human resource needs.

Sustainability

Although recognising that UN Women programmes have made provision for sustainability, the evaluation finds that UN women is still the engine behind the adoption of GRB within domestic institutions. Whilst the goal for supported institutions is to replicate their knowledge and behaviours, the evidence that this is happening is limited (and only in a few countries). In addition, whilst UN Women in most countries has sort synergies with other UN entities – and has taken advantage of joint programming when this was feasible – it lacks, in most cases, sufficient voice to force GRB as an agenda priority. There is a need for more direct political leverage from the regional level and strategic partners if this balance of power is to be influenced in favour of greater coordination.

At the regional level, there is an urgent need to clarify the assumptions and strategy for sustainability given that a similar approach is taken in all ECA countries. The metaphor of a critical mass is prevalent, but has not been sufficiently substantiated as accurate and detailed enough to use for effective programming. There is also the opportunity to more effectively capture and share insights from countries that have progressed furthest in embedding GRB within performance-based budgeting, municipal reform, and EU accession processes.

At the country level, the evaluation notes the importance of having built on previous work within the Regional Project – further emphasising the value of longer term sustained investments. As a result of this, several countries are now at the point where they can shift from a mentoring and consultancy-supported approach to greater use of peer-to-peer communities of practice (both within the country and on a sub-regional basis).

Human Rights and Gender Equality

Given the preceding findings, UN Women's existing theories of change for GRB are largely sufficient to continue to implement relevant women's human rights projects with a 'tactical' focus on UN Women's comparative advantage of supporting institutional change.

However, the evaluation has also found that significant potential exists for UN Women to position GRB

more strategically to influence the broader macro-economic framework. This would be relevant for two main reasons: 1) progress in institutionalising GRB is correlated with the progress of wider financial and budgetary reform processes; and 2) the existing work on GRB has not been successful in engaging with and addressing macroeconomic patterns that disadvantage women.

Addressing this successfully requires a new level of theory of change – one that sets out a common language to explain UN Women’s unique contribution, mission and intervention for contributing to the macroeconomic discourse across the ECA region, and applying GRB as a means for realising this. The evaluation summit workshop identified some key components of a potential regional theory of change, summarised in the figure below.

One of these is to occupy the intellectual space on the care economy from a feminist perspective, but to package this in an approach and set of action research to make it accessible a country level. Another key component concluded as important by the evaluation summit workshop was the creation of a flagship knowledge product – such as a GRB index to track country performance – as a means to more

successfully drive the political discourse. Whilst both components would require corporate consent from UN Women HQ, and coordination with policy teams, the evaluation considers that the region is a highly relevant unit for trialling such initiatives.

Integrated in such a strategic reflection on UN Women’s approach is the need to revisit some of the core concepts of gender and the language being used by participants within GRB projects. For example, there is a need to reject economic language that entrenches the marginalisation of women – terms such as ‘economically inactive women’ that run counter to a full understanding of the care economy. Beyond the more intentional use of language within GRB project documents and dialogue is the need to address the absence of LGBTQ identities within the current analysis and design of GRB programming.

Conclusions and Recommendation

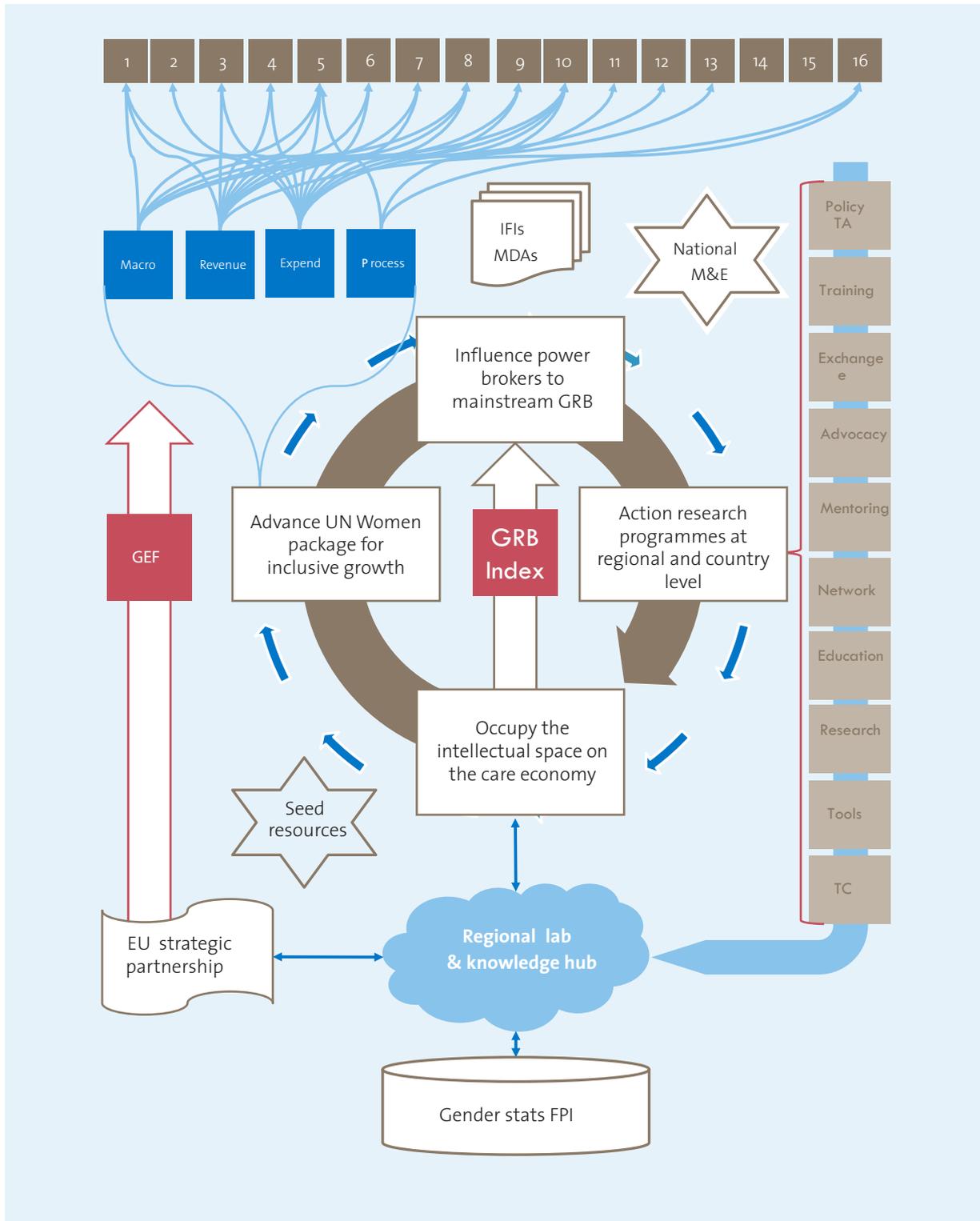
The following conclusions and recommendations are based on the evaluation criteria and are derived through a combination of realist meta-synthesis of evaluation evidence, consultation at the summit workshop, and validation by the evaluation reference groups.

Conclusion	Recommendation	Target	Priority
1: UN Women projects and programmes on GRB in ECA region have contributed substantively to improved awareness, regulatory frameworks and institutional capacity to engender the budget process and expenditure plans. Longer term support is needed achieve integration of GRB in the full cycle, expand practice, and mainstream GRB into performance based budgeting.	1.1 Expand the use of costing exercises to new domains of gender inequality, such as women in business (especially executive positions), gender bias in education, and the social dislocation of women migrant workers. Synchronise this research with public authority planning cycles.	UN Women project managers	Soon.
	1.2 At the municipal level, continue to explore a shift from advocating GRB to problem solving administrative tasks through the use of practical gender-sensitive models and tools.	UN Women project managers	Later.
2: Evidence from the evaluation suggests that GRB Regional Project interventions are contributing to positive social outcomes in terms of changes in the lives of women. Capturing and communicating this change requires expanding the scope of UN Women’s existing performance management systems.	2.1 Agree on a set of key indicators for GRB projects, building on work such as the Progress of the World’s Women (2016) framework. Aggregate performance of the key indicators on a regional basis to share the risks associated with innovation across countries and remove disincentives to experimentation.	UN Women Regional office, WEE and RBM. Regional project managers	Immediate.
	2.2 At country level, monitor CEDAW and SDG reporting to collect evidence of GRB’s success and feed this back into political discourse to build momentum.	UN Women Country Offices	Soon.

3: Current programmes are highly relevant to normative gender instruments and national gender frameworks. There is significant scope to build on this work to better position the contribution of GRB to Agenda 2030, inclusive economic development, and EU accession processes.	3.1 Work towards a regionally-adapted version of the Flagship Programme on transformative financing that includes specific links to the EU Acquis (such as through GEF) and UN Women's work on data/statistics	Regional Project – UN Women project manager, coordinators and country representatives	Soon.
	3.2 Explicitly link the work towards a regionally-adapted version of the Flagship Programme on data and statistics to the FPI on transformative financing (see 3.1)	UN Women Regional Office, management, WEE, Stats, RBM	Soon.
	3.3 Develop a macroeconomic theory of change for the region and publish a flagship GRB index to leverage UN Women's perspective on the care economy into IFI and MDA models for promoting inclusive growth	UN Women Regional Office, management, specialists	Later.
4: The main comparative advantage for UN Women of working regionally is knowledge management, resource mobilisation, and sharing risk. This can be better underpinned by shared key indicators used by localised implementations of UN Women's regional approach.	4.1 Work with key partners, (including but not limited to ministries of finance, gender equality mechanisms, and civil society networks) to design future regional projects through participatory processes, including having country-specific outputs that respond to local political priorities	UN Women Project managers Development partners (financing support)	Soon.
	4.2 Establish a regional knowledge and communications hub for GRB to gather, simplify and translate insights, tools, and guidance from across the region (including, but not limited to, future regional projects).	UN Women Regional Office	Soon.
	4.3 Continue the development of regional GRB projects, but focus the regional aspect on knowledge management, political advocacy, and partnership brokerage. Give greater emphasis in knowledge management to regional exchanges, peer-to-peer mentoring, and document sharing; and less emphasis to study tours (see 4.2)	Regional Project – UN Women project manager	Immediate
	4.4 Explore the option of establishing a regional framework agreement with development partners for GRB with two components: 1) provision for regional knowledge management (see 4.2) and 2) provision for country-led GRB projects under a common reporting framework (see 2.1)	UN Women Regional Office Development partners	Later
5: It is optimal to support project design and implementation at country level wherever possible. This needs to be backed-up by an institutional commitment to maintaining a baseline level of human resources to GRB, particularly in programme presence countries without delegated authority.	5.1 Establish a region-wide commitment to preserving a minimum level of UN Women support to maintain GRB over the long-term.	UN Women Regional Office, management UN Women country representatives	Later
	5.2 In each country establish an explicit strategy to work towards embedding the role of GRB advisor (or another form of GRB expertise) in the Ministry of Finance.	UN Women Country Offices	Soon.
	5.3 Ensure full cost recovery of a full-time-equivalent project coordinator for future GRB projects (i.e. rather than cost-sharing with the country office) to avoid false-economy, and to allow for more staff time in the field.	UN Women Regional Office, operations	Immediate
6: Overall, UN Women remains the engine sustaining and developing GRB. Greater scope remains to both clarify and innovate strategies for sustainability across the region, and to	6.1 Within UN Women's coordination work, prioritise conceptual and language alignment of GRB with the budgeting programmes of other entities, including human rights based budgeting (OHCHR) and performance based budgeting (UNDP).	UN Women project managers and coordinators	Soon.

measure and learn from the experiences of each country.	6.1 Within UN Women’s coordination work, prioritise conceptual and language alignment of GRB with the budgeting programmes of other entities, including human rights based budgeting (OHCHR) and performance based budgeting (UNDP).	UN Women project managers and coordinators UN Women Regional Office, management, specialists	Soon.
	6.2 Continue to widen and better utilise the regional pool of GRB experts, including supporting country-to-country technical cooperation by leveraging UN Women’s universal mandate and strategic partnership with the EU.	UN Women project managers	Soon.
7: Current theories of change for GRB are focused at the meso and micro level of GRB, because of which UN Women is missing the macro-level regional patterns that are driving the economic marginalisation of women, vulnerable social and cultural groups, and people identifying as LGBTQ.	7.1 Expand UN Women’s GRB theories of change to fully cover all stages of the budget cycle (including the watchdog role), analysis of revenue policies, and consideration of LGBTQ gender identities.	UN Women project managers	Immediate
	7.2 Ensure that all country-level GRB projects include provision for engaging macro-economic actors – including but not limited to the World Bank, IMF and EU – to advocate for gender mainstreaming in all policy analysis and recommendations.	UN Women country representatives	Soon.
	7.3 Ensure that all GRB projects start with a baseline macroeconomic analysis that is gender and class aware.	UN Women regional WEE advisor	Immediate

FIGURE 3
Concept of a regional-level UN Women theory of change for GRB contributing to the SDGs – elaborated from dialogue during the summit workshop



INTRODUCTION

UN Women Global Approach, Mandate and Strategic Directions on GRB

Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) has become an internationally acknowledged tool for achieving gender equality. This tool was first pioneered in Australia in 1984, with a federal government assessment of the budget's impact on women. A decade later, the concept was endorsed by the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women and the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995.

According to Budlender and Hewitt (2003), "GRBs can help to improve economic governance and financial management. They can provide feedback to government on whether it is meeting the needs of different groups of women and men, girls and boys. For those outside government, GRBs can be used to encourage transparency, accountability and participation. They should also provide data that can be used in advocacy. For those both inside and outside government, gender budget work provides information that allows for better decision-making on how policies and priorities should be revised – and the accompanying resources needed – to achieve the goal of gender equality."¹

Presently, more than 70 countries all around the world pursue a variety of GRB initiatives that span civil society, academia, Parliaments, government and international organizations.

Since the establishment of UN Women, GRB has been one of UN Women's core thematic priorities, as reflected in its Strategic Plan – Development Results Framework – Goal 5: "governance and national planning fully reflect accountability for gender equality commitments and priorities."²

UN Women's specific mandate on GRB, which is now situated under the umbrella of financing gender equality, is derived from and informed by existing and recently adopted commitments on gender equality. A number of successive, international agreements

and policies, including the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, the 23rd Special Session of the General Assembly (Beijing+5), the 52nd, 58th, 59th CSW agreed conclusions and the International Conferences on Financing for Development outline the normative framework for GRB and financing gender equality.

Most recently, in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, governments *reaffirmed that achieving gender equality, empowering all women and girls, and the full realization of their human rights are essential to achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development and reiterated the need for gender mainstreaming, including targeted actions and investments in the formula on and implementation of all financial, economic, environmental and social policies.*

The recent twenty-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action found that under-investment in gender equality and women's empowerment has contributed to slow and uneven progress in all 12 critical areas of concern³. Inadequate financing hinders the implementation of gender responsive laws and policies evidenced by governments placing low priority on gender equality in budgets. Even in countries that are considered to spend significant resources on gender equality, data shows that these allocations range from a mere 0.5% to 21.9% of the national budget. Financing gaps for implementing national actions plans on gender equality are often as high as 90%.

Research examining Millennium Development Goal related spending in 55 countries in the areas of agriculture, education, environment, gender, health, social protection, and water and sanitation found that, spending has fallen as a percent of GDP or total expenditure in almost all areas and remained stagnant in one (water and sanitation) across the majority of countries⁴. To illustrate the impact of such gaps: an extra year of primary school can increase women's

1 Budlender, Debbie and Hewitt, Guy, "Engendering Budgets: A Practitioners' Guide to Understanding and Implementing Gender-Responsive Budgets," Commonwealth Secretariat 2003, p. 7.

2 UN Women Strategic Plan 2014-2017, p. 14.

3 See E/CN.6/2015/3 at: http://www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2015/sg%20report_synthesis-en_web.pdf

4 Unpublished paper prepared by Debbie Budlender, Matthew Marn and Richard Was, UN Women (2013).

eventual wages by 10-20%⁵; productivity losses resulting from violence against women are estimated at between 1.5 to 2% of GDP⁶, and gender inequality in work costs low income countries USD \$9 trillion per year⁷.

Recognising that financing new and existing commitments on gender equality is central to implementing and achieving all of the proposed sustainable development goals (in particular Goal 5), in 2015, UN Women selected “Transformative Financing for Gender Equality & Women’s Empowerment” as one of the flagship initiatives to be supported by the entity. This flagship programme seeks to:

1. Create political awareness and consensus to increase allocations to and implement national gender equality commitments. Through gender gap analyses of budgets and ODA, public spending impact assessments and costing, the flagship will improve the evidence and make data available on the financing gaps. The leadership capacity of GE advocates will be strengthened through their participation in gender analyses of budgets, parliamentary committees, and advocacy efforts.
2. Promote gender responsive fiscal laws, policies and national action plans that prioritize both revenue and budgetary allocations for gender equality. Technical support and capacity development for putting in place progressive tax policies that eliminate discriminatory provisions and result in more equitable distribution of socio-economic benefits will be provided. In addition, legislative frameworks and institutional capacities of finance ministries on gender responsive public financial management systems will be strengthened. The capacities of line ministries and local government on GRB will also be enhanced to enable strategic budget allocations for gender equality.
3. Mobilize additional financing for gender equality. The flagship will increase international financing

for gender equality by improving the awareness and capacity of donors to analyze gender gaps and strengthening donor monitoring and tracking systems. It will also increase resources for GE from the private sector and innovative financing mechanisms through efforts to align them with national gender equality commitments.

4. Hold all actors accountable for implementing GEEW commitments. Establishing multi-stakeholder partnerships will ensure comprehensive responses to address financing gaps. The capacities of multi-stakeholder partners to analyse the impact of their investments will be strengthened. Gender advocates and women’s organizations will be enabled to demand greater accountability for and transparency on government expenditures through enhanced capacity on gender analysis of budgets and advocacy.

Responding to the demand from countries to introduce or institutionalize GRB, UN Women also contributes extensively to building interest, capacity and commitment to incorporate a gender equality perspective in budgetary processes and practices. UN Women’s supported GRB initiatives operate on different levels and vary in their objectives, but they are united in their ultimate goal: to contribute to the realization of women’s rights and gender equality through changes in budget priorities as well as increased women’s participation in budgetary debates and decision-making.

Overview of GRB Work in the ECA Region

Since 2007, GRB initiatives in the ECA region have taken place in the following 10 countries: Albania; BiH; Macedonia, Moldova; Georgia; Serbia, Kosovo; Kyrgyzstan; Turkey and Ukraine. In some countries of ECA region such as Albania, BiH, FYR Macedonia, Serbia the first GRB initiatives started as 2007, while in some others GRB started later such as Moldova, Georgia, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey and Ukraine.

5 United Nations, Inter-agency Task Force on Rural Women, Fact Sheet: Rural Women and the Millennium Development Goals.

6 <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2013/11/25/violence-against-women-exacts-high-economic-price-world-bank-says>

7 http://www.ac onaid.org.uk/sites/default/les/publications/womens_rights_on-line_version_2.1.pdf

EVALUATION BACKGROUND

Purpose

In its 2015/2017 Strategic Note, the UN Women ECA Regional Office established a strategic level evaluation planning approach. The UN Women's work on GRB in the ECA Region is the second Regional Strategic Evaluation in ECA.

The primary purpose of this evaluation is to support UN Women to establish a region-wide strategic view on opportunities and challenges faced in GRB; and to be forward-looking in the sense that it should contribute to effective adaptation of UN Women's approach to GRB for different contexts in the region.

The information generated by the evaluation will be used by different stakeholders to build on evidence based information on effective strategies for addressing the needs of women in the region.

The primary intended users of the evaluation are those stakeholders both inside and outside of UN Women who will be in the position to influence future strategic decisions related to GRB implementation in the region. Such stakeholders include: UN Women Staff in in the ECA region, UN sister agencies; ECA national and local governments, CSOs, donor community and other development partners.

The intended use of the evaluation is to inform strategic policy and programmatic decision-making and management, organizational learning and accountability, and contribute to wider knowledge in the region on what works and what doesn't to advance gender responsive budgeting.

Objectives of the Evaluation

In accordance with the TOR, the **objectives** of this evaluation are to:

1. Assess the **relevance** and **sustainability** of UN Women's contribution financing for GEEW in the ECA region.

2. Assess **effectiveness and organizational efficiency** in progressing towards the achievement of GRB regional project results

3. Analyze **how human rights approach and gender equality principles** are integrated in the implementation of GRB programming.

4. **Identify and validate lessons learned, good practices and examples and innovations** of work supported by UN Women in GRB programming.

5. Provide **actionable recommendations** with respect to UN Women's work on GRB in the ECA region¹.

Evaluation Scope

In accordance with the TOR, the evaluation has both a summative and a forward looking focus and will analyse UN Women work on GRB in ECA region. While the main focus of the evaluation was the GRB regional project (implemented between 2013 and 2016 in Albania, BiH, FYR of Macedonia and Moldova), it also aimed to systematise lessons from all the different GRB initiatives supported in the region (in Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Serbia and Turkey).

The evaluation was guided by the work of Diane Elson² and Debbie Budlender on defining gender responsive budgeting, along with the corporate theory of change

1 UN Women Independent Evaluation Office, Terms of Reference: Final Evaluation of UN Women's GRB Work in the ECA Region.

2 GRB consists of the use of tools to analyse the gender dimensions of budgets; and adoption of procedures to ensure that the budget supports the achievement of gender equality. It requires better understanding of who are the beneficiaries of public expenditure and who contributes in different ways to pay for public expenditure. It requires consideration of how budgets impact on the unpaid work of caring for family and friends. It also assists in the achievement of various other objectives: Efficiency, Effectiveness, Transparency and Accountability. Civil society academics, women's groups) can contribute to the analysis.

for the flagship programme “Transformative Financing for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment”.

Evaluation criteria

The selection of the evaluation criteria has been based on the evaluation TORs and aligned with OECD-DAC and UNEG standards, in particular the UNEG Handbook for Conducting Evaluations of Normative Work in the UN System (2013).

- **Relevance** (including the extent to which the objectives of the development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, countries’ needs, global priorities, and partner’s and donor’s policies)
- **Effectiveness** (the extent to which the development intervention’s objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance);
- **Efficiency** (extent to which the initiative has used the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results)
- **Sustainability** (the continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed, the probability of continued long-term benefits and the resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time)

The evaluation team added **integration of a human rights approach and of gender equality principles** as a standalone criterion in addition to mainstreaming women’s human rights within the rest of the framework. **Impact** was not assessed in this evaluation as this type of analysis would require resources and methods beyond the design of this evaluation.

The Evaluation Object

Promoting Gender Responsive Policies in South East Europe and the Republic of Moldova, Phase II” regional project (2013 -2016) (hereon referred to as “GRB Regional Project”) is funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). This regional project represents the largest effort UN Women has contributed to support GRB in the ECA region.

The project is implemented in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Former Yugoslav FYR Macedonia (FYR of Macedonia) and Moldova. Its goal is to contribute to the implementation of commitments towards achieving gender equality in these countries.

The project builds on two prior interventions, “Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in South East Europe (SEE): Advancing Gender Equality and Democratic Governance through Increased Transparency and Accountability in Albania, BiH, FYR of Macedonia and Serbia (2006-2010) and the first phase of the project “Promoting Gender Responsive Policies and Budgets in South-East Europe” (2011-2013) (PGRP-SEE) in Albania, BiH and FYR Macedonia.

The ultimate aim of the project is to contribute to the implementation of commitments towards achieving gender equality. To achieve this aim, three distinct outcomes were anticipated (the logical framework for the project provides more details):

- Outcome 1: Sectoral programs and budgets at the central and local levels reflect better gender equality concerns.
- Outcome 2: Strengthened oversight of central and local government programs, policies and budgets towards gender equality commitments.
- Outcome 3: Exchange of knowledge and learning on GRB facilitates replication of good practices and lessons learned.

The Project is formulated for a total of 2,157,929.42 EUR of which 1,100,000.00 EUR (50.97%) was financed by ADA and 1,057,929.42 EUR (49.03%) was financed by SDC. UN Women covered the cost of two Project Assistants in Albania and BiH and all project administrative cost in Republic of Moldova.

Gender Equality Commitments and Legal and Policy Frameworks

All four countries involved in the implementation of the GRB Regional Project are signatories of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and have committed to the UN Beijing Platform for Action. Republic of Moldova signed an EU Association Agreements (AA) in 2014, BiH has formally started the process of EU accession, and Albania and FYR Macedonia are EU candidate countries. The process demands governments to transpose the EU equality legislation into the national legal systems, to introduce relevant mechanisms and tools, to allocate resources and monitor the process in the area of gender equality and advancement of women’s rights.

In each country, gender equality laws, strategies and policies have provided an important framework for introducing GRB:

- In BiH, this includes the Gender Equality Law, BiH Action Plan (2013-2017) and the Republika Srpska Action Plan on Rural Women;
- In FYR Macedonia, this includes the 2010 Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination, the 2006 Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (amended 2012), the National Strategy for Gender Equality (2012–2020), the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (2013–2016), the Government Methodology for Gender Responsive Budgeting and the National Strategy on the Introduction of Gender-Responsive Budgeting (2012–2017);
- In Albania, there is Law No. 9970 “On Gender Equality in Society, the National Strategy for the Gender Equality and Eradication of Gender Based Violence and Domestic Violence (2-11-2015), the National Strategy for Development and Integration (2013-2020) and the Council of Ministers Decision No. 465/2012 on GRB in the Medium-term Budgeting Programme (2013).
- In Moldova, this included Law No. 121 on ensuring equality and the National Programme on Ensuring Gender Equality (2010-2015).

The conclusions and recommendations of the CEDAW Committee to the most recent country periodic reports (Albania 2010; FYR Macedonia 2013, BiH 2013 and Moldova 2013) have also emphasized the importance of the efforts of governments to apply systematic

approaches to the advancement of gender equality and ensure that public policies at all levels advance gender equality and women's rights.

Socio-economic Context

Whilst governments of the four project countries have repeatedly affirmed their commitment to gender equality and the advancement of women through the above-mentioned laws, policies and strategies, progress has been uneven due to a number of socio-cultural factors. These have included persistent patriarchal attitudes and gender stereotypes about men and women's gender roles, responsibilities, and capabilities which have perpetuated discrimination against women. Concern over such stereotypes and the impact on the full realisation of gender equality was voiced by the CEDAW Committee in its Concluding Observations for the four countries, in particular the effect of such attitudes on women's disadvantaged position in political and public life¹.

In the design of the regional project, important gender analysis was conducted which provided important data and a clear baseline measure of the high level of unemployment and inactivity rates among women in the project countries. Across the countries, the trend of withdrawing from the labour market and focusing on marital and family obligations is a deeply "female" phenomenon and an apparent coping mechanism in response to the labour market situation². In **Albania**, the gender gap in the labour market widened from 18.2% in 2007 to 21.5% in 2009, indicating women's withdrawal from the labour market. According to the Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2009 data, the inactivity rate was 26.7% for men, yet at 48.2% almost twice as high for women. In the last five years, according to the LFS data, women's employment rate fell from 49.3% to 43.6%. During the same time, men's employment remained stable, resulting in a widening of the overall employment gap between women and men, by almost 20 percentage points³. **BiH** suffers from a very low economic activity rate for women, in 2011 this stood at 32.8% for women and 55.9% for men⁴. In FYR

Macedonia, only 45% of women are economically active and 31% employed⁵. In the Republic of Moldova, only 39.3% of women 15 years old and above are economically active, in comparison with 45.6% of men in the same age group⁶.

In the design of the project, the need to increase employment and activity rates in order to economically empower women and enable them to reach their economic potential for the overall benefit of society is included as a key focus of the project intervention.

Political Context

All project countries are undergoing protracted and complex political, legal, economic and social transition. BiH, FYR Macedonia and Republic of Moldova have also experienced a violent conflict in the recent past⁷. Consequently, the project environment can overall be described as relatively sensitive, prone to change and undergoing numerous reforms at different levels.

Political transition emanating from national and local level elections also had an often adverse effect on project implementation⁸ in terms of turnover of key government GRB champions and leaders and creating shifts in priorities. In Albania, project implementation was influenced by the change in the Minister of Social Welfare and Youth (who also headed the Gender Equality Machinery) and who had served as an important driver for GRB implementation. The territorial reforms introduced in Albania also resulted in changes in a number of key mayors with whom the project had built support from for GRB. In BiH, the complex administrative governance structure of State, Entity and Cantonal levels of government has also created additional challenges for the introduction of programme-based budgeting and integration of GRB due to significant delays in its implementation. In Moldova during project implementation period, the Government has changed three times, including the management of key ministries.

1 See: Concluding observations on Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Moldova and FYR Macedonia

2 Project Document, p. 6.

3 Ibid., p. 6.

4 Ibid., p. 6.

5 Ibid., p. 6.

6 Statistics provided by the National Bureau of Statistics for 2011 in the 2012 edition "Labour Force in the Republic of Moldova: Employment and Unemployment."

7 Ibid. p. 4.

8 Inception Interviews

Other Contextual Factors

There are a number of important specific contextual factors that have presented both opportunities and challenges in relation to implementation of the Regional GRB Project including:

1. Limited gender expertise and institutional capacity to sustain GRB:
2. A failure to apply GRB holistically
3. Weak capacities of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs),
4. Absence of strong leadership for GRB
5. The introduction of public finance reforms,
6. The EU Accession Agenda.
7. Interest of new donors in GRB.
8. Financing the new post-2015 sustainable development framework.
9. UN Women Flagship Programme “Transformative Financing for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment”.

Overview of UN Women’s Theory of Change for the Regional GRB Project

Building on the results and evaluation findings and recommendations from the first phase of the GRB regional project, the second phase of the project has sought to strengthen and increase the impact of the UN Women GRB initiatives already underway in Albania, BiH, FYR Macedonia and Republic of Moldova. In doing so, the focus of the project has been on: 1) further advancing the institutionalisation of GRB; 2) enhancing sustainability of ongoing GRB initiatives; and 3) ensuring availability of high quality national and local GRB expertise among state and non-state actors.

Across these areas, the need to embed and institutionalise a gender-responsive approach across all phases of the policy planning and budget cycle (including policy; planning and priority setting; programming and budgeting; execution; and monitoring and evaluation) have informed the design and development of the project strategies.

In order to provide a theoretical framework that captures the project results framework as well as the overall approaches and strategies that have influence the design and implementation of the project, the evaluation team, in line with the evaluation TOR and based on consultations with evaluation stakeholders and a review of key documents, developed a reconstructed Theory of Change, as a guiding conceptual framework for the evaluation.

The overarching project objective is to contribute to the implementation of gender equality commitments as enshrined in various international human rights documents including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, CEDAW, the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, EU Equality Directives, and national laws and strategies on gender equality.

The reconstructed TOC captures some of the key influential factors (including social, economic, political and cultural challenges) that have the potential to support and hinder implementation to varying degrees. A comprehensive overview of these factors is included in the context section of this report.

FIGURE 4
Opportunities and challenges facing GRB in ECA

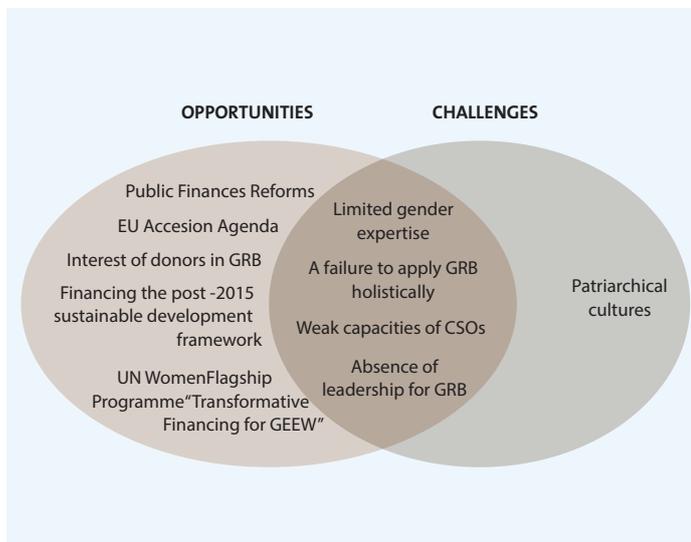
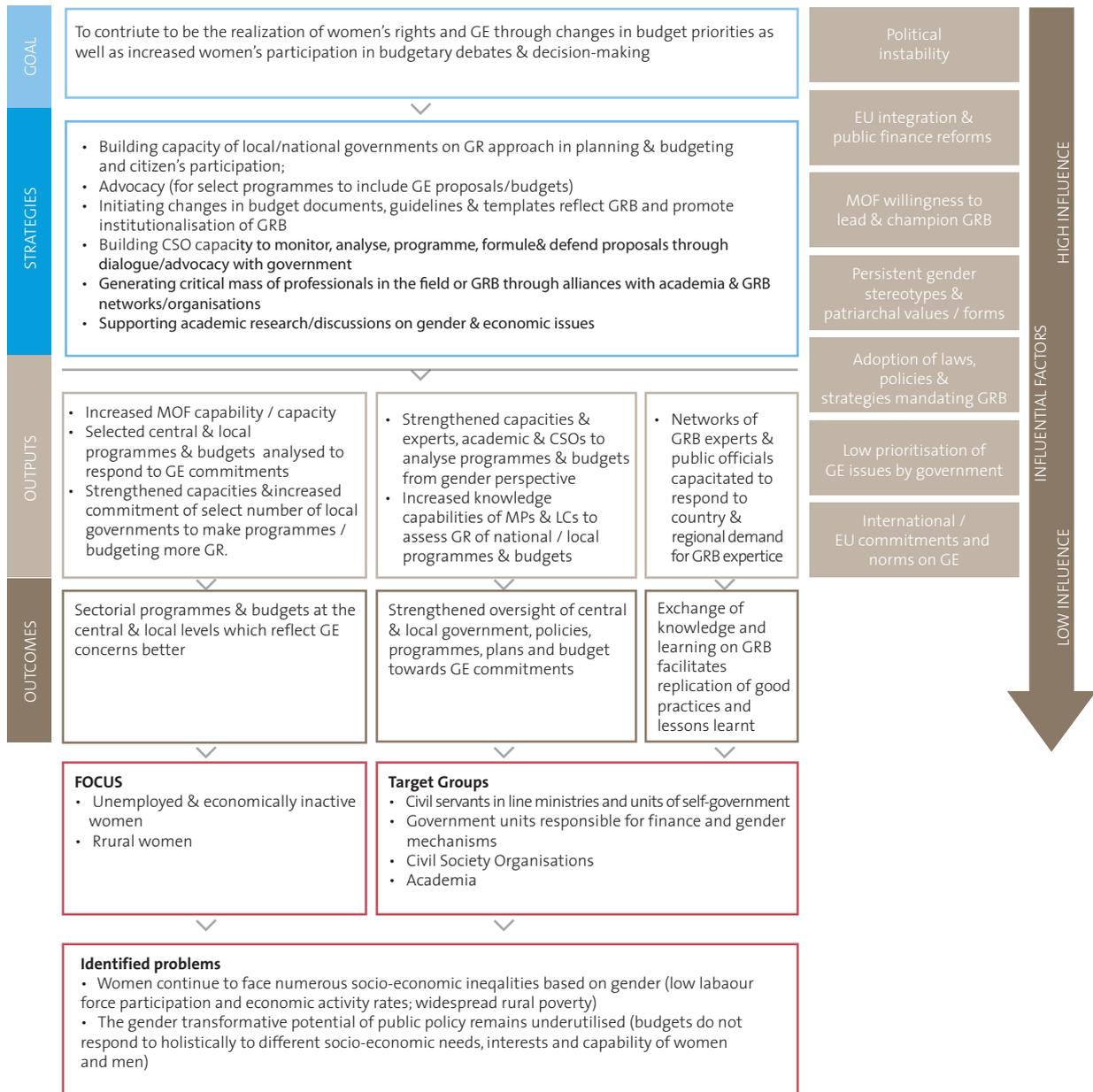


FIGURE 5
Reconstructed theory of change for the Regional Project (based on evaluation of Phase I)



Evaluation Stakeholders

The Inception Phase included a mapping to identify key stakeholders of UN Women GRB work in the region. During the inception phase, evaluation stakeholders interviewed were asked to identify relevant stakeholders and the best approaches in each country to maximise their participation at different stages of the evaluation process. Combined with a desk review, and stakeholder identification work that had been

undertaken by the Regional Evaluation Specialist in commissioning the evaluation, the evaluation team mapped this data using a 5-stage process.

In the design of the project, the need to increase employment and activity rates in order to economically empower women and enable them to reach their economic potential for the overall benefit of society is included as a key focus of the project intervention. In

Across the region, GRB projects work with the following target groups directly:

Target Group	Role
Civil servants in line ministries and units of local self-government	Capacity to effectively apply GRB in budget planning processes.
Government units responsible for finance	Mainstreaming gender in budgetary processes
National Gender Machinery	Mainstreaming gender in national processes, legislation and documents
Members of Parliament (MPs)	Overseeing the implementation of gender equality legislation and strategies
Civil society organizations	Holding governments accountable to their commitments and advocating for women's needs
Academia	Exposing students to the concept of GRB and increasing the body of knowledge on the intersections between gender, public policy and budgetary decision-making

The following indirect (ultimate) beneficiaries of GRB across the region have been identified as:

	Regional Program	Global Program	Country Program	Joint Program
Rural women	Albania, BiH, FYR Macedonia, Moldova		Serbia	
Unemployed and economically inactive women	Albania, BiH, FYR Macedonia, Moldova	Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine		Turkey
Women with disabilities	FYR Macedonia, Moldova		Serbia	
Single Parents			Serbia	
Survivors of Domestic Violence				Kosovo
Ethnic minority women	FYR Macedonia, Moldova		Georgia, Serbia	
Conflict affected women			Georgia	
Internally displaced persons			Georgia	

EVALUATION METHODS

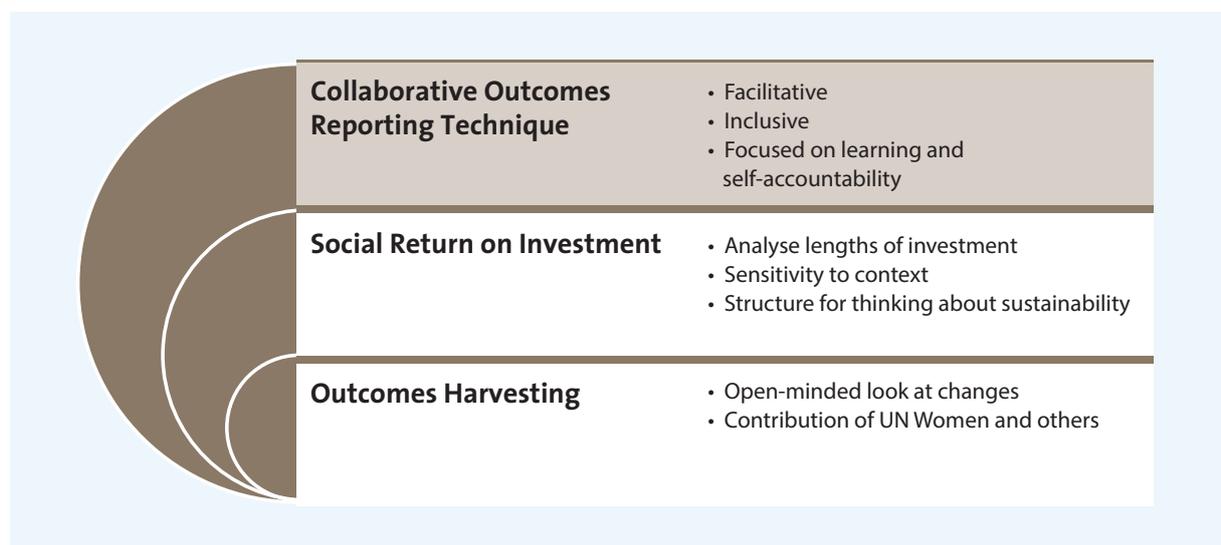
Evaluation Approach

The overall structure of the evaluation is based on **Collaborative Outcomes Reporting Technique (CORT)**, an extension of contribution analysis designed specifically for maximizing the participation of stakeholders in situations where outcomes are diffuse and complex. CORT is a theory-based approach.

Within this framework, applied **Outcomes Harvesting (OH)** – an approach to capturing unintended, intended, positive, and negative outcome level results of interventions within complex contexts. To strengthen the depth and utilization of the analysis, the evaluation also attempted to calculate a **Social Return on Investment (SROI)** for GRB.

FIGURE 6

Design of the evaluation – combining CORT, Outcome Harvesting, and Social Return on Investment



In addition to the principal approaches described above, the evaluation enriched the analysis through the following methods:

1. Participatory theories of change mapping using a combination of document review, interviews and inception workshop;
2. Stakeholder mapping using a sequenced application of Critical Systems Heuristics, Human Rights Role Analysis, and power analysis;
3. Mapping the history of GRB in the region, including a rich picture (systems) view of what forces were at play in determining the decisions that were made;
4. Assessing the integration of human rights norms, standards and principles into the work (instrumental) and social arrangements (transformational) of GRB interventions;
5. Reflecting on the extent to which the structures, systems, culture and performance of GRB interventions respond to feminist critiques of the dominant paradigm; and
6. Institutional pathways analysis assessing the system dynamics that have influenced the history of the GRB in the region and frame the options for future change.

The evaluation adhered to “*Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation*” with human rights approaches integrated into the scope and conduct of the evaluation. The overall approach of the evaluation was guided by Human Rights norms, standards and processes.

Four case studies were undertaken involving interviews with 181 stakeholders (146 women, 35 men) representing both institutional duty bearers and rights holders. The evaluation culminated in a participatory summit workshop with members of the Evaluation Reference Group.

Evaluation Matrix

In order to provide a framework to collect, analyse and assess data and information to answer the key evaluation questions, an Evaluation Matrix (EM) was developed by the evaluation team. The EM was developed and informed based on input from stakeholders during the inception phase. The final version of the EM is included in Annex B.

Sampling

The main unit of analysis for this evaluation is the nation state (country). The evaluation covers a total of 10 countries. In accordance with the ToR, case studies were undertaken in a sample of four countries that have been purposively identified due to their participation in the ‘regional project’. However, all countries were included in the overall portfolio analysis through a survey, key informant interviews, and desk top analysis.

In the case of the country case studies, key informants were selected based on local knowledge of people with insight of the programme, and the analysis of social role groups identified by the evaluation team using critical systems heuristics. To address bias in the selection of key informants, the evidence was subject to examination by the summit workshop during the CORT process.

Sources of Data and Collection Methods

The main sources of data were:

- Regional semi structured interviews (in person, Skype)
- Document analysis
- Four country case studies – to countries involved in the original project – were undertaken

- o Opening workshop
- o Semi structured and group interviews
- o Site visit
- o Closing workshop
- A regional survey
- Evaluation summit workshop

Data Analysis Methods

The following data analysis methods were used:

- 1) **Outcome harvesting** used meta-synthesis methodology to combine and compare qualitative data by-hand, which was substantiated and validated through participatory stakeholder consultation;
- 2) **Social return on investment quantitative calculations** was adapted and estimated based on time use data;
- 3) **Qualitative analysis** was undertaken through coding of text from interviews and documents using deductive codes based on the evaluation questions and criteria;
- 4) **Video stories** will be edited using iMovie for Mac OS X;
- 5) **Synthesis and triangulation** of the different streams of evidence was undertaken through a multi-stage process based on **Collaborative Outcomes Reporting Technique**.

Validation

At the regional level, the evaluation team will applied CORT¹ techniques, to ensure the active participation of key stakeholders in the review of findings and the development of recommendations. This included the organization of a participatory Summit Workshop with UN Women staff members, members of the ERG and other key stakeholders.

Limitations

The inception phase identified a number of limitations and risks. Approaches to mitigating these were integrated into the evaluation design.

The utilization-focused design proposed for the evaluation has many comparative advantages within the purpose, objectives and scope of the evaluation. It also

1 <http://betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/cort>

faces inherent limitations, some of which cannot, or can only partially be, overcome.

The main limitations of the evaluation design include:

- No assessment of attribution to impacts using statistical techniques;
- The reductionist nature of all theory-based approaches that cannot be fully overcome, but can be mitigated through being fully transparent about evaluative reasoning and judgments;
- Constrained involvement of large numbers of rights holders and marginalized women in the commissioning and design of the evaluation, or as data collectors and interpreters; and
- The potential for bias in the Outcome Harvesting, which was mitigated through triangulation in the summit workshop and critical analysis by the evaluation team.

Ethics

The evaluation was guided by the UNEG Ethical Guidelines and the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System. Specific commitments and provisions are included in Annex C.

FINDINGS FROM THE ECA REGION

Relevance

1 The underlying assumptions of UN Women's approaches to GRB in Europe and Central Asia are structural and institutional. Interventions are focused on altering public expenditure and establishing more inclusive budget processes. GRB projects tend to reflect a pragmatic preoccupation with the operational details of sector and municipal budgets rather than seeking to influence macroeconomic priorities.

Seminal work by Diane Elson (UNIFEM, 2006) and Huckerby et al (UNIFEM, 2008) identified four main aspects of Gender Responsive Budgeting and the links to CEDAW. These are:

1. Expenditure
2. Budget processes
3. Revenue (tax and fees)
4. Macroeconomic policy

Across all countries in the region, the evaluation found that programming is currently focused on the budget process and on expenditure. In particular, there is an emphasis on the governance aspects of budget processes (participation, non-discrimination, transparency) and expenditure (tracking, performance monitoring): with a lower emphasis on the economic aspects (such as costing or modelling effects on intra-household income and consumption).

This tendency is consistent with Diane Elson's summary of global programming on GRB, and should not, therefore, be considered unusual. The dominant perception among UN Women staff interviewed during the evaluation is that tax policies and fees are macroeconomic issues beyond the scope of UN Women's projects, expertise, comparative-advantage or leverage. Tax reform is a challenging, slow, and highly political process in the context of most countries in the ECA region.

The focus on budget process and expenditure is reflected in the emphasis on additional financial resources, planning and budgeting in the process map (labelled as a theory of change) within the Regional GRB Project Phase II, and the logic of the global flagship programme on financing gender equality¹. It is also apparent in the prevalence of specific activities, with all countries working on increasing the voice and power of women in the budget-making process to ensure that programmes better meet women's needs.

By comparison, only half of ECA countries consider engendering budget reform processes (such as the transition to performance based budgeting or decentralisation), public expenditure monitoring, macroeconomic analysis and redistribution of expenditure. Where UN Women offices do report consideration of macroeconomic analysis, consideration of tax regimes and user fees, these are periphery to the main thrust of GRB projects.

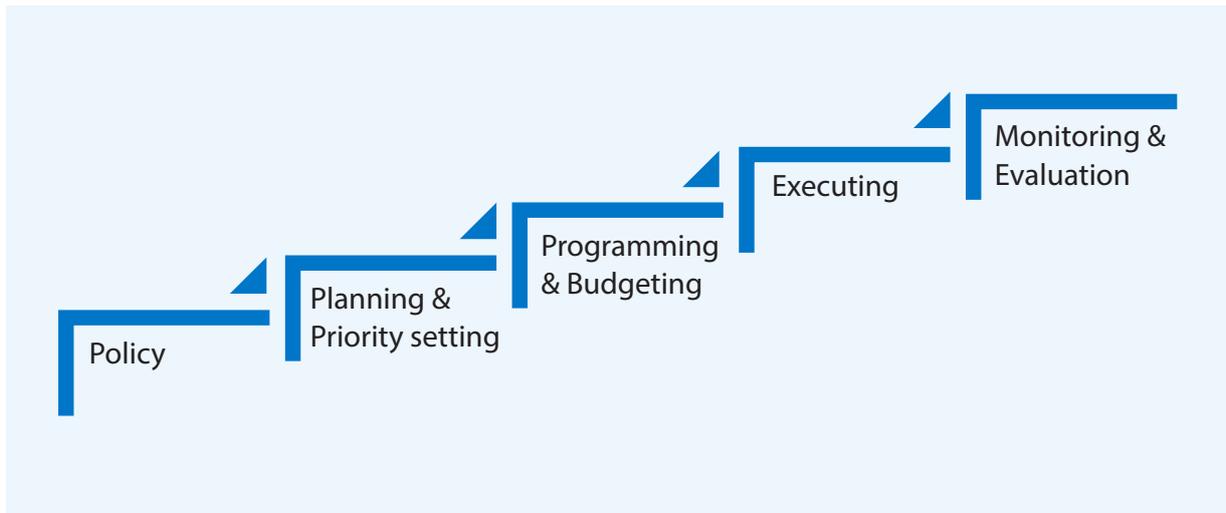
Within the context of these assumptions, the evaluation case studies found that GRB interventions in all countries were successful in making progress to integrate gender into budget planning, but require

¹ If (1) political consensus to address the financing gap in GEWE is created; (2) budgetary allocations prioritize GEWE; (3) additional public financing for GEWE is mobilized; and (4) there is increased accountability on spending for results; Then (5) new and existing internationally agreed commitments on GEWE will be realized; because (6) additional financial resources for GEWE will be available and effectively used. (Emphasis added).

more sustained engagement to establish the capacity and systems to track, monitor and report on actual expenditure. In a few cases, such as FYR Macedonia, there is a group of budget literate CSOs that are working on local policy advocacy and monitoring, but the capacities to fully assume the budget watchdog

role are limited. Overall, interviews with CSOs and UN Women staff across the region suggest that civil society capacity to undertake the watchdog role is embryonic, dependant on UN Women support, and not yet embedded in organisational missions.

FIGURE 7
The stages of GRB as applied in the logic of the Regional Project Phase II



The strategies adopted to advance gender responsive budget processes and expenditure planning across the region centred around ministries of finance as the entry point. This was based on the hypothesis that finance ministry instruments (policies, budget circulars, guidance, and formats) provide a means of both institutionalising GRB in the structure and systems of government and ensuring compliance. From an institutional perspective, these are both necessary conditions for sustainability.

The evaluation found evidence that this strategy has largely worked, in particular with regard to institutionalising within systems. In Serbia, GRB has become mandatory (under budget law and system), starting from 2016. Ministries can now only get funding if they comply with requirements, including GRB. Rather than using the finance ministry as an entry point, Serbia used a strategy of piloting and upscaling through showing why GRB is useful and how it works in practice in other contexts.

There are examples from the cases, however, which illustrate that whilst it is necessary to work with ministries of finance, it is not sufficient to do so in

isolation. For example, in FYR Macedonia, whilst the budget guidance requires the presentation of disaggregated data for municipal and programme budgets, this guidance is not enforced in the template and the finance ministry does not have the internal technical capacity to comment on the adequacy of the data that is presented. For this reason, the team has had to ensure that interventions are multi-stakeholder and all activities with the MoF are closely coordinated with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection.

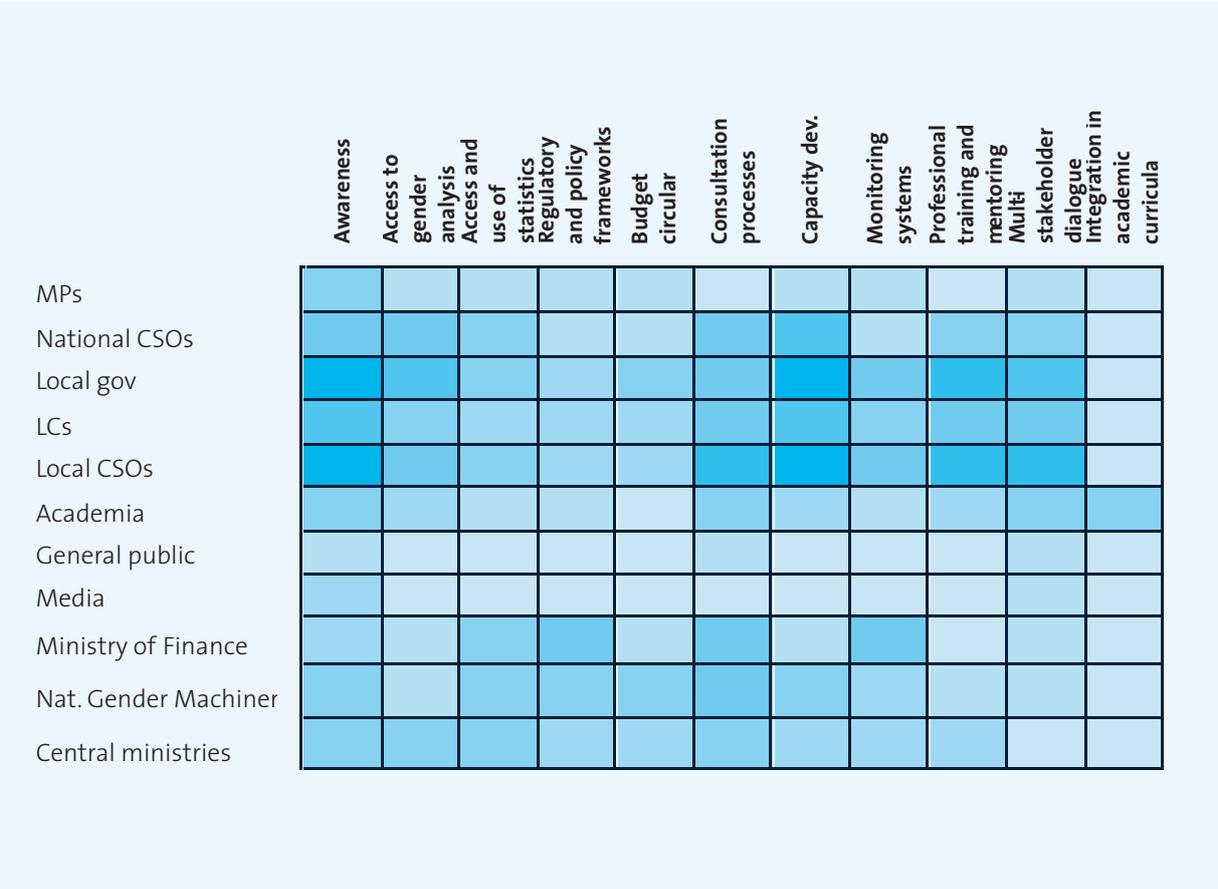
In the example of Republic of Moldova, de-prioritisation of GRB as an issue of interest by the finance ministry (due to the national political economy) has made it necessary for the project to adapt and find different partners and routes to drive the uptake and practice of GRB. These include academic partners able to include GRB as a module within relevant economic curricula, an alternative approach to long term sustainability that has also been pursued in Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Experience from these examples indicates that successful systemic approaches to GRB are require the involvement of multiple actors at multiple levels. This

insight is reflected in a heat map of the strategies adopted across the region to address a wider range of stakeholders. Mapping data from each of the ECA countries reveals a predominant concentration on enhancing awareness and capacity of local governments and civil society, with all countries undertaking these activities. There are exceptions to this pattern, such as Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, both of which predominantly focused interventions at the central level.

A secondary focus across the region includes advocacy for specific programmes to include gender indicators and attempts to generate a ‘critical mass’ of GRB professionals through alliances with academia and civil society. Capacity development with elected representatives is undertaken in five countries (Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Serbia) but is a tertiary focus in terms of effort; whilst wider advocacy with the media and general public is only recently emerging as a consideration, and is not a feature of most GRB interventions.

FIGURE 8
Heatmap of the dominant focus of GRB approaches (self-reported) across the ECA region



An ECA regional perception survey of progress in enhancing awareness of GRB, triangulated by the case studies, suggests that widespread achievements have been realised in improving understanding of GRB among government staff. The degree of awareness achieved, however, tends to be more limited at the municipal level, with ‘significant progress’ when it is found being confined to central government. By comparison, most progress has been observed with

regard to the awareness and understanding of CSOs at the central and local level; and limited progress in the awareness of elected representatives, which is concentrated at the local level.

An analysis of the underlying theories of change being applied across the region reveals a focus on addressing structures (institutions) rather than agents (individuals). The most prevalent assumptions within UN Women programming is that change takes place

through achieving major policy shifts, which are achieved through presenting policy makers with rational (evidence-based) policy analysis and options. A secondary set of strategies are based on combining theories of grassroots mobilisation, participation and good governance to influence change.

Some of the theories of change that may be most considered as applicable but, potentially, underutilised include organisational outflanking to change the political calculation for power holders (e.g. elected representatives seeking re-election), strategic partnerships and advocacy coalitions, working with champions, and agenda setting through influencing the popular media.

With regard to supporting take-up of GRB, the evaluation found scope for more explicit (and potentially more consistent) elaboration of the assumed means by which the ideas, knowledge and practice of GRB will spread within the national infrastructure. Existing approaches include:

Top-down: from the Ministry of Finance down through the national infrastructure by way of budget circulars, templates, training, and guidance

Bottom-up: the codification by central ministries of GRB practices piloted and demonstrated within specific municipalities and/or ministry programmes

Organic: self-selection of ministries, programmes, municipalities and other budget-making institutions to implement GRB based on their witnessing of others using the approach

Incentivised: sponsor-driven uptake of GRB through the creation of incentives by outside actors (such as paid-for training, mentoring, and technical cooperation)

Blended: a mix or combination of the above strategies.

In reflecting on current interventions, UN Women staff have identified a degree of path-dependence: the concept of past choices creating boundaries on what future choices are available. UN Women is now working from a menu of interventions that is based on what activities have been done before (to ensure continuation), what staff skills and experiences are available (to ensure comparative advantage), country demands, the theory of change, the work of GRB scholars, and evidence from previous work (to ensure a strong evidence-base).

Another influencing factor on the menu of approaches available to pursue GRB is the degree to

which normative standards for GRB are present in the **dominant political framing**. UN Women's values are anchored in the normative standards established by CEDAW, UNDHR and other instruments. Within the sphere of influence of the European Union there is dominant political frame that is largely consistent with the human rights lens. Elsewhere in the ECA other dominant frames are to be found, including the Orthodox and Islamic narratives of traditional values. At the regional level, UN Women staff have acknowledged that less is understood in these contexts about how to effectively engage in dialogue and address conservative cultural norms.

Alternative approaches to GRB that could be applied consistently across the region that have been tabled during the evaluation process include:

1. Advancing regional work on the care economy and leveraging strategic partnerships with organisations that can invest significant resources in promulgating GRB
2. Reshaping work on GRB from a problem space to a solution space to amplify solutions that are already working
3. Critiquing the existing approach to participatory approaches to ensure they challenge traditional values
4. Incentivise elected power structures who are seeking re-election to engage in participatory approaches that are inclusive and responsive to the needs of constituents.

These approaches share a common foundation in positioning knowledge as the primary driver of value for UN Women. Central to a knowledge-strategy is the need to organise and outflanking alternative narratives. This includes exploiting dissonance between established theory and experiences of reality, implying timely responses to opportunities, driving and packaging policy-relevant innovation, and shaping for change for the public administration. The evaluation evidence suggests that UN Women has insufficient human resources to achieve this on a country-basis (in terms of both action-research and the dialectic process of persuasion), but may be able to **aggregate capacity across the region** to successfully pioneer a knowledge-based approach.

Aggregating human and knowledge resources across the region means that a common intellectual foundation for GRB is needed. The evaluation identified a number of barriers to achieving this. Chief among these is the assumption that both UN Women

2

colleagues and strategic partners share a common understanding of the framing to be applied to GRB. UN Women staff members suggest that there is a need for clearer messages on how the SDGs can be advanced through GRB within the broader context of inclusive growth (no one left behind).

GRB projects reflect an organisational commitment to innovating the activities and interventions by which outputs are achieved. This has led to iterative advances across the region, demonstrating progressively more relevant approaches over time. Less innovation has taken place within the core conceptual framework and theories of change, which remain grounded in meso-level institutional capacity.

The dominant theories of change used to advance GRB – primarily supporting the twin drivers of government and civil society knowledge and capacity – have been innovated upon in countries across the ECA region. Examples of innovation include:

1. In **Turkey**, municipal governments and CSOs were brought together to prepare shared road maps and mutual accountability for advancing GRB in their provinces. Mayors have used these road maps to help advance GRB activities
2. In **Serbia**, mixed GRB Teams have been established that include a finance representative, policy maker, and representative from the national gender machinery. These multi-disciplinary teams can advance GRB on a holistic basis
3. In **Albania**, GRB activities have been promoted on Facebook and Twitter to engage constituency members and better expose administrations to public sentiment
4. In **Moldova** a costing study of existing provisions and implications of GBV was undertaken to demonstrate that application of GRB could improve both the effectiveness and efficiency of existing provisions
5. In **Kyrgyzstan** an elearning course on GRB was developed and distributed through the Training Centre of the Ministry of Finance
6. In **Bosnia and Herzegovina** a Republika Srpska Action Plan has been established specifically to address the status of Rural Women.

It is notable that most current innovation has taken place at the level of activities. Innovation of the core approach of UN Women to GRB has remained within the domain of structural theories of change, such as shifting from awareness-raising in the first phase to fiscal policy change in the latter phase. Interviews with UN Women staff members, however, emphasise that structural interventions are likely to be insufficient to assure progress since one well-placed individual can block the successful adoption of GRB.

Some offices in the region, as part of UN Women's exploration of using innovation thinking, are now piloting using a positive-deviance approach to identifying and spreading the knowledge, attitudes and practices of individuals who have successfully advanced GRB. Expansion of this approach of working with individual champions within the structure, if found to be successful, has the potential to complement existing structural approaches.

Nevertheless, in general the evaluation found that current work on GRB has been cognisant of and built upon innovation and lessons from the preceding work (for example the documented lessons and recommendations from the Regional Project Phase I). This has been supported by investments in learning between the countries at three levels:

1. within UN Women (such as a visit by the FYR Macedonia programme to the Georgia Country Office)
2. with partners, (such as a regional academic event held in April 2016)
3. amongst partners (for example, Kosovo created a pool of experts from the region).

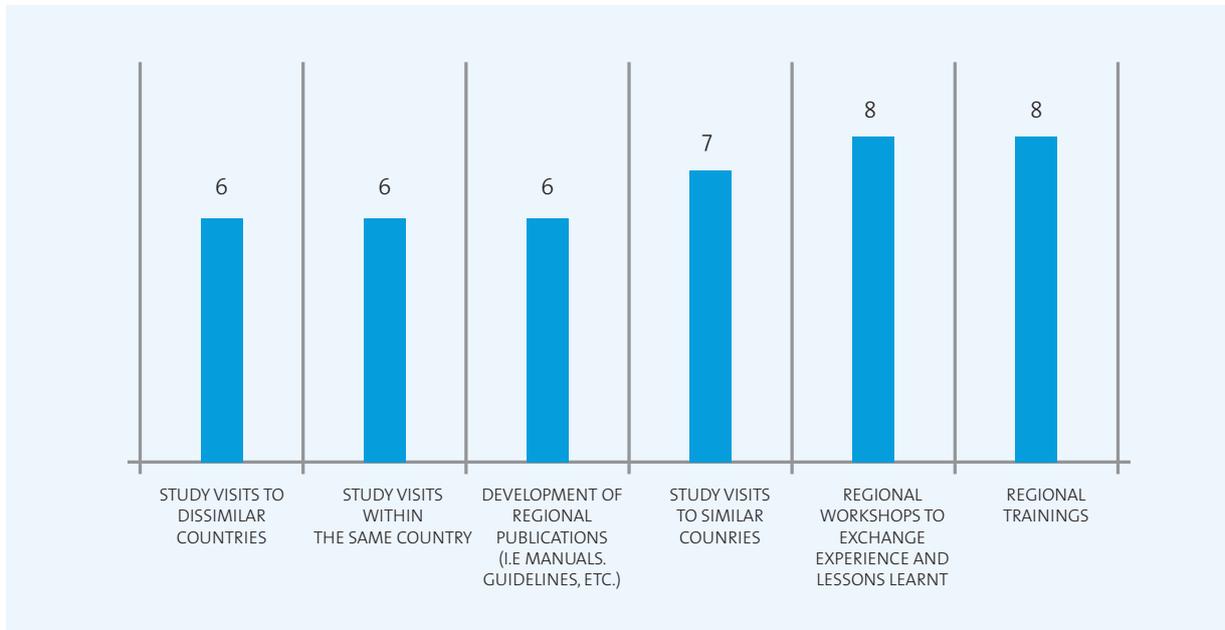
Learning has taken place both within the Regional Project and amongst other countries in the region (including exchange visits with non-programme countries such as Iceland, Austria and Sweden). When surveyed, 88 per cent of UN Women country and programme presence offices expressed satisfaction with the existing level of learning, with the remainder feeling neutral. The most frequently used knowledge sharing formats among countries are regional trainings and workshops.

The view of UN Women staff, when surveyed, was that the most effective learning strategies have been exchange visits to within the same or to similar countries, and regional exchange events in combination with trainings. These all emphasise a peer-to-peer aspect to information and knowledge sharing. Alternative

models that are consistent with peer-to-peer learning and are not currently being applied by UN Women include Technical Cooperation (such as used by ILO)

or the similar social-cultural approach of professional exchange practiced by institutions such as the British Council.

FIGURE 9
Prevalence of approaches to knowledge exchange on GRB used across the ECA region



UN Women’s restricted resources means that needs analysis rely largely on synthesis of secondary data and information from partners. There are few opportunities for UN Women staff to spend time among rights holders and their key duty bearers.

3

The case studies revealed that the Regional Project Phase II was developed based on an extensive gender analysis in the ProDoc, reference to CEDAW concluding observations, reference to national strategies and action plans, and country-level baselines. The project targeted rural women and economically marginalised women. For the latter group, the project documents adopted the language of national governments in the Western Balkans, referring to ‘economically inactive and unemployed women’. Whilst understandable from the perspective of national ownership, the evaluation challenges the use of this terminology in terms of both UN Women’s intellectual model (all women are economic agents in terms of reproductive work and many are active in informal productive work), and with regard to the groups actually targeted (including underemployed and informal workers).

Region-wide, the dominant frame – as reported by UN Women staff – for targeting social identities

within the current GRB portfolio is economic, with 7 countries explicitly targeting low-income women and 6 countries targeting economically excluded women. Cutting across these identities are age, belonging to specific marginalised groups and cultures, and living in rural areas. Older women, younger women, rural women, survivors of violence, and other marginalised groups are all targeted by 5 countries each. The least addressed social identities are internally displaced women and refugees (2 countries), women living with disabilities (3 countries), and men from vulnerable groups (3 countries). The evaluation found no evidence of other identities (LGBTQ, classes, sub-cultures) being analysed or targeted.

Overall, **the prominent means for identifying women's needs were desk-based:** with 8 countries using research studies and statistical data to inform intervention designs. Supplementing this, 5 countries undertook baseline assessments, 4 undertook specific needs assessments, and 3 consulted with women's groups. Whilst monitoring data were periodically collected in all 4 countries of the regional project implementation, only 1 country reported continuing to collect monitoring data from women's groups during implementation of the project; whilst 1 country sought to innovate through the use of voluntary municipal self-assessments.

Reflection on these findings by UN Women staff in some of the case studies highlighted the **invisible cost on participation of resource constraints** in terms of the limited human and financial resources available to UN Women offices to spend time amongst women's groups at both the central and local level. In some cases, this was partially overcome through the use of mentoring services provided by local GRB experts engaged on a long-term basis (FYR Macedonia) or combining with joint programmes (Moldova). The complementary Gender Equality Facility in Albania (and planned for Serbia) also promises to help address the question of capacity. Nevertheless, constraints on UN Women's resources are preventing the organisation from spending time in the field working with women's groups on GRB.

A particular challenge was found to be with the **design process for regional initiatives.** Having a combined project management framework, such as for the Regional Project Phase II, required that outcomes and activities were negotiated at regional level first, before being adapted to national contexts. The evaluation found evidence from stakeholder interviews that this approach had dampening effects on the sense of ownership among both ministries of finance and national women's CSO – both of which are critical partners. A more inclusive design process for a common regional project implies a capital cost (to bring stakeholders together in a design workshop) that may not be available to UN Women. This suggests that a need exists to explore alternative models to regionality, such as focusing the regional aspect on work to establish a common intellectual frame and knowledge network, whilst enabling fully participatory intervention design processes at country-level.

Effectiveness

4

Whilst UN Women does not track indicators of the contribution of GRB to the lives of rights holders, extrapolating the available data suggests that both the hours of time being saved by women and the additional financial resources being leveraged for GEEW are considerable.

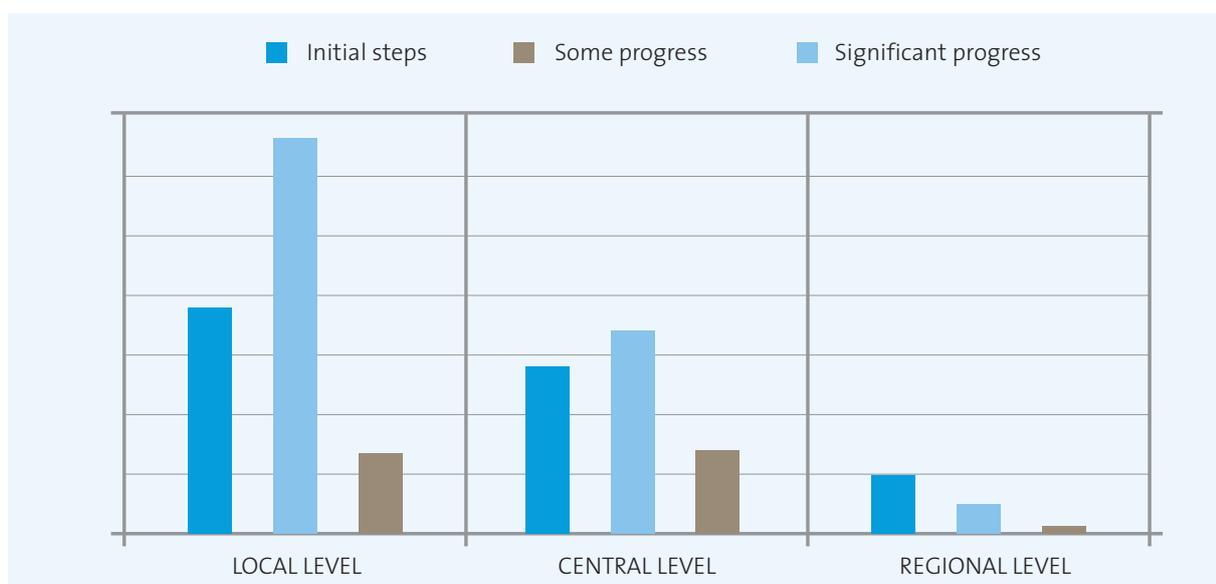
UNWomen offices across the region have documented institutional-level work and outputs including policy technical support, capacity development, convening, dialogue, research, and implementation mentoring. For example, an evaluation of programming in Georgia found evidence that “Five Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) Working Groups in Sachkhere, Zugdidi, Gori, Tetritskaro and Marneuli municipalities were formally established at the local government level, ensuring that the needs of the target groups will be further integrated into the social budget and programmes that promote the improvement of livelihood conditions.” (UN Women, 2015).

In Kosovo, Law No 05-L/O20 on Gender Equality was approved in 2015. According to this law Gender Responsive Budgeting is mandatory for all public institutions in the Republic of Kosovo. Funds from municipal budget have been allocated for shelter

services, domestic violence Police Investigation Units (to provide basic needs to DV survivors and their children during interviews), and DV survivors are offered health services free of charge and free day care for their children in the local kinder gardens.

Whilst a long list of institutional gains and achievements in GRB can be compiled for the region, it is harder to establish an aggregated overview of contributions in closing the rights-gap experienced by women and specific groups of marginalised rights holders. A self-assessment of progress in advancing GRB by UN Women staff reveals that most achievements are seen to be at the local level, with progress also evident at the central (national) level. By comparison, the much lower level of work at the regional level (such as working with sub-regional networks of local governments) tends to be in the initial phase of implementation.

FIGURE 10
Comparative weighting of progress at different levels based on aggregating self-assessments of progress towards GRB outcomes by countries in the ECA region



Establishing the contribution of GRB to the lives of women and men is far harder to assess. UN Women does not have a key indicator for outcome-level changes in the realisation of economic, social, cultural, civil or political rights as a result of GRB. This is largely because outcomes are seen to be a product of the sector, programme or budget that GRB is applied to, rather than being attributable to the application of GRB tools.

At the institutional level, qualitative synthesis of evaluation interviews, observations and project monitoring documents suggests that UN Women is largely undisputed as the innovator and driver of GRB across the region: there is no evidence to suggest that another organisation would have introduced GRB were UN

Women not to have implemented this approach. As such, the introduction of GRB within budget policies across the region can thus be reasonably attributed to the work of UN Women.

The GRB Regional Project Phase II illustrates the type of institutional contributions being made by UN Women's current interventions on GRB. Highlights from the Regional Project include integrating GRB into 38 national programmes, training 397 elected representatives and 319 public officials, and institutionalising 5 academic syllabi on GRB. As a consequence of the Regional Project Phase II, 50 municipalities are now implementing GRB in their budget planning processes, and 10 have benefited from watchdog reports from local CSOs.

TABLE 2
Synthesis of the results of the GRB Regional Project Phase II based on UN Women's own RBM data

Result	Number
Academic syllabi on GRB	5
Additional \$ committed to GEEW	\$61 million
Amended policies and laws	10
Budget instructions guidelines, methodologies, roadmaps, modules	7
Costing studies	1
CSOs trained in GRB	9
Elected Representatives trained in GRB	397
GRB Assessments	68
International exchanges on GRB	7
Intra-regional consultancy on GRB	2
Municipalities with participatory budget processes	50
National action plans, strategies and programs	3
Online resource sites	2
Policy reviews	12
Programmes engendered	38
Public officials' capacity development	319
Regional meetings	6
Training modules and curricula	5
Watchdog reports	10

Based on the overall budget for the Regional Project, it cost an average of \$24,000 per municipality or national programme to instigate GRB. Based on calculations for the average municipal budget (in total) for FYR Macedonia in 2014 (€5.7 million) this has the potential to influence €286 million per year in expenditure. Whilst the actual influence will be significantly lower (for example, salaries will not be affected), this does not account for the addition impact of the project on central programmes. Also, in reality, the cost per municipality was much lower than this figure and the benefit much greater: in Albania alone an additional \$61 million was leveraged specifically to advance GEEW policy, representing a return on investment for the entire regional project of 2,640% (€26.40 for each €1 spent).

The results of all these institutional outputs were observed by the case studies to be mostly in terms of activities that release time for women from reproductive work. Although examples of support to women's entrepreneurship (such as a grant of €44,000 in Albania to women's entrepreneurship) and rights to leisure time were identified, these were in the minority. Most short-term expenditure was observed by the evaluation case studies to be on investments such as kindergartens or infrastructure (bridges, pavements, wells, lighting) that save women's time either indirectly or through increased access to safe public spaces. In addition to having a direct impact on women's rights to security of person, the marginal time savings from activities executed as a consequence of GRB aggregate to represent a considerable overall gain.

Within the context of the region, therefore, UN Women's programmes can therefore be found to have contributed to significant results given the available resources and the complexity of the contexts of operation. Furthermore, the work at municipal level is generating a body of evidence and experience that

can be used to advocate for uptake of GRB more widely in each country.

The ECA region encompasses two main regional circles of influence, the European Union (EU) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU). It is a requirement of the EU Acquis that countries must demonstrate the mainstreaming of gender equality into programmes and budgets. No equivalent requirement exists for the EEU. However, the Russian Federation, a key convenor of the EEU, is also a key member of the Inter-Agency Expert Group on the SDGs, which includes specifying requirements for tracking Goal 5 and mainstreamed gender indicators in other goals.

Broadly speaking, the evaluation heard that, on a meta-level, the proximity to these two orbits is likely to have an influence on the institutional drivers that advance (human rights) or impede (traditional values) the adoption of GRB. This is not the only – or main – influence, however. For example, in Turkey it was reported by UN Women staff that GRB was not previously known or understood among key stakeholders as a means to improve GEEW. In that context, awareness raising and capacity development was key. By contrast, in Ukraine it was reported that having a unified methodology across GRB proponents was advantageous in developing a shared pool of national GRB experts.

Overall, however, the key message identified by the evaluation was that **moments of political, social and economic transition are critical entry points for GRB**. As a tool, GRB has potential to gain traction during periods of budget and fiscal reform. The evaluation heard evidence that experiences from Serbia highlight the value having a wide range of partners to build consensus around GRB (even among political opponents) in readiness for opportunities to influence structural reforms.

A qualitative analysis of enabling and hindering factors based on the country case studies suggests that performance based budgeting (PBB) is a major factor positively influencing GRB take-up, whilst the national political economy (especially political crises) is the major hindering factor through the uncertainty it creates around reform processes. These two factors correlate with a separate region-wide survey of the causal factors for GRB.

5

Whilst the overall national political contexts have an inhibiting effect on the advancement of GRB in the region, the transition to performance based budgeting is an important enabling factor in achieving results.

TABLE 3**Enabling and hindering factors for GRB identified in the Regional Project case studies**

Enabling factors	Countries	Inhibiting factors	Countries
PBB roll out expected	3	National political economy and crisis	3
Leadership	2	Decentralisation uncertainty	3
Ongoing strategy and policy entry points	2	Staff turnover	2
Costing exercises	2	Insufficient participation of partners in region project design	2
Inclusion of GE in budget law	1	Partial rollout of PBB	2
Capacity development of local government	1	Lack of donors and aid harmonisation	2
GRB champions	1	Insufficient GRB experts	2
UN Women GRB flagship	1	Complexity of applying GRB	2
Joint programming opportunities	1	Availability of project staff time	1
Statistical databases	1	Rigidity of approach	1
Academies and e-learning	1	Insufficient communication of project results	1
		Regional architecture roll out	1
		Multiple complex layers of government	1
		Gender data gap	1
		Intragovernmental coordination	1

TABLE 4**Main factors influencing GRB identified by UN Women staff from across ECA region**

Positive influences	Negative influences
✓ Transition to Performance Based Budgeting	✗ Political and economic context
✓ Support of elected representatives	✗ Media and popular culture
✓ Political priorities of local governments	✗ Social and cultural patterns between gender groups

6 In addition to addressing gaps in direct and indirect outcome indicators in future project RBM frameworks for GRB, potential exists to use UN Women's framework in Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016 to track national level contributions to the realisation of women's economic rights.

As evidenced by the performance management framework of the GRB Regional Project, the focus of current Results Based Management indicators is at the institutional level. These track gains in the policy framework, practice within institutional units (such as municipalities), and proxies for capacity (such as trainings and knowledge exchanges). Whilst important contributions, the evaluation observed that these indicators do not capture the full performance story of GRB. A review of GRB in Serbia identified that no evaluation of policies and programmes has taken place, and thus there is no measurement of the outcomes on women and men of changes in work on for example, influencing employment policies.

Supporting the integration of gender responsive indicators and monitoring systems into national programmes and municipal plans is thus a key task that is obligated under CEDAW Article 3 and will be required for reporting to many of the SDG indicators. However, the evaluation has also identified potential for UN Women’s own performance management frameworks to identify a wider range of outcome indicators – at both the institutional (direct) and micro (indirect) levels.

Beyond project-level RBM indicators, the evaluation also identified a case for more consistent tracking of

the contribution of GRB to the realisation of rights and responsiveness of economies at the national level, including through potential macroeconomic and revenue work. The Progress of the World’s Women Report 2015-2016 provides an appropriate rights-based framework for identifying these contributions through 10 outcome areas.

Applying these to the GRB Regional Project Phase II, the evaluation conducted a qualitative assessment of the availability of plausible evidence that UN Women is currently contributing to these outcome areas. This analysis found that the strongest evidence of contribution relates to investment in gender responsive social services (due to the focus on expenditure and budget processes), using human rights to shape policy, and supporting women’s CSOs. The least available evidence relates to impacts on decent work for women, income security throughout life, and evidence to assess progress.

Applying the ‘Progress’ framework within the evaluation process was found to be a useful means of aggregating evidence of the strategic contributions of GRB, suggesting that there is potential for using this as the basis for more systematic national monitoring of outcomes.

TABLE 5
Key gaps in project-level RBM and potential indicators to meet these identified by the evaluation

Key gap	Potential indicators
Indirect outcomes on the lives of women and men	Estimated time saving of women and men because of activities funded through gender responsive budgets
Indirect outcomes on the reach of services	Changes in the number of women and men accessing selected state services planned through gender responsive budget processes
Direct outcomes on the amount of budget that is programmed through GRB	Change in percent of funds reallocated to better meet GE priorities (in central/municipal budgets) Total funds redistributed to programmes that target GE priorities
Direct outcomes on the constituents served by UN Women in GRB projects	Balance service scorecard on sentiment of national institutions being supported by UN Women projects and programmes
Sustainability of capacity	Time series of knowledge, attitudes and practices among a sample of participants in UN Women-supported training activities, mentoring, and knowledge exchange

FIGURE 11

Application of the Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016 framework to qualitatively assess the plausible contribution of GRB to meeting women's economic rights in the Regional Project



Efficiency

7 Greater analysis of equity is required within UN Women's approaches and project management systems if it is to avoid the paradoxes of GRB that can entrench inequalities.

In a paper for the First International Conference on Gender Responsive Budgeting and Social Justice (2008), Regina Frey from the Genderbüro Berlin explores the paradoxes of gender budgeting. Whilst a detailed assessment of the equity of outcomes from the regional project was not possible during the case studies (due to the time and sample), evidence from interviews suggest that these paradoxes can also apply across countries within the regional project.

Before reviewing these paradoxes, it is important to acknowledge that the GRB Regional Project explicitly dealt with non-traditional fields, such as local level safety, housing, caregiving, economic empowerment; and national level culture, sports, and ICT. However, as has been highlighted elsewhere, many GRB projects looked at by Frey are focused on programme and municipal budgets and thus exhibit a micro-bias – missing the big picture issues such as privatisation and austerity. This is undoubtedly the case for the Regional Project, and appears to reflect UN Women's overall approach within the region.

Frey proposed that the practice of GRB in many cases is “sex-counting” – which inherently favours ‘soft-policy’ areas (such as education and health) where this is easier and more obvious than policy areas such as defence, national security, or telecommunications. Whilst the portfolio of programmes implementing GRB within the regional project was relatively diverse, there is a tendency within public administrations to repeat this bias. There is a need, therefore, for UN Women regionally (and perhaps globally) to establish a body of work on qualitative indicators or alternative quantitative indicators that can help to overcome this preference for ‘feminised’ policy areas.

Furthermore, Frey's proposal highlights that a focus on expenditure – as was found to be the case on the regional project – makes the ‘tax’ of women's care work invisible. Indeed, this is reflected in the documents of the regional project itself, which refer to targeting “economically inactive women”, a terminology that explicitly discounts the economic contribution of

women through reproductive and unpaid and informal productive work¹.

Finally, the epistemological critique is offered of duality-bias – that the very use of the term gender acts to entrench the concept of gender as a social institution. This is harder for the evaluation to examine, since it speaks to the very nature of UN Women itself and the strategic decisions that were made in the negotiation of its founding resolutions.

It was noted, however, that all conceptualisations of gender within the regional work of GRB exhibit duality-bias in the sense of using a heterosexual model of gender that juxtaposes women and men. Whilst it is acknowledged that the political economy of most programme presence countries in the region makes LGBTQ human rights a politically sensitive subject to engage with at the policy level, the evaluation finds that the current approach to GRB is blind to the equity of people who hold gender identities outside of heterosexual women and men.

A final note of caution regarding equity is the absence of analysis of class within the evidence seen regarding GRB. This is relevant to budget process as much as it is expenditure, and several informal observations were made by UN Women staff that alluded to the underlying importance of class. For example, it was questioned whether achieving increases in elected women representatives is a good in its own right if they are from a social position that is bought into reinforcing social narratives which entrench inequalities.

¹ This term was used in specific parts of the programme document to reflect the use of language (and meaning) by national systems

8

Sustainability

Whilst GRB interventions have been cognisant of sustainability, greater strategic clarity and monitoring data is needed to ensure that capacity and participation are embedded within domestic institutions.

The evaluation examined the extent to which regional work has been successful in embedding participation, capacity and policy within the context of recent projects and programmes. It did so through a regional survey of UN Women staff, the case study field visits, and interviews with regional stakeholders.

It was noted that all Regional Project and most other countries have experienced, at one point or another during a project implementation period, the strong effects that changes in the national political situation bring. This serves to emphasise the importance of ensuring that GRB efforts and investments are equally focused on building capacity and knowledge of institutions outside of the executive (including elected representatives and civil society) to advocate and lobby for GR budgets and programmes.

For some countries, changes in the political space at national level have been interpreted as making it more strategic to focus project interventions at the local level. Whilst this enables progress to continue, it was noted by the evaluation that it also leads to a scaling and sustaining challenge. Scaling is a challenge because the size of project budgets and the capacity of UN Women offices is insufficient to deliver support to each municipality. Sustaining becomes a challenge since the case studies found that if UN Women stops working in municipalities, the practice of GRB may not 'die', but it is highly improbable that it will grow. For this reason, interventions that work primarily at municipal level can only be considered as appropriate as temporary arrangements, and not viable long term strategies.

One of the main challenges to sustainability revealed during the evaluation process was a low level of consistency between countries over the **strategic purpose of working with municipalities** and the appropriate links and balance with work at the central level. There is no clearly stated intention as to whether the municipal practice of GRB is expected to reach a point of self-sustainability, or whether support to the uptake of GRB in selected municipalities is mainly a means

to generate evidence and momentum in support of national efforts. This uncertainty has implications for both planning and assessing sustainability, and is reflected in the absence of sustainability indicators in the performance management framework for the Regional Project.

Establishing clarity on the main purpose of local level work would support interpretation of data on the current patterns of sustainability. For example, an assessment by UN Women staff of the extent to which participation has been embedded in GRB programming across the region indicates that:

- The highest progress in ensuring participation is for civil society and women's groups at the local level
- The least progress in embedding participation is for members of parliament, indeed this represents a reversal in some countries due to prevalent political conditions
- Progress in the participation of civil society and women's groups at the national level is comparably less than half of that achieved at the local level.

Furthermore, participation varies regarding the stage of GRB being considered. Greatest progress is reported in planning and priority-setting, and slightly less in the process of programming and budgeting. There is a big drop-off in the relative level of participation reported in later stages, including implementation but most especially in terms of monitoring (which is close to zero-rated). Low levels of participation were also reported in policy development processes.

These findings triangulate with the overall finding for the evaluation that, whilst policy frameworks have been embedded nationally, work on GRB implementation has made the most significant progress at the local level and within the early planning stages of the budget cycle. Whilst Albania appears to have made a breakthrough in national programme budgeting, and others may follow, there is very limited evidence

across the region of successful implementation of expenditure monitoring (by either state institutions or civil society).

One of the main challenges to this is the absence of institutional champions for GRB (or even budget monitoring) within the various state apparatus and civil society. Whilst there are individuals who are acting as champions, some CSOs have started implementing GRB activities and academic courses re becoming mainstream, none of the institutions the evaluation encountered have gender budget analysis as a core part of their purpose, identity or mission (the academies may be closest to this, but they do not implement GRB projects at grassroots). This leads to significant vulnerabilities to turnover of trained government and CS staff, since the socialisation of GRB

9

UN Women’s approaches sustainability have targeted important linkages sustain work on GRB, but require stronger links to gender statistics to really deliver.

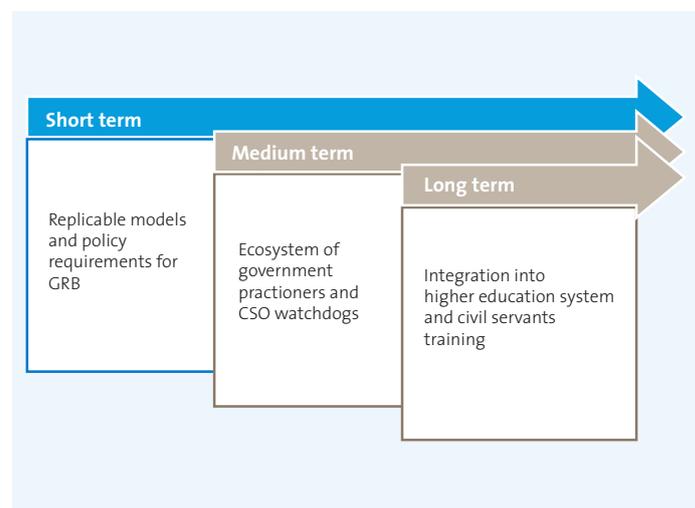
into their institutions requires long-term continuous engagement.

Whilst the GRB training and mentoring activities undertaken by UN Women were found to have successfully enhanced the knowledge and skills of participants, the organisation lacks data on the permanence of the knowledge, attitudes, skills and practices of both the individuals and the institutions involved in GRB interventions. A lesson for future GRB interventions is to include a basic measure of sustainability like a time series of KAP (knowledge attitudes and practices) surveys over the course of a programme in order to track how knowledge and behaviours spread through the system.

Three main approaches to sustainability were identified in the case studies: advocating for policy framework and creating replicable models to respond to these; nurturing an ecosystem of GRB experts, practitioners and interested parties; and integrating GRB into educational systems. Broadly speaking these can be classified as sort, medium, and long term approaches.

The level of success for these approaches appears to be dependent on several key factors:

FIGURE 12
Three main strategies for sustainability used by UN Women



1. The adoption and practice of performance based budgeting
2. The use of mentoring and study tours to introduce concepts firsthand
3. Communicating evidence of success in ways that are easy to understand (such as stories) to build momentum
4. Connecting with global and regional donors to address low availability of development financing inside many ECA countries

According to data from the regional survey, the main issue of concern for sustainability among UN Women teams is ensuring availability of timely national and local gender disaggregated statistics. The absence of this data is seen to contribute to missed opportunities for national stakeholders to practice what they have learnt, reducing momentum behind the implementation of GRB. This emphasises the case for articulating future work on GRB to SDGs as an accelerator of budgeting for the data revolution.

Human Rights & Gender Equality

10

Examples of evidence from the case studies and documents from other countries in the region highlight countless examples of GRB initiatives having contributed to improving the enabling environment at all levels for addressing the underlying social and cultural patterns of gender inequality.

The Municipality of Bratunac in BiH was introduced to the GRB tool and methodology for analysis and implementation of measures through the budget; the GRB working group conducted the gender analysis of agriculture sector which pointed to numerous inequalities between men and women in terms of budget spending; in order to address the needs of rural unemployed women, financial incentives were placed in the budget in order to encourage women-owned agro production – contributing to economic empowerment.

The evaluation found multiple examples of the Regional Project contributing to addressing the needs of rural, underemployed and economically marginalized women. For example, the Regional GRB project supported the Municipality of Bogovinje in FYR Macedonia to build their capacities for integrating a gender perspective in their planning and budgeting processes, to conduct gender analyses of local programmes and to design gender specific measures. This, coupled with the USAID support and municipal own contribution resulted in business development support to rural and unemployed women.

In Albania initiatives included a) social housing for widowed women (Ministry of Urban Development); b) credit lines for women (Ministry of Economic Development, Trade, Entrepreneurship and Tourism); c) targeted programs for women offender (Ministry of Interior) d) promotion of women artists projects (Ministry of Culture) and e) Dedicated start up support for women entrepreneurs (Tirana Municipality).

In Moldova an innovative study on “Costing Domestic Violence in Republic of Moldova” was launched by Women’s Law Centre (WLC) with the technical support from UN Women. In this context, UN Women Moldova and WHO provided for international expertise and WLC with local experts on financial, statistical and legal subjects. The preliminary findings show that a careful and evidence-based policy development would lead to cost-efficient measures against domestic violence in Moldova. The State is spending a

UN Women is missing the comprehensive and strategic theory of change that it needs to address the main structural barriers to gender equality through GRB

lot of resources on mitigation of the effects and plans and spends none on prevention. The report offers recommendations for the implementation of GRB in Moldova and will be used as an advocacy tool in working with state institutions and will create conditions for building stronger ties with the Government.

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Costing exercises of the Kyrgyzstan NAPs were introduced into the national planning processes by UN Women efforts have become a systematic and regular practice in drafting and approving all major national and sectoral development programmes. The improved methodology informed by the lessons of the first exercise was used in 2015 in the process of costing the second NAP for 2015-2017. The improvements in the costing methodology relate to the elaboration of the price-list for identifying and calculating estimated costs of the NAP implementation. Also, participatory and consultative process of the new NAP development allowed identifying the sources of funding from donors through the extended GTG. As a result, the NAP became more feasible and has a smaller financial gap (30 % versus 90% in the previous NAP).

Gender responsive budgeting, as currently practiced, is framed by women’s human rights. As such, it has largely been communicated as means for member states to meet their international treaty obligations under CEDAW and other human rights instruments – including aligning with EU laws, regulations and directives. Under this narrative, UN Women is well positioned in de jure terms due to its mandate. However, the women’s human rights discourse has been found to have limited influence within domestic institutions outside of the national women’s machinery, or the IFIs and multilaterals that advise government.

This scenario appears to set up a dichotomy between framing the argument for GRB within a neo-liberal

or economic-nationalist discourse so as to gain traction with policy makers; or to remain committed to a critical narrative in an attempt to shape the long-term trajectory of discourse. The launch of the SDGs has, however, given new impetus to an alternative narrative for advocating GRB: inclusive growth that leaves no one behind. This has the potential to speak to the anxiety of political leaders facing demands for greater economic security, whilst remaining grounded in principles of participation, non-discrimination and equity.

There are multiple opportunities for UN Women to frame a case (and an intervention package) for GRB based on inclusive growth. These include: relating GRB explicitly to SDGs other than Goal 5 (including goals 1, 8, 10); work on methodological development of the remaining SDG Tier 3 indicators to mainstream gender within national systems; positioning GRB as removing implicit obstacles to EU integration; costing gender inequality in sectors beyond EVAW; and leveraging GRB into the models used by IMF and the World Bank.

As it stands, the evaluation considers that UN Women ECA has some of the elements required to implement a such an approach, but is missing the intellectual chapeau needed to both drive a coherent and clear message with confidence. Some of the ideas generated during the summit evaluation workshop to address this challenge include:

1. Mainstreaming gender in participation processes for SDGs, starting with a focus on target sectors
2. Communicating the results of GRB strategies within an inclusive growth narrative so as to create political recognition for civil servants and public recognition for elected representatives (especially mayors)
3. Targeting power holders who are open minded – in the process of dealing with individuals you can change the system
4. Tracking member state and shadow reports to search for evidence of GRB contributing to larger shifts
5. Repackage GRB in a process that helps to establish shared language with other agencies, especially UN entities.

A significant step to realising this strategic positioning would be to fill the strategic-level gap in the

current theories of change available for GRB – which only focus on project and programme level changes – so as to better capture the innovative thinking that is being developed in the region.

FINDINGS FROM THE REGIONAL PROJECT

Relevance

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The GRB Regional Project Phase II systematically applied the recommendations from the evaluation of Phase I. In some cases these have been innovated and adjusted to cope with unexpected changes in the context. New challenges have also emerged relating to national ownership and localisation of regional projects.

Comparison of the evaluation of the Regional Project Phase I against the design and implementation of the Regional Project Phase II found that all recommendations were addressed in the management response and most were taken up in the design of phase II of the project (some to a greater extent than others). Within the boundaries of a regional-management system, the case studies suggest that the approach to defining a regional results framework for the project was an example of good practice in how broad results were defined for all countries, with country-specific

baseline data and targets which allowed for customization to each particular country context.

The practice of conducting a comprehensive baseline assessment was also good practice as it enabled project staff to take stock of existing capacities, identify gaps and design targeted strategies to address these. It will be important to conduct a combined post/pre-capacity assessment as a part of the design of Phase III of the project.

TABLE 6
Level of implementation of evaluation recommendations from the Regional Project Phase I

Recommendation	Level of implementation	Emerging lessons
1: A regional approach to GRB programming should be continued.	<p>Although the project was designed as a regional project, there is evidence (from the document review and country case studies) that the regional aspects of the project were not as clearly defined in phase II.</p> <p>The budget for learning in Phase II was increased and distributed across the country budgets (rather than being held in a central pot).</p>	As a regional project, more input and involvement is needed from UN Women offices and country-level stakeholders in the design of the project (and formulation of regional outcomes) in order to ensure that it corresponds to country needs/priorities and is realistic for each country to implement within the timeframe
2: Greater focus should be placed on capacity building at the institutional level	A strong focus was placed on strengthening systems and regulations to further institutionalise and mandate GRB implementation.	One gap was in strengthening systems and knowledge to support monitoring. Whilst the MOF was a strong driver of GRB in most countries, systems and processes within MOFs for transferring technical knowledge on GRB to budget users was needed to support full institutionalisation of GRB

	The regional meeting held in BiH with MOF, was an important opportunity for the countries to exchange information about their efforts to institutionalise GRB implementation.	
3: Future capacity development interventions should focus on mentoring and supporting a “learning-by-doing” approach	<p>The approach of Albania (embedding a technical advisor within the MOF) proved to be particularly effective in increasing and transferring knowledge and capacity.</p> <p>Mentors worked effectively in FYR Macedonia, and local consultants for the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme in Moldova undertook the same role.</p>	Evidence from phase II shows that in most of the countries there is still a need for a mentoring/learning by doing approach.
4: GRB should be further integrated into other areas of UN Women’s work in the region (in particular women’s economic empowerment and women, peace and security)	There was clear evidence under phase II of increased linkages between UNW’s work on GRB and other thematic areas in some countries (i.e. in Moldova links to Women in Politics programme and also with EVAW through costing work; in Albania through gender mainstreaming of the EU Acquis)	Greater synergies still available between UN Women’s work on GRB as a mutually-reinforcing tool to support work related to WEE, WPP, EVAW, P&S and local governance.
5: UNW should undertake all efforts possible to ensure continuity of current project management and staff	This recommendation was applied – all staff retained except in BiH where the project coordinator moved to another UNW CO (supporting GRB).	This continuity of knowledge and expertise directly contributed to the achievement of project results
6: UNW, together with its project partners, should conduct a full analysis of the GRB-related sectoral changes achieved during implementation of the project in order to identify remaining capacity gaps	This recommendation was full implemented. A very comprehensive baseline assessment was conducted which examined the capacities and GRB implementation levels in each country following implementation of phase I.	
7: Project Documents for regional projects, the formulation of project results (in particular outcomes) should be broad and realistic for three countries and country-specific targets (rather than country-specific outcomes) should be defined (in co-operation with project partners and stakeholders) under the overarching project results in order to further customize and clarify the results expected for each country	This recommendation was fully applied and allowed for an overarching results framework to compare and measure country-level results and progress and country-specific targets which were defined and adjusted for each country context.	Some COs felt that having country-specific outputs would also be important
8: A project-level PMF which consolidates expected results, indicators, baselines, targets and data sources into one framework should be developed at the start of the next phase of future programming	This recommendation was fully implemented and allowed for better measurement of project results and progress.	
9: UNW should allocate necessary staff and budgetary resources to conduct pre- and post-capacity and baseline assessments	This recommendation was successfully implemented. The baseline information was used to develop the PMF and define targets for each country.	
10: Training on RBM and M&E should be provided to future project staff in order to ensure an effective and consistent approach to monitoring, measuring and reporting on project results		

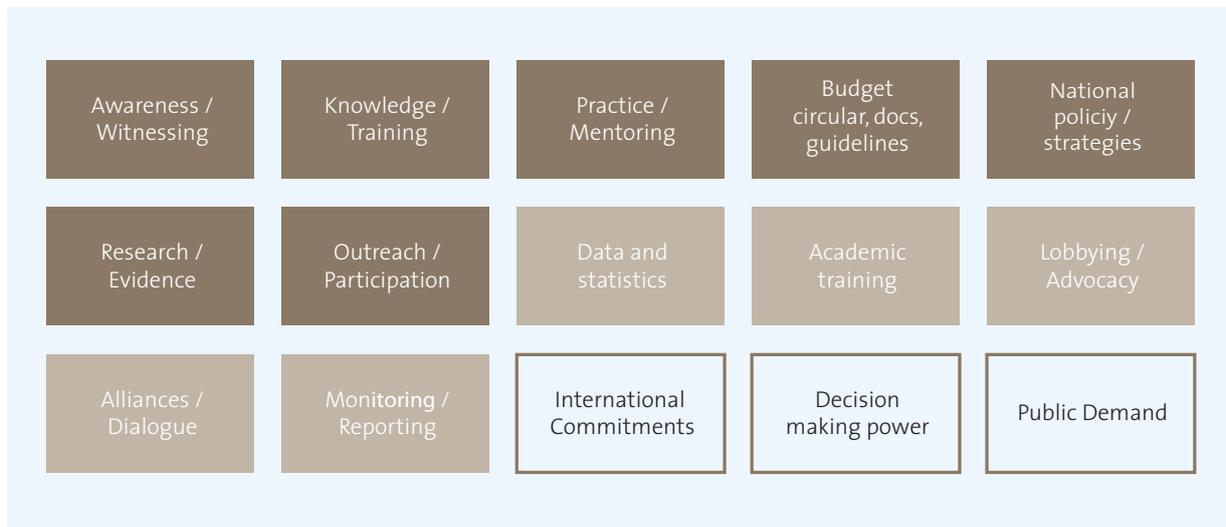
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The design of the GRB Regional Project responded directly to national systems and policies for gender. Whilst GRB is highly relevant to budget reform and decentralisation processes, the evidence to date suggests it remains peripheral within the political economy; and that national stakeholders are yet to fully appreciate the potential of GRB to contribute to more effective regional integration processes and the SDGs

A region-wide survey identified the principle strategies used by UN Women to strengthen national capacity for GRB, including: training, exchange visits, mentoring, budget policy, national strategies, evidence, and participation of affected groups. Secondary strategies supported national systems relating to advocacy, academic training, statistics, monitoring and multi-stakeholder alliances. By comparison, only minimal levels of action were targeted at strengthening national contributions to public demand for GRB, the decision-making power of women, or the pursuit of international commitments.

and municipal administrations. There is also evidence of contributions to good governance, with a focus on enhancing participatory processes and citizen forums, especially at the municipal level. Progress was also made in developing relationships with national statistical institutes in a number of countries, and the strengthening of these institutes is expected to increase further with the need for national reporting on the SDGs. Working to impede progress, the evaluation observed that over the course of the Regional Project, a number of countries witnessed changes and instability in national governments. According to interviews,

FIGURE 13
Relative qualitative weighting of different strategies used to strengthen national capacity from the case studies of the Regional Project Phase II



More specifically, the evaluation considered the relevance of the Regional Project to four specific frames: public sector reform, budget reform, decentralisation and aid effectiveness. As found for the wider region, the Regional Project did not engage with fiscal policy, tax, or financial regulation.

Public sector reform: through links to academic institutions, the Regional Project has sought to contribute to long term trends in the body of civil servants and elected representatives working within national

this had the effect of reducing the momentum behind public sector reform and the political prioritisation of gender mainstreaming.

Budget reform: all four Regional Project countries are in various stages of the transition from line budgeting to performance-based (PBB) or programme-based budgeting. UN Women’s work is timely within this context, since one of the main enabling factors for GRB identified by the evaluation is the presence of PBB. Significant progress has been made in institutionalising GRB in the budget preparation policies of

the ministries of finance in all countries. For example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina GRB has been institutionalized and is fully embedded in the budget preparation process (GE and GRB instructions provided to all budget users as part of budget instructions during the budget preparation phase).

Across the region it also was found that support to municipalities can be an effective entry point to mainstreaming gender responsiveness into programmes and budgets, since many do not have the institutional capacity to do PBB systematically.

At the same time, however, despite continuous dialogue with the main agency in the UN system to support PBB – UNDP – both bilaterally (through joint

perceived as opaque and/or restricted to women's issues amongst many economic actors in the national infrastructure and the multilateral system. This was found to also be the case for the related approach of Human Rights Based Budgeting being advocated by OHCHR. There is scope for UN Women to expand the modus operandi for integrating GRB in performance budgeting systems that has been implemented in Albania and Republika Srpska.

Decentralisation: influential intersections exist between processes of decentralisation and the capacity strengthening interventions associated with GRB, especially in terms of governance aspects. For example, in FYR Macedonia there are complementary objectives between the Community Forums project in support of decentralisation and the participatory budget consultations that have been supported under GRB. In some instances, this has given GRB work additional leverage. In the case of FYR Macedonia the evaluation observed how the planning of a USAID-funded municipal programme was influenced by the GRB project to channel training and grants to young women entrepreneurs. These women are now beginning to generate income-earning opportunities for other women. In Moldova, UN Women mainstreamed GRB into the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme with UNDP as a practical means to engender the decentralisation process that also adheres to Delivering as One.

Aid effectiveness: desk analysis found that the design of the Regional Project was explicitly aligned with national policies, strategies, gender action plans and UNDAF in all four countries. Furthermore, the implementation of GRB is harmonised in broad terms with the budget reform and decentralisation processes that are at various stages in each country. There have been mixed results with regard to UN joint programming and joint programmes that include GRB, with evidence of an implicit assumption among other entities of being able to sufficiently mainstream GRB within their own economic programmes.

European Union

For pre-accession countries, the gender requirements of the EU Acquis is considered by UN Women staff to be an important positive driver at the national level.

GRB demonstrates clear potential as a tool to support the financing and implementation of the acquis.

The Gender Equality Facility, piloted in Albania and planned in Serbia, may offer a complementary intervention in pre-accession countries.

Establishing concrete synergies between the two interventions could be a means to help drive and reinforce progress in gender mainstreaming across both policy and budgeting.

programming and meetings) and within the UNCT, UN Women is not involved as a central actor in budget reform processes. To some extent this has been outside of UN Women's direct control, with opportunities for engagement offered to UN Women offices in several cases being restricted to a peripheral role in real terms. At the same time, the evaluation found tacit acceptance, but with some reservations, for GRB among governance and economics in other UN entities, and then entirely with regard to the potential instrumental effects of GRB.

One of the potential explanatory factors for this are, however, partly within UN Women's influence. The intellectual model for GRB and its links to the achievement of wider policy objectives appears to still be

Analysis of the alignment between current GRB programming and the SDGs highlights 7 goals to which the Regional Project can plausibly make a direct contribution (primarily with regard to economic indicators), 6 goals to which the Regional Project can indirectly contribute through reallocating and revising programme budgets, and 4 goals to which there is currently no clear link.

The evaluation summit workshop explored this issue in depth, and proposed that the absence of a macro-economic chapeau represents a significant barrier to GRB programming contributing to all of the SDGs. For instance, it was proposed that altering the distribution and control of household income can plausibly alter expenditure patterns to favour nutrition, education, care and health. Since expenditure patterns are linked to demand, this can potentially lead to both increasing labour demand (through increased demand for labour-intensive services) and reducing carbon footprints (through reduced demand for high-carbon goods). Similarly, rural multipurpose centres such as the joint information and services bureaus in Moldova have the potential to introduce new techniques of productivity that may contribute sustainable production patterns and techniques

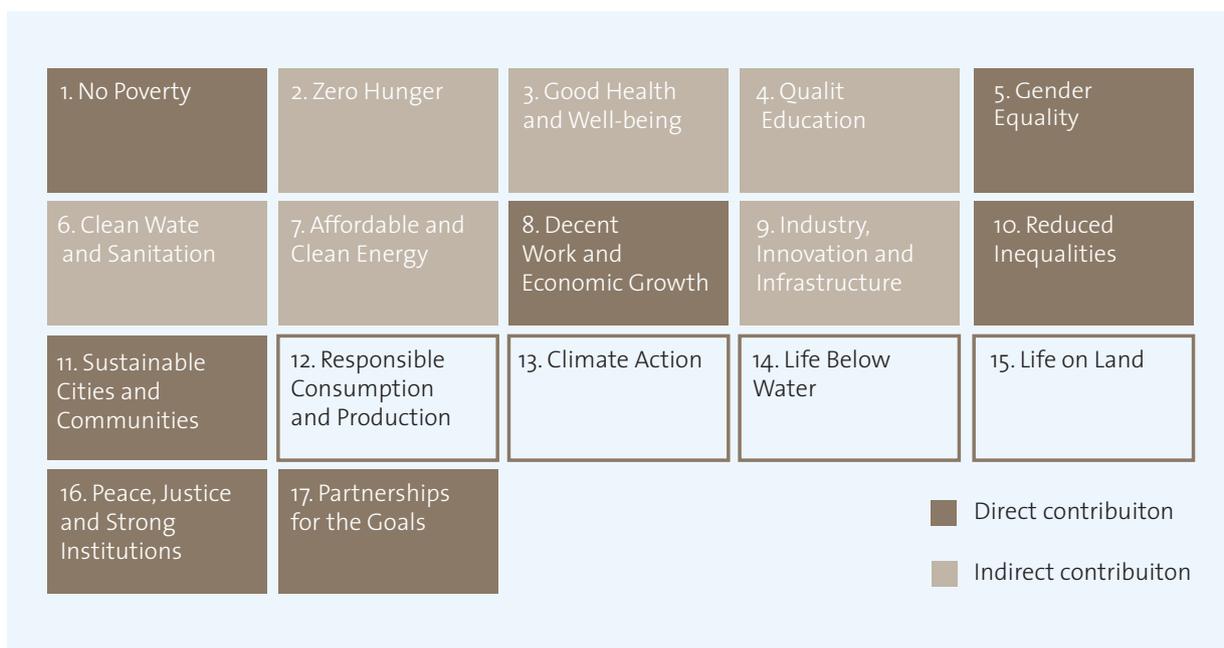
Given the centrality of economic security to the emerging political agenda within a number of regional

member states, some UN Women experts interviewed during the evaluation emphasised the need for a macroeconomic framing of GRB as ‘inclusive growth’. As such, UN Women requires an understanding of inclusive governance beyond the women/men dichotomy, including broader thinking of the potential of GRB to address class inequalities and environmental sustainability. Pursuing this approach vigorously, it was proposed, requires UN Women to have a clearer view of the minimum resources, time commitment, critical professional mass and intellectual basis required to effectively advocate for GRB.

Three other challenges identified by evaluation interviewees as needing to be addressed include:

1. Establishing a comprehensive theory of change and toolkit that addresses macroeconomic and revenue in addition to expenditure and budget process
2. A coherent economic narrative on the care economy with a hook into the statistics required to report on the SDGs, EU acquis, and sub-regional and national frameworks
3. Providing core support to CSOs on a regional basis so as to support UN Women advocacy through the generation of research, analysis and other knowledge products.

FIGURE 14
Plausible contributions of existing approaches to the SDGs based on a qualitative appraisal validated during the evaluation summit workshop



Effectiveness

The GRB Regional Project Phase II has led to greater awareness of GRB in all four countries, improved regulatory frameworks in most countries, and increased institution capacity in some countries. More time is needed to achieve full implementation in terms of complete integration of GRB in all stages of the budget cycle at all levels of national planning.

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The synthesis of findings from case studies suggests that progress was made in all countries, but that integrating GRB into full budget cycle requires a greater investment of time and resources than was available to the Regional Project. Project countries were largely successful in integrating GRB in planning stages of targeted programmes and municipalities, but ensuring implementation and developing capacities and systems to track, monitor and report on gender responsiveness of expenditure will require sustained engagement. Experience in other countries, for example Morocco, triangulates this observation.

Albania: Achieved strong results regarding programs and budgets. Significant (and unexpected) advancements were made in the legal framework; GRB also contributed to awareness about gender beyond the budget process. For example, mainstreaming GRB through MTBP has become a priority for the finance ministry. At the central level important synergies have been established with other UN Women programmes and there is increased interest by decision makers in gender equality (as evidenced by the quota).

TABLE 7
Summary of the main results of the GRB Regional Project Phase II

Outcome	Results
1: Sectoral programs and budgets at the central and local levels reflect better GE concerns	There has been important progress towards systematic institutionalization of GRB through strengthened engagement with the MOFs, resulting in 50 municipal budgets and 38 national programme budgets better reflecting gender equality concerns.
2: Strengthened oversight of central and local government programs, policies and budgets towards GE commitments	<p>Work with civil society and elected representatives has focused on strengthening budget awareness, literacy, and capacity; but limited evidence exists of these actors taking on roles and responsibilities for greater accountability (including the civil society watch dog role).</p> <p>Continued technical assistance is needed in ensuring that elected representatives understand the budget cycle and all the points where GE can be introduced through GRB, including identifying committees with the power and influence to hold administrations to account.</p>
3: Exchange of knowledge and learning on GRB facilitates replication of good practices and lessons learned	<p>Knowledge exchange from the 7 regional events undertaken by the project supported countries in advancing their GRB efforts, but are seen as less evident than in the previous phase. A need has been expressed for greater exchange and learning between project implementers and stakeholders</p> <p>The pool of GRB experts is growing, but can be expanded and utilized further. Experts are needed with applied (rather than theoretical) economic, budget and gender experience.</p>

BiH: Overall, significant results were achieved given the resources available and the complexity of the country – continuously working with 3 finance ministries, 3 parliaments and 3 gender equality agencies. Delays in roll-out of the PBB process meant that GRB could only be applied during the planning stage. In 2017, full roll-out is expected and increased support will be needed to ensure that GRB is fully integrated and institutionalized in the other budget stages.

FYR Macedonia: GRB has been included in the MoF budget circular for central level budget users and GRB has been successfully mentored in targeted localities and pilot national programmes. A hybrid PBB/line-budget system has created challenges within the national system, but evidence exists of CSOs independently applying GRB techniques to successfully advocate against proposed changes to the laws covering abortion that reversed gains in women’s human rights.

Moldova: An action plan and roadmap for GRB implementation has been developed and GRB implementation is a separate action line in the new national plan for gender equality. The Academy of Economic Studies from Moldova introduced GRB as a mandatory course to 2 MA programs and GRB tools have been used in local planning in targeted communities.

All countries have shown at one point during the project implementation period the strong influence that changes in the political situation bring (elections, changes in administrative boundaries in Albania, complex structure in BiH). It was noted by interviewees the importance of building capacity and knowledge of parliamentarians and CSOs to advocate and lobby for GR budgets and programmes in this context. Flexibility to adjust the focus of efforts between the central and local levels depending on the changing political context was an important factor in continuing to advance the GRB agenda in FYR Macedonia and Moldova.

Building capacity for greater citizen engagement was highlighted as an integral part of developing gender responsive planning and budgeting processes, systems and structures at the local level. Building the capacity of women’s groups (especially groups representing marginalized, rural and economically inactive women) to develop platforms that articulate their needs remains a priority for ensuring that plans and budgets correspond to the actual priorities of women and girls. There is a continuing need to maximize

synergies with other actors working on local governance projects and to ensure greater integration in UNW’s GRB and governance related programming.

The evaluation found evidence of a need for **a more comprehensive national approach to GRB** rather than a project approach driven by UN Women, with the potential to embed GRB within broader PBB work (through strategic partnerships with other actors involved in public administrative reform efforts, local government efforts and legislative reform). GRB can more explicitly be used to reinforce UN Women’s work across its thematic areas (WPP, WEE, EVAW, peace and security, and governance).

At the regional level, the evidence from interviewees suggests that future regional programming should explicitly identify the added value of regional (vs. multi-country) structures, and should design the programme implementation to maximise these advantages. Evidence from the case studies demonstrated that knowledge-generation and exchange is a key element of maximise regional benefits. Technical-level expert meetings at the regional level (i.e. meetings with the MOFs or academic institutions) were regarded as useful and that knowledge accumulated through such fora was used and applied in advancing GRB efforts. It is therefore important that regional programming continues to include adequate resources to support **regional exchange** opportunities (and that these are aligned with the interests and needs of country-level stakeholders).

Further investment in regional knowledge exchange could support the development of **knowledge products** (including translation of these into the languages used in the project region) to support the spread of learning about effective approaches and tools between countries. There is also scope to establish a **community of practice** between the emerging domestic champions and sub-regional experts in GRB to better support informal sharing and knowledge networks.

A region-wide survey of UN Women staff undertaken for the evaluation found that the main positive drivers that explain the performance of GRB include PBB reforms, advocacy by elected representatives, the political priorities of local governments (especially mayors), and being able to refer to international and regional commitments to gender equality. Also positive, although seen as less influential, is the organization and capacity of civil society and coordination of the UN system.

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Negative drivers that are inhibiting results are the political and economic national contexts, media and popular culture, and trends in social and cultural patterns between gender groups (i.e. the resurgence of conservative and traditional narratives). Legal and policy frameworks, availability of donor financing, statistics, academia, national gender machineries, and decentralisation are all viewed as having a relatively neutral influence on the achievement (or not) of GRB results.

UN Women implemented a systematic performance monitoring system for the GRB Project Phase II that was appropriate to meet project management needs within the context in which it was designed. Within the current context, greater variation in the type of indicators and a stronger emphasis on national capacity would be the hallmarks of a more effective system

The Regional Project Phase II included a comprehensive performance monitoring framework with a range of qualitative indicators that encompassed contributions to institutional change. These indicators were systematically reported against by the project coordinators in each country and summarised in board meetings and donor reporting. The qualitative nature of the indicators allowed them to be adapted to each national context, with appropriate baselines and targets clearly described. This is considered to have been an appropriate approach in the context in which the project was developed (based on the evaluation of Phase I, in the absence of the global flagships, and with a nascent corporate RBM system).

Since all indicators were based on this approach, however, they also all exhibit the same limitations in terms of supporting programme management, accountability and learning. For example, none of the indicators can be easily aggregated across the region into a overall dashboard; all the indicators required research and follow-up by the project coordinators without standardised methodologies for how they were calculated (which some coordinators reported as being cumbersome; and the time gap between each round of data collection restricted opportunities for course-correction.

In an ideal scenario, the monitoring system for the project would be able to draw on the performance tracking of the national programmes and plans that

were included in GRB. However, as the evaluation has indicated in most cases these do not exist. Given this context the performance monitoring system of the project is found to be appropriate, systematic, and reliable within the constraints of its design. The inclusion of a regional project manager was a major contributing factor to this achievement.

In some cases, such as BiH, targets in the performance framework were realistic but the timelines were over ambitious: a full PBB roll out is now expected in 2017 and this will allow the intensification of GRB activities. The design of the project governance structure enabled the performance monitoring data to be used flexibly to accommodate this situation, as well as responding to both opportunities and constraints that emerged in other countries. Rigid use of the monitoring indicators to judge performance would not have been appropriate given the institutional nature of the interventions, so this approach is to be commended.

As indicated previously, the evaluation did identify some potential enhancements to the performance framework in terms of indicators to address aspects other than institutional changes. In addition to including some key quantified indicators to track and aggregate outcomes across the project, there is also scope in a future phase to consider national M&E capacity in the design of the performance monitoring system. This would need to be as practical and realistic as possible, with no more than one or two key indicators as an entry point to national systems strengthening.

Related to supporting national capacity, the evaluation process identified a strong case for **establishing a single signifier of progress** for countries regarding the realisation of GRB. Several different models exist for such a signifier, including an index based on a composite score, a balanced scorecard, quality standards, or markers. The purpose of UN Women piloting one of these approaches would be to both track and incentivise progress on GRB in a similar way to which the World Bank's 'doing business', Transparency International's index, or UN Women's gender equality seal are used.

Efficiency

16 The resources provided to the Regional Project were effectively managed and there is a strong reason to find a substantive contribution to positive social outcomes for stakeholders at all levels, including women and men in targeted municipalities.

Analysis of cost-effectiveness is grounded in the assessment of how effective the Regional Project was in advancing GRB, both in its own terms (the performance management framework) and more broadly in terms of aid effectiveness commitments (Paris Declaration, Agenda 2030, Delivering as One).

In the case of GRB, this analysis is made easier by the finding that UN Women is the engine driving interest and development of GRB in the sub-region. All stakeholders agree that work on GRB would not be taking place without UN Women's presence. The evaluation also noted that the achievements of the project have been made in a set of complex national contexts.

Given the nature of the context and GRB as an intervention, not all contributions can be fully accounted for when assessing cost effectiveness. For example, there is evidence that the project has contributed to improving understanding of gender in participants that is being used beyond this project. Similarly, the work on phases I and II has generated a body of local evidence and experience that will make future interventions more efficient. This potential value of this to future interventions cannot be fully accounted for, but is real.

Whilst the performance management framework of the regional project is focused at the institutional level (policies, capacities, practices), a complete assessment of development effectiveness within the broader framework demands that we consider contributions of the project to changes in the lives of women and men. Some estimates of these contributions were provided in Finding 6.

The evaluation inception and the country case studies examined the case for using Social Return on Investment (SRoI) to calculate the cost effectiveness of GRB within the region. This process revealed several challenges with using the standard SRoI approach in the context of a women's human rights framework.

- The neo-liberal economic framing implied by SRoI of valuing the results of GRB according to the

contribution that women make to the economy (as compared to the inherent value of rights or the contribution the economy makes to realising women's human rights)

- The use of financial proxies to calculate SRoI (such as the cost of replacing unpaid reproductive work with professional care service) which introduces the social bias of undervaluing work that is predominantly undertaken by women (and which is commonly paid less than typically male occupations)
- Challenges with valuing knowledge and capacity in societies in which knowledge about gender is not in demand.

The challenge of applying SRoI in an appropriate way was compounded by the type of activities observed during the case study visits and the absence of project monitoring data tracking indirect outcomes. Furthermore, whilst all interviewees expressed their appreciation of GRB, none were prepared to contribute to the cost of expanding GRB even under hypothetical conditions (this has implications for sustainability as well as calculating the value that GRB represents to constituents).

Taking into account these considerations, the evaluation sought to innovate a highly adapted version of SRoI based on time-accounting (rather than using money as the unit of comparison). After careful examination, these assumptions were agreed to be incomplete and to devalue 'knowledge', a key aspect of GRB. So as not to distract from the main findings, the SRoI work can be found in Annex M. Nevertheless, the structured process of analysis for the SRoI component of the evaluation did confirm that, it is reasonable to find that in a time-based calculation the project at least represents a positive social return on investment within its own lifetime.

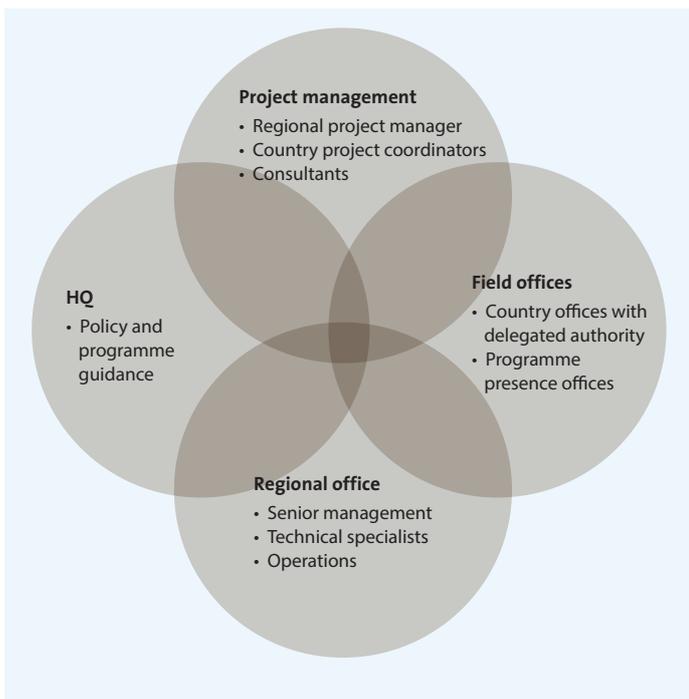
Overall, therefore, the evaluation finds that the Regional Project Phase II made a strong contribution

In terms of project management, UN Women's organizational systems and structures have supported the delivery of the planned activities and outputs. In terms of the strategic narrative of long-term integrated work on GRB, the project has exposed the limit of the current arrangements and highlighted lessons about regional project management, maintaining a minimum base of support for GRB, and establishing a coherent intellectual narrative behind UN Women's key value propositions.

of positive outcomes, beyond the level expected had the investment in the Regional Project not been made.

The Regional Project was supported by a series of inter-linked management and coordination structures: project management, host (field) offices, the Regional Office, and HQ.

FIGURE 15
The four main groups of UN Women structures and systems for the Regional Project



Given the effectiveness of the project in delivering cost-effective progress in advancing GRB, the evaluation has examined the extent to which each of these structures – and the relationships between them – contributed to achieving the objectives of the project.

Project management: based on evaluation interviews during the case studies, a series of overall lessons can be derived for future approaches to managing GRB programming on a regional or sub-regional basis.

1. There is a need for future regional projects to be designed with much earlier participation by – at the least – UN Women staff based in the countries that are included. Ideally, formative inclusion of finance ministry, national women's machinery and key civil society representatives would also allow for greater ownership and more localized project designs. Greater and earlier involvement of country staff and critical stakeholders (particularly the finance ministries) is required to secure adequate design, targets, and buy-in. The regional determination of the outcomes – subsequently sent to countries – was insufficient in meeting UN Women's commitment to inclusive and participatory design processes.

2. The management structure of the Regional Project introduced management layers that increased administrative requirements and delays for country-based staff whilst being insufficiently resourced to take full advantage of the opportunities for supporting cross-country knowledge management, resource mobilisation, and political alliance-building.

3. The existence of a common performance management framework added little value to the design and implementation of country-level interventions. The main benefit of 'packaging' together countries into the Regional Project was to present a single project to development partners that could be funded. The management logic of, for example, including Moldova but excluding Serbia and Kosovo from the Regional Project remains unclear.

4. As explored above, the decision to have a part-time project coordinator was a false economy in most countries, with insufficient time available to manage project workloads whilst maximizing the opportunities available to advance GRB during the project lifetime. More frequent opportunities for project coordinators to meet up are required if a project is to fully develop its (sub-)regional aspects and become more than a collection of countries all reporting to the same framework.

ject coordinators to meet up are required if a project is to fully develop its (sub-)regional aspects and become more than a collection of countries all reporting to the same framework.

5. The location of the project manager within a multi-country project has potential implications that warrant transparent discussion and buy-in of all the UN Women country and programme-presence offices in advance. The choice of Skopje was seen by some interviewees to have placed the 'centre of gravity' for the project in one of the participant countries, on rare occasions leading to communication and administrative delays for other countries (such as for contract approval in BiH). The project administration and reporting requirements absorbed most of the project management time, meaning that there were few opportunities for the project manager to spend time with the project coordinator in each country to collaborate on knowledge management and resource mobilization.

6. Whilst UN Women demonstrated flexibility and responsiveness to political conditions, focusing the management on 'project implementation' (delivering the performance management framework) has the potential to lead to strategic inefficiencies. For example, federations/councils of municipal governments are well-placed actors in both Moldova and FYR Macedonia. However, their strengths may be in political engagement and advocacy, rather than as a traditional implementing partner. Thus, whilst they are well placed – in theory – to help deliver UN Women's project outputs, project implementation is not – in reality – a core strength and may, in fact, be distracting from their potential. Future project management arrangement can allow scope to engage with such partners in a more strategic way that recognizes and benefits from their comparative political advantages.

7. Short duration projects do not provide sufficient opportunity to revisit women's priorities during implementation so that the project can respond and learn from experiences on the ground. Longer-term commitments would create space for more developmental and responsive project management.

8. The focus on the management of discrete projects inevitably leads to focusing on the micro-level, where results can reasonably be achieved in a 3-year period. This leads to UN Women and its allies having little view

of – or engagement with – the macro renegotiation of power, such as customs unions, financialization, and austerity.

9. As a means for better achieving sector outcomes, GRB can be packaged, in market terms, as a tool more clearly linked to managing for UNDAF outcomes. This is already being done to some extent, with Albania Country Office training UNCT members on GRB.

In addition to these lessons regarding project management structure, several insights emerged from interviews that related to the performance management tools used within the Regional Project. Chief among these it was suggested that a future performance framework should have greater scope for country-specific outputs to introduce greater flexibility. The evaluation considers that this takes on even greater relevance considering the diverging state of GRB implementation across the Regional Project countries.

With regard to measuring the performance of project structures, the summit workshop suggested that a vacuum exists in corporate guidance for monitoring and evaluation of GRB across UN Women's five main impact areas. Current systems of monitoring are looking within individual programmes rather than at contributions across a sector. At the sector level, there is a felt-need for robust process indicators that are not just quantitative.

Country offices: in some cases, offices with full delegation of authority were able to benefit from creating linkages between GRB and other initiatives. For example, in Moldova GRB was implemented in conjunction with the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme with UNDP and the Women in Politics project. Strategic working to link GRB with other initiatives was further made possible by the unearmarked support to the UN Women strategic note provided by Sweden. Specific support from SDC enabled similar links in FYR Macedonia (a programme presence country).

By contrast, BiH has the challenge of managing multiple relationships with the three different administrations, and has a need for additional project-level resources to account for this requirement. In FYR Macedonia, a programme presence country without delegation of authority, there was found to be a high

level of dissonance between the insecurity of relying on project financing and the long term need to invest in GRB with consistency. Within this context, the level of resources made available through projects needs to be sufficient to support direct work with partners outside of the office. Together, these raise the question of whether GRB should be considered a 'core function' of selected offices, with provision for a minimum staff capacity to maintain a GRB presence on a long term basis.

Regional Office: the evaluation process provoked discussion around the possibility of further clarifying how future work on GRB can better capitalise on the capabilities of UN Women's regional and global presence in support of country-level implementation and regional knowledge-management. This discussion highlighted several aspects of regional support that could be explored and strengthened.

1. UN Women undertakes target situational analyses for all countries as part of the strategic note process. However, it was seen that the entity is lacking the timely, reliable, and robust national data-sets needed to prioritize its work both within and across countries. This has a particular impact on GRB if it is to be conceptualized as a tool/package that is combined with other thematic areas of UN Women's work to accelerate women's human rights in those spaces.

2. The global development of the Flagship Programme Initiatives around themes such as data and statistics is seen to have helped put UN Women on the radar of development partners as a serious actor in these domains. There is a need, at regional level, to package GRB in a coherent way that can be communicated to potential partners as part of a distinct value proposition. Part of this work involves clarifying and normalizing the language around GRB so that all parts of UN Women are on the 'same page' regarding the vision and positioning of GRB in the broader storyline.

3. The forthcoming region-level implementation of the global data and statistics flagship provides a clear entry point for work on a coherent regional narrative around evidence-based responses to meeting the SDGs. GRB can be more clearly positioned as the primary means by which insights from new gender statistics capacities are used to drive policy responses. At the same time, the presence of GRB can reinforce domestic demand for gender statistics that provide

accurate insights into patterns of equity at the municipal as well as the national levels.

4. The expansion of the Gender Equality Facility in Albania – an EU-supported arrangement to mainstream gender within the accession process – to other pre-accession countries may be another example of where further work can be undertaken at regional level to package the approach into a clear value proposition, complementary to GRB, that UN Women can become known-for. As with the observation on data and statistics, this implies close collaboration between the regional technical specialists to build an integrated narrative with multiple 'hooks' for field offices to draw on as appropriate to their context.

5. Regional technical specialists cover multiple countries, and multiple activities in each country. There is typically found to be very little time for them to supervise and support each of the countries. The role and expected contribution of each regional officer towards both the multi-country and individual country elements of future regional projects can be better clarified in advance so that the project managers and coordinators can plan for accessing additional assistance if needed.

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UN Women has successfully controlled the major cost-centres within the GRB Regional Project to deliver the results of the project economically. Lessons from Phase II indicate that there is a strong case for full cost recovery of project coordinators and for refining the approach to regional knowledge exchange in future programming.

Whilst the evaluation has not undertaken a detailed analysis of the accounts for the Regional Project (it was not within the purpose of the evaluation to do so), the major cost-structures of the current approach can be assessed regarding optimal quantity and pricing.

The evaluation identified two main cost drivers within the Regional Project:

1. The cost of human resources (staff and consultants – including mentors)
2. The cost of exchange visits and regional events.

It should be noted that training is another cost centre for GRB, but in the view of the evaluation this has less scope for adjustment, thus having a major impact on the overall economics of how GRB is approached.

Human resources: the evaluation explored the quantity and, to a lesser extent, the cost of human resources within each of the case studies. The project benefited from UN Women's standard operational systems and structures, and the evidence triangulated from multiple stakeholders is that this is consistently resulting in value-for-money that is at least equal-to, but mostly better-than, expected for the sector.

In all the countries visited, participants in the project identified the national consultants and mentors as critical to the progress that had been made, and the UN Women project coordinators as critical to the successful delivery (and innovation) of project plans. Consultants that were engaged on a regional basis were also highly valued, although in some instances it was noted that it can be challenging to contextualise technical assistance within local realities.

The budget of the regional project supported 50 per cent of the cost of each country project coordinator. All the countries found means to support the other 50 per cent through links to other projects and programmes (including joint programmes). Whilst this had the indirect benefit for promoting linkages, it also introduced a competition for time and attention. It is the view of the evaluation that this is the major factor in explaining why the project implementation was focused on delivering its core accountabilities, and that full advantage was not taken to develop knowledge products and regional networks that could have significantly strengthened the strategic positioning of the project to influence wider discourse.

Given the challenging political economy of advancing GRB at the central level, and benefits to be derived from maintaining momentum and innovation at the local level, the evaluation finds that maintaining this 50/50 structure for project coordinators in future interventions will be false economy. In some contexts the case for at least a full time project coordinator dedicated to GRB is particularly acute. For example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina the project has to continuously engage with three sets of state institutions.

The evaluation findings indicate that the Regional Project has demonstrated sufficient value in terms of cost effectiveness at country-level, and underutilised opportunities for knowledge-building at regional level, to warrant UN Women including **comprehensive cost-recovery for project management in future partnerships**.

Study tours and regional exchanges: visits by representatives from government, civil society and academia to other countries in Europe were a key pillar of the Regional Project. These sought to expand awareness, knowledge, and political commitment to GRB based on witnessing it in action and exchanging experience with peers.

The costs associated with exchanges and study tours are relatively high, encompassing direct costs (such as transport, accommodation and events) and indirect costs (staff time to organise and host). Interviews with UN Women staff members suggest that these activities were only undertaken, therefore, when there was significant justification for the cost involved. The main justification provided was that people only truly understand GRB when they witness it in action, and only commit to implementing when they truly understand it.

The evaluation sought to test this justification through interviews with stakeholders across the project with non-leading questions about their knowledge of GRB. Almost without exception, stakeholders indicated that they did not understand what GRB was until they witnessed it in action (and they did not understand how to implement it until they had been mentored through the first round). **Learning by seeing and learning by doing** have been key to demystifying GRB for participants; and, considering this, the evaluation finds that the regional visits have made strong economic sense.

Within this overall finding there is some nuance that is necessary to consider in programming future regional interventions. Based on interview data (not triangulated with participant feedback forms), the evaluation indicates that:

- Whilst country study visits helped to raise awareness and commitment, they were less effective in sharing substantive knowledge than regional exchange meetings

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- Given that Albania now qualifies as one of the leading countries in the world regarding GRB implementation, there is an increasing case for sub-regional visits and exchanges within programme-presence countries, rather than to Iceland, Sweden and Austria
- There is greater potential for translation and adaptation of knowledge materials between countries as an alternative means of exchange (such as the BiH textbook or Moldavian curricula)
- Given the global strategic partnership between UN Women and the EU, there is scope to explore a more universal approach to technical cooperation and knowledge exchange, particularly if this positions GRB as a tool to apply insights from data and statistics being generated to report on the SDGs.

UN Women has successfully implemented tactics to ensure efficiency of project delivery, although these can generate some unexpected effects that future interventions can better address.

In assessing efficiency of delivery, the evaluation does not consider it relevant to examine the precise level to which each planned output met the targets set during the planning phase for three reasons:

1. The evaluation has already established that the project achieved social return on investment at the

outcome level, which is a more important consideration than the outputs required to get there. If the numbers for activities and outputs are of interest, then the evaluation considers that it is a management function to record these in the final project report – the nature of the indicators and UN Women’s systems for monitoring have been found to be sufficiently robust to negate the need for further validation.

2. The evaluation has already seen that the implementation of activities was highly dependent on external processes, such as delays in the promulgation of performance based budgeting in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The achievement of particular outputs relative to targets may or may not, therefore, reflect the efficiency of UN Women in responding to uncertainty and change.

3. Flexibility and innovation during implementation is considered an important asset to effective policy-level work. Auditing the achievements of outputs runs counter to this, as it implicitly rewards rigidity and bureaucratic inertia.

The case studies of the Regional Project highlighted several tactics that UN Women is using to improve efficiency. Overall, the project produced strong evidence of having contributed to substantive effects, which suggests that many of these tactics are working. However the evaluation also found some unexpected implications of these approaches that will need to be carefully balanced in future work on GRB.

TABLE 7
Summary of the main results of the GRB Regional Project Phase II

Tactic	Positive effect	Unintended effect
Development of a common theory of change and logical framework	Supported delivery of the intended activities and outcomes per the best theory at the time of the project design	Disincentivised innovation and restricted responsiveness to emerging insights. Implicitly treats failure as negative rather than as generating new knowledge into what does and does not work.
Establishing country-specific indicators and targets	Allowed for the regional project designed to be partially adapted the country context	Disincentivised innovation by constraining risk of experimentation within a single country, rather than sharing it across the region

Targeting UN Women's comparative advantage of institutional-level interventions	Maximised the limited resources of the project by playing to key strengths	Attenuated the recognition of the importance of individual actors/ champions of GRB and their knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices as an internal entry point into wider structures
Establishing important and innovative synergies with other UN Women programmes	Extended the reach and sustainability of the GRB project within the limitations of the budget	Acts to hide some of the inefficiencies and lost opportunities of having insufficient human resources for the project
Supporting municipalities to 'learn by seeing and learn by doing' GRB	The project found an effective way to demystify GRB and develop capacity to engender budget planning	The project focused on GRB in its own right, and missed potential opportunities to solve practical budget and planning problems at municipal level (such as linking program plans to line-item reports) with tools (such as municipal software) that could have been designed to integrate gender data and analysis
Winning policy commitment to GRB by ministries of finance	Ensuring that a powerful domestic policy instrument exists to leverage in discussions with state agencies	Positioning GRB outside of the mainstream debate on budget reform processes happening within funding packages provided by IFIs and bilateral agencies

Overall, the evaluation identified several key areas with the potential for delivering substantive gains in efficiency from a strategic (rather than operational) perspective.

1. Knowledge products: a distilled documentation package and tool kit could maximise regional value of the project and promote exchange of knowledge and experience between project countries and wider ECA countries. More generally, improved knowledge management is necessary, including a platform or clearinghouse to systemise all knowledge products created across the region.

2. Anchoring GRB in reform processes: there is a need to anchor GRB within major ongoing reform processes to leverage these for more compelling exposure to donors and greater results. UN Women does not have to lead the drive for GRB, however, it does need to have a more coherent intellectual model for GRB within the regional context if it is to protect the space for feminist economics within wider reform processes.

3. Synergies with key partners maximise effectiveness and prevent duplication - leveraging results through partnerships. For example, in BiH a collaboration with USAID on training MPs was an important means of maximizing synergies and resources (especially considering training-fatigue). A similar approach was taken in Moldova with the Women in Politics programme, a joint programme with UNDP.

Sustainability

20 Despite challenges, the Regional Project has identified and is responding to opportunities to support the sustainability of GRB within domestic institutions. Extending this effort would benefit from revisiting some of the underlying assumptions about how sustainability will be realized.

During the GRB regional projects, three countries have established a comprehensive legal framework for GRB: Albania, BiH, FYR Macedonia. As previously described, the evaluation found that the national political situation is highly influential on both establishing and supporting the implementation of this framework. It is also subject to many practical difficulties regarding aligning budget templates, tools, software and workflows. As such, by the end of the Regional Project Phase II it would be the evaluation summit workshop to described the results as still being driven by UN Women and not yet self-sustaining.

There are, however, examples of sustainability that have either been achieved in practice or are a strong potential for the near future. In BiH GRB gender action plans led to structural changes to criteria for fund distribution at the local level. The Academy of Economic Studies in Moldova introduced GRB as a mandatory course to two MA programs, and GRB curricula have been adopted in Albania and BiH. In FYR Macedonia, mentors guided programme managers in ministries through the first round of GRB planning and have established a peer-network so that they can support each other through subsequent rounds.

All of the Regional Project countries face challenges in sustaining the investment and momentum behind GRB. These include:

1. Line budgeting remains a challenge in several contexts since the transition to PBB is not complete
2. Turnover of elected representatives requires a continuity of GRB training that normally goes beyond what can be included in standard induction sessions
3. Gender action plans at local level are effective, but should be complemented by mainstreaming gender into existing planning documents
4. Local associations of local government are well placed to support sustainability of gender, but their political reality is set by their members' interests

5. NGOs are naturally cautious about the politics of the budget

6. Project duration is not always long enough to support a full budget process, and developing the watchdog role always comes last. Continuity of investment is needed to support a full budget cycle

7. By 'projectizing' GRB it becomes easy to lose sight of the long-term contributions it has made and trajectory it is taking. There is a need for indicators that go beyond a single project timeframe.

Despite these challenges, Regional Project countries have also responded to or identified opportunities to embed GRB in domestic institutions. For instance, UN Women Albania is in the process of negotiating the integration of GRB, community based scorecards, and the European Charter for Women and Men in Local Life into a nationwide-programme to restructure municipalities as part of a territorial reform.

In BiH, deepening knowledge and capacity of the Gender Agency and Gender Centres to lead GRB will ensure sustainability and support scaling up through coordination of local level efforts and engagement with MPs/CSOs. In FYR Macedonia, UN Women can research into better understanding how the use of GRB technique spilled over into the CSO-led campaign against abortion law changes so as to strengthen support to watchdog formation. This could be combined with, for example, opportunities to influence municipal eGovernance tools to better empower CSOs with the information needed to be a watchdog.

Cutting-across all of these challenges and opportunities is an implicit assumption about the pathway to sustainability that the evaluation identified as both critical to the design of GRB interventions and yet somewhat vague and undefined: critical mass.

Critical mass: the recurrent idea in interviews with participants and in some of the project documents that GRB needs to reach a ‘tipping point’ after which it will be sustainable and have a momentum to continue to grow. The critical mass concept was heard being applied to GRB professionals, government staff, municipalities, or even the general body of public consciousness about GRB.

The visual metaphor of a mass that expands to the point it can tip a lever is a powerful one, and can shape both implicit and explicit understandings of how GRB spreads and sustains. It is, therefore, worth interrogating further.

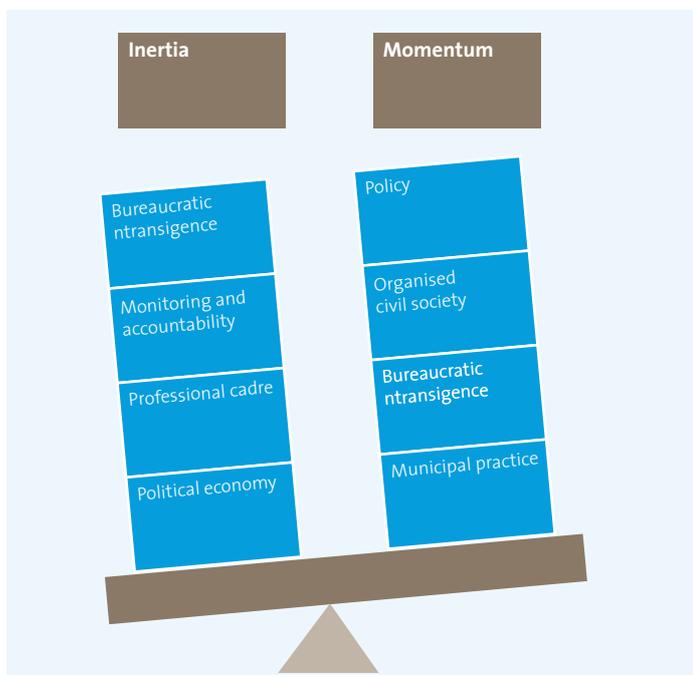
Within the use of the term ‘critical mass’, the implicit meaning appears to be that UN Women’s role is to steward the practice of GRB to the ‘tipping point’, after which its role is complete since domestic institutions can continue to grow the ‘mass’. This suggests that the primary role of UN Women, is to shift elements ‘across’ an imaginary scale until there is a greater mass promoting GRB than there is hindering it.

Given the prevalence of this explanation, there are several important questions to be asked about ‘critical mass’, not least of which is whether it is an accurate concept. We know, for example, that critical consciousness has not historically led to realisation of power: small but organized groups have often managed to outflank larger groups. This has important implications for programming: accepting the critical mass metaphor implies an goal of continuing to grow UN Women’s GRB programming (rather than adjusting targeting, or handing over existing work and innovating the next phase).

If, however, critical mass is seen to have validity and usefulness as a metaphor, then it would seem important to conduct more detailed research so that it can be used accurately and usefully. For example, what is the ‘mass’ that is essential to build? Where is the tipping point based on previous experiences? What does it take to reach the tipping point? What support is needed to maintain momentum after the tipping point? Do we need to attain critical mass in all aspects, or are some masses more influential than others?

It will be necessary for these questions, and others, to be explored by future programming on GRB. Together they can work towards a set of decision-making criteria in the form of a tool to describe on which areas are most important to focus on. This, the evaluation finds, is the main benefit of regionality: the chance to build a body of knowledge that goes beyond ideas for activities and constructs an unrivalled intellectual foundation to sustain GRB.

FIGURE 16
An example of the image of a ‘critical mass’ restraining or advancing GRB



Human Rights & Gender Equality

GRB projects have been strongly aligned to normative instruments, concluding observations and joint declarations, within the scope of women's social, economic and cultural rights.

21

The Regional Project programme document (and other GRB programme documents) contain extensive references to relevant normative instruments including:

1. Beijing Declaration 1995
2. EU Resolution "Gender Budgeting: Building Public Budgets with Gender Perspective" (A5-0214/2003)
3. The conclusions and recommendations of the CEDAW Committee to the most recent country periodic reports (Albania 2014; FYR Macedonia 2013, BiH 2013 and Moldova 2013).

Overall, the design of the project was well-aligned with and designed to support implementation of these international commitments, in addition to the extensive body of national laws, strategies and gender action plans. Additional gender analysis in the programme documents supported the Regional Project to address underlying causes of gender inequality within the scope of the budget process and expenditure. There was equitable distribution of investments across principal, primary, and secondary duty bearers (including national and local governments, CSOs and MPs).

The conclusions and recommendations of the CEDAW Committee to the most recent country periodic reports (Albania 2014; FYR Macedonia 2013, BiH 2013 and Moldova 2013) emphasized the importance of the efforts of governments to apply systematic approaches to the advancement of gender equality and ensure that public policies at all levels advance gender equality and women's rights.

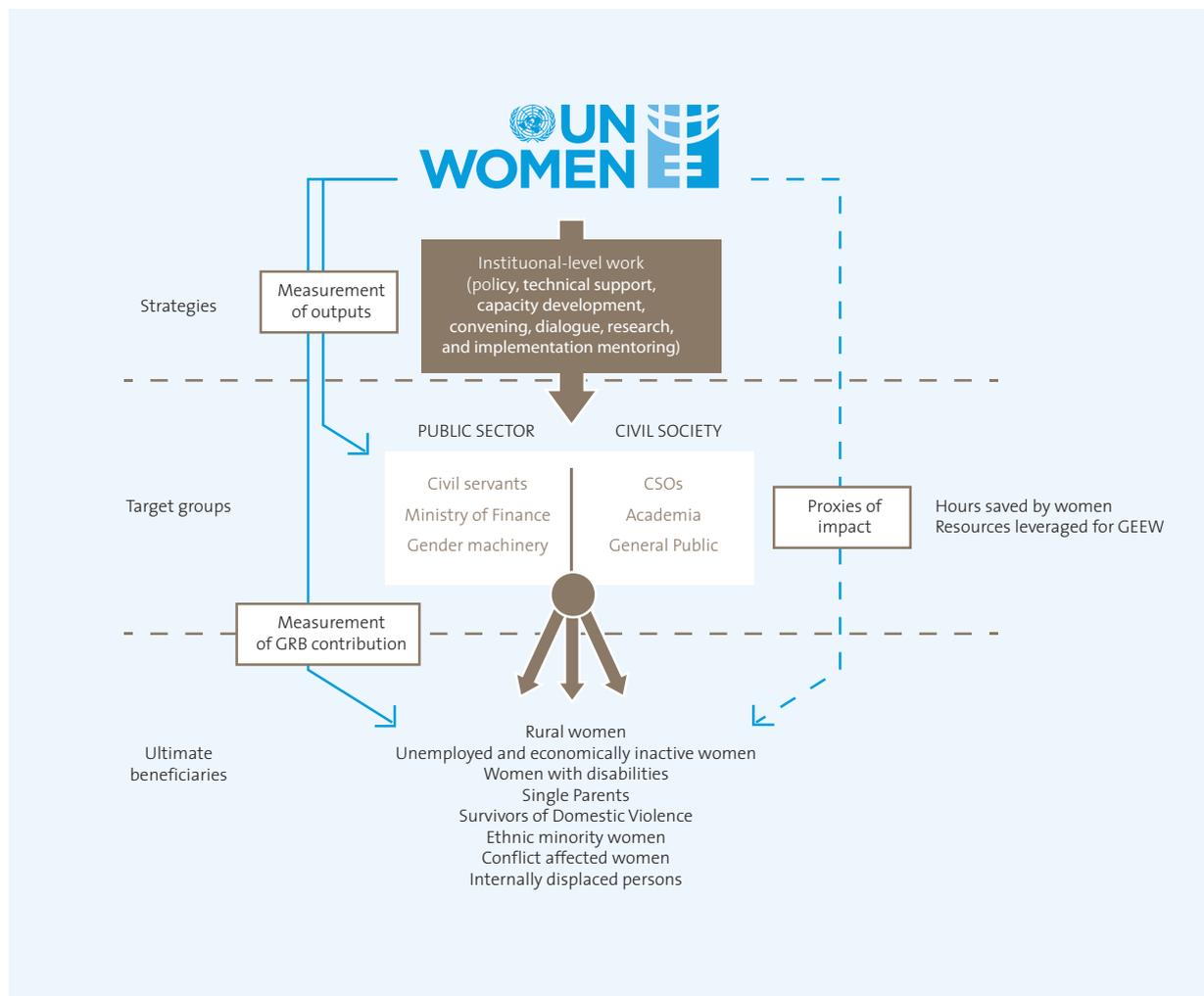
The design of the Regional GRB Project has been informed by and aligned to support implementation of these conclusions and recommendations. For example, the decision to partner with and build the capacity of gender machinery to lead and support implementation of GRB across line ministries has helped to strengthen cooperation.

One exception to this was in BiH regarding the CEDAW recommendation related to harmonization of GEMS – stakeholders agreed that the project could have supported a more coordinated approach between the State and Entity-level Gender Agency and Gender Centres (rather than a separate approach to and with each institute) and that future projects should ensure that they directly support harmonization.

The strategic decision of the project to focus on vulnerable and marginalised women (in particular underemployed, economically marginalised, and rural women) also aligns well with recommendations of the CEDAW Committee as well as the project's focus on the key sectors of employment, social assistance and rural development.

The partial nature of the GRB projects in the regional (focused on budget process and expenditure but excluding macroeconomics and revenue) lead to greater relevance to some articles of CEDAW than others. Mapping the activities of the Regional Project to CEDAW articles reveals a strong focus on non-discrimination, substantive equality, participation, economic and social rights, and rural women. A secondary focus relates to the thematic coverage of programmes that applied GRB (education, health, decent work), whilst a tertiary focus was found in relation to political participation in specific domestic institutions (special measures and eliminating prejudice). Women's civil and political rights are largely absent from current programme designs.

FIGURE 17
Relevance of the GRB Regional Project to CEDAW Articles



CONCLUSIONS

The following seven conclusions are based on the evaluation criteria and are derived through a combination of realist meta-synthesis of evaluation evidence, consultation at the summit workshop, and validation by the evaluation reference groups.

1 UN Women projects and programmes on GRB in ECA region have contributed substantively to improved awareness, regulatory frameworks and institutional capacity to engender the budget process and expenditure plans. Longer term support is needed achieve integration of GRB in the full cycle, expand practice, and mainstream GRB into performance based budgeting.

The evaluation has identified multiple lines and levels of evidence supporting the conclusion that UN Women GRB interventions have contributed substantially to enhancing institutional capacity and practice of gender responsive budget-processes and expenditure planning despite having limited resources and in uncertain political contexts.

In terms of meeting the objectives of the GRB Regional Project, the overall picture is impressive – with 38 programmes and 50 municipalities now implementing various levels of GRB approaches. Variations in the progress of specific countries is largely attributable to the pace of wider reform processes (such as performance based budgeting, decentralisation, and EU accession).

Lessons for future programming on GRB include the need for longer-term interventions or finding an alternative strategy to supporting the full budget cycle in order that the monitoring, reporting and advocating (watchdog) role is supported as fully as the research, consultation and planning phase.

2 Evidence from the evaluation suggests that GRB Regional Project interventions are contributing to positive social outcomes in terms of changes in the lives of women. Capturing and communicating this change requires expanding the scope of UN Women's existing performance management systems.

Based on findings on Effectiveness

Based extrapolation of the evaluation case study observations and a set of assumptions, the evaluation concludes that, in the context of productive and reproductive time use, the GRB Regional Project intervention has contributed to positive and meaningful social outcomes.

The assumptions made by the evaluation to conclude this (and the discounting of many potential social, economic, and cultural benefits of GRB) are made necessary by the decision to restrict current performance management systems to tracking only institutional-level changes (such as human capacity and budget tools).

The evaluation revealed a strong case for better capturing the direct and indirect outcomes of GRB interventions through three lenses:

1. Contributions to changes in the lives of women through enabling better efficiency in achieving sector outcomes (e.g. education, health, WASH) – which requires strengthening gender responsive sector monitoring frameworks
2. Contributions to sustained changes in knowledge, attitudes, skills and practices of individuals and institutions touched by GRB interventions
3. Contributions to women's economic rights using the 10-priority framework elaborated in Progress of the World's Women 2015-16, including where contributions are not being made due to the absence of interventions in the macroeconomic and revenue spaces.

3

Current programmes are highly relevant to normative gender instruments and national gender frameworks. There is significant scope to build on this work to better position the contribution of GRB to Agenda 2030, inclusive economic development, and EU accession processes.

Based on findings on Relevance

UN Women GRB programming documents reflect systematic mapping of and alignment to normative gender frameworks at the international and country level. It also takes account of regional gender commitments. Consequently, activities were found to be highly relevant to institutional conditions in each country, and the presence (and relationships) of UN Women country staff also supported adaptation to changing contexts (such as unplanned elections).

There are forthcoming opportunities for UN Women to support national institutions across the region in responding to the demand for gender statistics to establish baselines and reporting on the SDG indicators. Through the global flagship programme initiative on data and statistics, there is the potential to release ‘seed resources’ for GRB as a tool for utilising the evidence generated by statistical systems. The budget process itself, if it is participatory, may also be considered as a vector for generating SDG reporting data – but needs to be communicated as such. A ‘corporate package’ based on statistics and GRB may be a relevant entry point for more globally-orientated countries or those outside of the EU accession process.

One of the perspectives that UN Women needs but is currently missing to agitate for GRB a macroeconomic level is an approach that orientates GRB within a larger economic framework. Given the centrality of equity to Agenda 2030 – no one left behind – the evaluation summit workshop concluded that ‘inclusive growth’ is the most promising way of reframing GRB. The evaluation agrees that inclusive growth is likely to resonate and have meaning with policy makers and power brokers outside of those aware of and motivated by gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Given that this evaluation is published at a time in which Authoritarian Populism is showing signs of

outflanking liberalism across the ECA region (including in some donor countries), it must be concluded that framing GRB in terms of economic growth and security concurrently with its existing framing within women’s human rights may be a necessary factor in ensuring its future relevance. The regional ability to pursue this is inhibited by a corporate level gap in UN Women’s work on alternative (or heterodox) macro frameworks that are gender and class-aware; and macroeconomic policy simulations to generate evidence for engaging in dialogue with IFIs.

4

The main comparative advantage for UN Women of working regionally is knowledge management, resource mobilisation, and sharing risk. This can be better underpinned by shared key indicators used by localised implementations of UN Women’s regional approach.

Based on findings on Efficiency

The Regional Project has benefited greatly from the opportunities countries have had to share regional resources and experiences, through exchanges, study tours, the project manager, and informal networking. More could be made of such opportunities in the future, especially given the changing context. The evaluation identified, for example, a wealth of experience in ECA countries outside of the Regional Project that could be more systematically captured and shared. Regionally, ECA is missing a knowledge-hub for documented lessons, tools, and guidance for GRB translated into other national languages and quality assured by UN Women’s global or regional experts.

Furthermore, given that a body of experience now exists on a sub-regional basis, the evaluation concludes that there is now a stronger case for exchange events than there is a need for study tours. Study visits can now be more often undertaken to neighbouring countries or sub-national regions in the same country that are demonstrating GRB in action. There is also scope for the systematic use of GRB professionals from within the region to be engaged in country-to-country technical cooperation facilitated by UN Women.

Adapting regional approaches to GRB programming to national (and sub-national) contexts has been an important factor in the results that were identified in the evaluation. Allowing for localisation is

likely to increase in importance as the range of GRB-implementation status increases among countries. On a small level this was seen in the addition of Moldova to the Regional Project Phase II, giving it a different starting point from the other countries. In the future, it may be that Albania becomes the main case study for other countries in the region (including some non-programme presence countries) to witness institutionalised GRB.

Localisation of programming highlights the importance of high levels of participation from country-level stakeholders – especially UN Women country staff, ministries of finance, and civil society representatives – in the design of regional projects. This was not optimised in the process of designing the Regional Project Phase II, partly due to time and resource constraints. A further chance to support localisation would be to allow for country-specific outputs to be included in any multi-country monitoring frameworks.

The challenge for localising the implementation of GRB programming is finding the means to capture the overall contribution that UN Women is making, and packaging this in ways that support both accountability and resource mobilisation. Whilst an attempt to do this was made with the Regional Project performance monitoring framework, the predominant use of institutional narratives in the indicators inhibited the aggregation of a concise-but-meaningful overall storyline. This points to the need for a small number of carefully designed key-indicators for GRB that can be aggregated across the region.

5

It is optimal to support project design and implementation at country level wherever possible. This needs to be backed-up by an institutional commitment to maintaining a baseline level of human resources to GRB, particularly in programme presence countries without delegated authority.

Based on findings on Efficiency

Whilst the presences of regional project and technical staff facilitated knowledge exchange management at country level, the introduction of multi-country layers of project management was not seen to offer sufficient value to offset additional administrative costs. Future project management would be more efficient, therefore, if it was to be decentralised to country level

– with regional project staff focused on knowledge exchange, partnership brokering, political influencing, and resource mobilisation.

This conclusion assumes the provision of sufficient human resources at country level, and takes note of the finding that the provision of 50 per cent of a country-level project coordinator was most likely a case of false-economy. Such an assumption is particularly fragile in programme presence countries without full delegation of authority or institutional budget. In these cases in particular, reporting lines of country-level coordinators of regional projects need to be in line with country organigramme to preserve institutional knowledge after project funding ceases. Given the need to invest in GRB consistently over a long period to cover and socialise changes within the full budget cycle, these vulnerabilities are of particular concern.

The strategy for future regional approaches to GRB thus depends on whether UN Women corporately considers, and positions, GRB as a core value proposition that serves and advances its other objectives, including Agenda 2030. If it were considered a core business function, UN Women should be required to know – and make provision for – the minimum level of staffing required to keep GRB supported in all its programme presence countries during periods when project financing is not available (this may be a proportion of time from a programme officer). A key advantage of regionality could be to share guaranteed provision for this minimum requirement across countries; and to support individual countries (and regional projects) to make the case for full cost recovery of human resource needs.

6

Overall, UN Women remains the engine sustaining and developing GRB. Greater scope remains to both clarify and innovate strategies for sustainability across the region, and to measure and learn from the experiences of each country.

Based on findings Sustainability

Although recognising that UN Women programmes have made provision for sustainability, the evaluation concludes that UN women is still the engine behind the adoption of GRB within domestic institutions. Whilst the goal for supported institutions is to replicate their

knowledge and behaviours, the evidence that this is happening is limited (and only in a few countries). In addition, whilst UN Women in most countries has sort synergies with other UN entities – and has taken advantage of joint programming when this was feasible – it lacks, in most cases, sufficient voice to force GRB as an agenda priority. There is a need for more direct political leverage from the regional level and strategic partners if this balance of power is to be influenced in favour of greater coordination.

At the regional level, there is an urgent need to clarify the assumptions and strategy for sustainability given that a similar approach is taken in all ECA countries. The metaphor of a critical mass is prevalent, but has not been sufficiently substantiated as accurate and detailed enough to use for effective programming. There is also the opportunity to more effectively capture and share insights from countries that have progressed furthest in embedding GRB within performance-based budgeting, municipal reform, and EU accession processes.

At the country level, the evaluation notes the importance of having built on previous work within the Regional Project – further emphasising the value of longer term sustained investments. As a result of this, several countries are now at the point where they can shift from a mentoring and consultancy-supported approach to greater use of peer-to-peer communities of practice (both within the country and on a sub-regional basis).

However, the evaluation has also concluded that significant potential exists for UN Women to position GRB more strategically to influence the broader macroeconomic framework. This would be relevant for two main reasons: 1) progress in institutionalising GRB is correlated with the progress of wider financial and budgetary reform processes; and 2) the existing work on GRB has not been successful in engaging with and addressing macroeconomic patterns that disadvantage women.

Addressing this successfully requires a new level of theory of change – one that sets out a common language to explain UN Women’s unique contribution, mission and intervention for contributing to the macroeconomic discourse across the ECA region, and applying GRB as a means for realising this. The evaluation summit workshop identified some key components of a potential regional theory of change, summarised in the figure below.

One of these is to occupy the intellectual space on the care economy from a feminist perspective, but to package this in an approach and set of action research to make it accessible a country level. Another key component concluded as important by the evaluation summit workshop was the creation of a flagship knowledge product – such as a GRB index to track country performance – as a means to more successfully drive the political discourse. Whilst both components would require corporate consent from UN Women HQ, and coordination with policy teams, the evaluation concludes that the region is a highly relevant unit for trialling such initiatives.

Integrated in such a strategic reflection on UN Women’s approach is the need to revisit some of the core concepts of gender and the language being used by participants within GRB projects. For example, there is a need to move constituents away from the use of economic language that entrenches the marginalisation of women – terms such as ‘economically inactive women’ that run counter to a full understanding of the care economy. Beyond the more intentional use of language within GRB dialogue is the need to address the absence of LGBTQ identities within the current analysis and design of GRB programming.

4

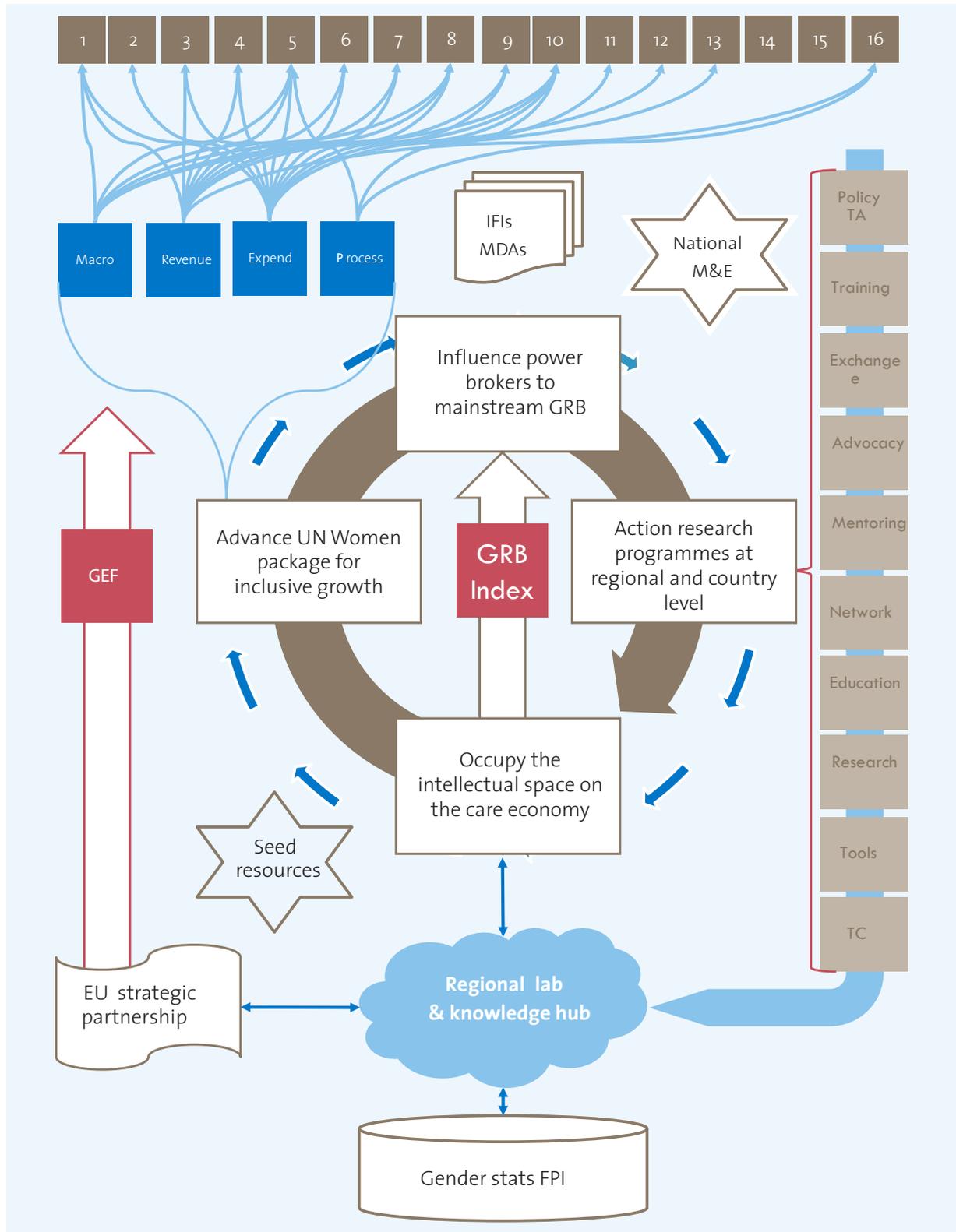
Current theories of change for GRB are focused at the meso and micro level of GRB, because of which UN Women is missing the macro-level regional patterns that are driving the economic marginalisation of women, vulnerable social and cultural groups, and people identifying as LGBTQ.

Based on findings on Human Rights

Given the preceding conclusions, UN Women’s existing theories of change for GRB are largely sufficient to continue to implement relevant women’s human rights projects with a ‘tactical’ focus on UN Women’s comparative advantage of supporting institutional change.

FIGURE 18

Concept of a regional-level UN Women theory of change for GRB contributing to the SDGs – elaborated from dialogue during the summit workshop



RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been developed based on the conclusions and subject to validation from the evaluation reference group.

Conclusion	Recommendation	Target	Priority
<p>1: UN Women projects and programmes on GRB in ECA region have contributed substantively to improved awareness, regulatory frameworks and institutional capacity to engender the budget process and expenditure plans. Longer term support is needed achieve integration of GRB in the full cycle, expand practice, and mainstream GRB into performance based budgeting.</p>	<p>1.1 Expand the use of costing exercises to new domains of gender inequality, such as women in business (especially executive positions), gender bias in education, and the social dislocation of women migrant workers. Synchronise this research with public authority planning cycles.</p>	UN Women project managers	Soon.
	<p>1.2 At the municipal level, continue to explore a shift from advocating GRB to problem solving administrative tasks through the use of practical gender-sensitive models and tools.</p>		
<p>2: Evidence from the evaluation suggests that GRB Regional Project interventions are contributing to positive social outcomes in terms of changes in the lives of women. Capturing and communicating this change requires expanding the scope of UN Women’s existing performance management systems.</p>	<p>2.1 Agree on a set of key indicators for GRB projects, building on work such as the Progress of the World’s Women (2016) framework. Aggregate performance of the key indicators on a regional basis to share the risks associated with innovation across countries and remove disincentives to experimentation.</p>	UN Women Regional office, WEE and RBM.	Immediate.
	<p>2.2 At country level, monitor CEDAW and SDG reporting to collect evidence of GRB’s success and feed this back into political discourse to build momentum.</p>	Regional project managers	Soon.
<p>3: Current programmes are highly relevant to normative gender instruments and national gender frameworks. There is significant scope to build on this work to better position the contribution of GRB to Agenda 2030, inclusive economic development, and EU accession processes.</p>	<p>3.1 Work towards a regionally-adapted version of the Flagship Programme on transformative financing that includes specific links to the EU Acquis (such as through GEF) and UN Women’s work on data/statistics</p>	Regional Project – UN Women project manager, coordinators and country representatives	Soon.
	<p>3.2 Explicitly link the work towards a regionally-adapted version of the Flagship Programme on data and statistics to the FPI on transformative financing (see 3.1)</p>	UN Women Regional Office, management, WEE, Stats, RBM	Soon.
	<p>3.3 Develop a macroeconomic theory of change for the region and publish a flagship GRB index to leverage UN Women’s perspective on the care economy into IFI and MDA models for promoting inclusive growth</p>	UN Women Regional Office, management, specialists	Later
<p>4: The main comparative advantage for UN Women of working regionally is knowledge management, resource mobilisation, and sharing risk. This can be better underpinned by shared key indicators used by localised implementations of UN Women’s regional approach.</p>	<p>4.1 Work with key partners, (including but not limited to ministries of finance, gender equality mechanisms, and civil society networks) to design future regional projects through participatory processes, including having country-specific outputs that respond to local political priorities</p>	UN Women Project managers Development partners (financing support)	Soon
	<p>4.2 Establish a regional knowledge and communications hub for GRB to gather, simplify and translate insights, tools, and guidance from across the region (including, but not limited to, future regional projects).</p>	UN Women Regional Office	Soon

	<p>4.3 Continue the development of regional GRB projects, but focus the regional aspect on knowledge management, political advocacy, and partnership brokerage. Give greater emphasis in knowledge management to regional exchanges, peer-to-peer mentoring, and document sharing; and less emphasis to study tours (see 4.2)</p> <p>4.4 Explore the option of establishing a regional framework agreement with development partners for GRB with two components: 1) provision for regional knowledge management (see 4.2) and 2) provision for country-led GRB projects under a common reporting framework (see 2.1)</p>	<p>Regional Project – UN Women project manager</p> <p>UN Women Regional Office</p> <p>Development partners</p>	<p>Immediate.</p> <p>Later.</p>
<p>5: It is optimal to support project design and implementation at country level wherever possible. This needs to be backed-up by an institutional commitment to maintaining a baseline level of human resources to GRB, particularly in programme presence countries without delegated authority.</p>	<p>5.1 Establish a region-wide commitment to preserving a minimum level of UN Women support to maintain GRB over the long-term.</p> <p>5.2 In each country establish an explicit strategy to work towards embedding the role of GRB advisor (or another form of GRB expertise) in the Ministry of Finance.</p> <p>5.3 Ensure full cost recovery of a full-time-equivalent project coordinator for future GRB projects (i.e. rather than cost-sharing with the country office) to avoid false-economy, and to allow for more staff time in the field.</p>	<p>UN Women Regional Office, management</p> <p>UN Women country representatives</p> <p>UN Women Country Offices</p> <p>UN Women Regional Office, operations</p>	<p>Later.</p> <p>Soon.</p> <p>Immediate</p>
<p>6: Overall, UN Women remains the engine sustaining and developing GRB. Greater scope remains to both clarify and innovate strategies for sustainability across the region, and to measure and learn from the experiences of each country.</p>	<p>6.1 Within UN Women’s coordination work, prioritise conceptual and language alignment of GRB with the budgeting programmes of other entities, including human rights based budgeting (OHCHR) and performance based budgeting (UNDP).</p> <p>6.2 Continue to widen and better utilise the regional pool of GRB experts, including supporting country-to-country technical cooperation by leveraging UN Women’s universal mandate and strategic partnership with the EU.</p>	<p>UN Women project managers and coordinators</p> <p>UN Women project managers</p>	<p>Soon.</p> <p>Soon.</p>
<p>7: Current theories of change for GRB are focused at the meso and micro level of GRB, because of which UN Women is missing the macro-level regional patterns that are driving the economic marginalisation of women, vulnerable social and cultural groups, and people identifying as LGBTQ.</p>	<p>4.1 Work with key partners, (including but not limited to 7.1 Expand UN Women’s GRB theories of change to fully cover all stages of the budget cycle (including the watchdog role), analysis of revenue policies, and consideration of LGBTQ gender identities.</p> <p>7.2 Ensure that all country-level GRB projects include provision for engaging macro-economic actors – including but not limited to the World Bank, IMF and EU – to advocate for gender mainstreaming in all policy analysis and recommendations.</p> <p>7.3 Ensure that all GRB projects start with a baseline macroeconomic analysis that is gender and class aware.</p>	<p>UN Women project managers</p> <p>UN Women country representatives</p> <p>UN Women regional WEE advisor</p>	<p>Immediate</p> <p>Soon</p> <p>Immediate</p>

LESSONS LEARNED

Lesson 1: the benefit of longer-term programming and financing

This continuity of knowledge and expertise between Phase I and Phase II has directly contributed to the achievement of project results. This demonstrates the value of providing options for longer-term financing of GRB programming.

Short duration projects do not provide sufficient opportunity to revisit women's priorities during implementation so that the project can respond and learn from experiences on the ground. A focus on the management of individual projects inevitably leads to focusing on the micro-level, where results can reasonably be achieved in a 3-year period. This misses the macro renegotiation of power, such as customs unions, financialization, and austerity. Longer-term commitments and responsive project management would create space for a more ambitious vision.

There is a need for longer-term interventions or finding an alternative strategy to supporting the full budget cycle in order that the monitoring, reporting and advocating (watchdog) role is supported as fully as the research, consultation and planning phase. Whilst the MOF was a strong driver of GRB in most countries, systems and processes within MOFs for transferring technical knowledge on GRB to budget users was needed to support full institutionalisation of GRB.

Lesson 2: the value of early-stage participation

There is a need for future regional projects to be designed with much earlier participation by finance ministry, national women's machinery and key civil society representatives to allow for greater ownership and more localized project designs. Greater and earlier involvement of critical stakeholders (particularly the finance ministries) is required to secure adequate design, targets, and buy-in. Regional determination of the outcomes – subsequently sent to countries – is insufficient in meeting UN Women's commitment to inclusive and participatory design processes. Some CO experiences indicate that having country-specific outputs is also important.

Lesson 3: knowledge as the value proposition of regional programming

Supporting cross-country knowledge management, resource mobilisation, and political alliance-building creates significant value for UN Women. Regional mechanisms work best when they are focused on quality assurance of interventions, technical support on GRB, and regional exchange. 'Packaging' together countries into a regional project to present a single project to development partners that can be funded should not displace decentralised project management, and must allow regional staff to focus on coordination of knowledge and mobilisation.

Lesson 4: supporting and tracking sustainable capacity for GRB

Evidence from the Regional Project Phase II demonstrates the effectiveness and the continued need for a mentoring/learning-by-doing approach to supporting GRB uptake. Lessons are emerging around the need to develop this strategy with a view to sustainability: shifting from external mentors to peer-to-peer mentoring and professional support embed within institutions. Mentoring appears to work best when it is for an intensive period of 6-12 months, to ensure regular contact and avoid dependency.

A lesson for future GRB interventions is to include a basic measure of sustainability like a time series of KAP (knowledge attitudes and practices) surveys over the course of a programme in order to track how knowledge and behaviours spread through the system.

Lesson 5: supporting greater use of costing studies to advance the GRB agenda

In Moldova an innovative study on "Costing Domestic Violence in Republic of Moldova" was launched by Women's Law Centre (WLC) with the technical support from UN Women. In this context, UN Women Moldova and WHO provided for international expertise and WLC with local experts on financial, statistical and legal subjects. The preliminary findings show that a careful and evidence-based policy development would lead to cost-efficient measures against

domestic violence in Moldova. The State is spending a lot of resources on mitigation of the effects and plans and spends none on prevention. The report offers recommendations for the implementation of GRB in Moldova and will be used as an advocacy tool in working with state institutions and will create conditions for building stronger ties with the Government.

Costing exercises of the Kyrgyzstan NAPs were introduced into the national planning processes by UN Women efforts have become a systematic and regular practice in drafting and approving all major national and sectoral development programmes. The improved methodology informed by the lessons of the first exercise was used in 2015 in the process of costing the second NAP for 2015-2017. The improvements in the costing methodology relate to the elaboration of the price-list for identifying and calculating estimated costs of the NAP implementation. Also, participatory and consultative process of the new NAP development allowed identifying the sources of funding from donors through the extended GTG. As a result, the NAP became more feasible and has a smaller financial gap (30 % versus 90% in the previous NAP).

Lesson 6: individuals matter just as much as institutions

Leaders are one of the key success factors, laws are mostly secondary ones. Study visit proved to be effective in building champions and enabling authorities to 'see' and understand GRB in practice; to be cost-effective and relevant to the context, should focus at the regional level (added value as a regional project). High turnover can compromise these achievements.

Lesson 7: GRB can be promoted as an instrument of budget efficiency, rather than as philosophy of GEEW

Experiences have identified scope to talk more often about "Socially-inclusive budgeting" rather than GRB (because it is easier to understand and accept). Participatory budgeting is a valid entry point for this. Whilst pursuing such a strategy, however, UN Women staff note the importance of maintaining GRB as result-oriented approach for all GEWE programmatic interventions.

Innovations observed in the strategies of Regional Project countries and lessons from implementation of the project

1. INSTAT leading the regional initiative of publishing a Data book "Men and women in the region" to feed into regional knowledge base
2. Publically available the monitoring of each Ministry budget on their website
3. Subsidiary schemes for women and girls – proposal to assure funds for 2017
4. A collaboration with USAID on training MPs and building on the tool kit they developed was an important means of maximizing synergies and resources (and having less training but with greater impact in light of training fatigue)
5. More time and resources are needed to have a result (and follow-up on sectoral analysis) – invest in capacity building that responds to needs of budget users and decision makers and enables practical understanding through using/applying
6. Creating synergies with other UN entities (e.g. UNDP in Moldova)
7. Building on education and long term sustainability by introducing a GRB course into a university degree
8. Creating lobby groups among civil society organizations and grass-roots organizations at the local level
9. Focus group discussions and interviews with key stakeholders pointed out that assessing one program per Ministry/institution despite the changes it can create still constitutes a small contribution to the larger-scale GRB initiative at state level. An opportunity can be provided by requests to integrate multiple programs in one GRB statement which might have implications on the Methodology for monitoring GRB.
10. One of the biggest remaining challenges is to make the leap from adherence to the legal requirements to the change in the culture of the institutions which would probably require a higher political commitment for mainstreaming GRB.

CASE STUDIES

Albania

Case Study



Executive Summary – Key facts

<p>The policy environment – national policies and alignment with CEDAW, CSW and BPA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law on Gender Equality in Society (2008), • National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015-2020 (NSDI). • Public Finance Management Strategy (2014-2020)
<p>Summary of key contextual factors for advancing GRB (supporting and hindering factors) including politics, donors, and regional dynamics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Central Government (June 2013) and Administrative Reform – from 373 to 61 municipalities (in 2015) • Council of Ministers Decision no 465/2012
<p>The state of the women’s movement and the national women’s machinery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National women’s machinery as well as key CSO and gender experts have been capacitated to understand GRB. CSOs and individuals have acted as mentors to both local and central government institutions in mainstreaming GRB.
<p>Current national budgeting arrangements, agencies working on budget and/or decentralization reform and the national capacity for GRB. Key partners for the work. Coordination with other UN entities. Participation of CSOs in GRB.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of gender equality as core principle in the Budget Organic Law²³, • MoF is the main champion of GRB • UN Women main partner supporting GRB

²³ UN Women Independent Evaluation Office, Terms of Reference: Final Evaluation of UN Women’s GRB Work in the ECA Region.

<p>Legacy of prior work on GRB, including response to evaluation of Phase 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This phase of the project has built upon the previous one, including: • Technical assistance focused on building the capacity of the Ministry of Finance to lead and support the integration of gender into planning and budgeting processes, • Support continued to be provided to Mid-term Budget Programme (MTBP) to increase its capacity to monitor the results of GRB-supported sectors in the line ministries, • Co-operation with civil society and academia.
<p>Key design features of UN Women’s approach to GRB in the country (theories of change), and the coverage of the intervention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building capacity around GRB and gender at the government and civil society, at central and local levels • Embedding GRB in the Mid-term Budget Programme and circulars • At local level, GRB introduced through Participatory budgeting • Promoting greater availability, access and use of disaggregated data • Covering central level and 7 municipalities
<p>Adaptations to changing contexts and lessons during implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders are the key success factor, laws are the second ones. • Training means change of mindset, while legal frame means change of practices • High turnover can compromise the achievements • Awareness and trainings are crucial to understand GRB • The approval of the GRB in the organic Budget law meant unexpected work for the team (support in operationalizing protocols developing the law) • Participatory budgeting is a valid entry point • Talking about “Socially-inclusive budgeting” rather than GRB (easier to understand and accept). It slightly dilutes focus on women rights though. • Flexibility and adaptability key to respond to the new territorial reform. • Effects in the municipalities due to the reform: bigger population and territory, different needs of community. • Effects in the program: need for more actors to be trained
<p>Key achievements at the national level (policies, programmes, budgets)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieved significant results regarding programs and budgets. Outstanding (unexpected) changes in the legal framework. • GRB brought awareness about gender even beyond budgeting. • At central level good progress is done, still continuation is suggested. • Remarkable effects regarding the size of the project • Important synergies with other UNW programmes – innovative way of extending coverage. • Replication of good experiences from other countries. • Making use of UNW internal experience and know how. • Mainstreaming GRB through MTBP has become a priority for the MoF. (new organic budget law) • Increased interest by decision makers on GE (quota, accepting GRB).
<p>Evidence of sustainable changes in knowledge, capacity and practices from GRB interventions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Albania can offer a model on gender mainstreaming in participatory processes at local level • Political changes and high turnover of civil servants might threaten sustainability • At local level continuation of support associated with co-implementation of pilots is seen as most relevant strategy for long-term sustainability
<p>Examples and nature of instrumental outcomes at the municipal/local level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At local level women rights diluted into community new priorities (good tailoring of the regional program to the context)
<p>Any emerging evidence of (potential) contributions to transformation in gender relations at the individual, household, community or group level</p>	

Innovations in the strategy and lessons from implementation of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synergies from GRB and WEE (and GEF) programs • INSTAT leading the regional initiative of publishing a Data book “Men and women in the region” • Publically available the monitoring of each Ministry budget on their website • Subsidiary schemes for women and girls – proposal to assure funds for 2017 • 6million LEK dedicated grant allocated to women entrepreneurship. • Visualizing in campaigns as a way to reach out • Dedicated specific budgets for programmes analysed through the GRB project with gender lenses at national level
Key challenges, opportunities and options for the next steps in advancing GRB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy of continuity consolidating achievements (as it is planned) • Start designing the exit strategy (or at least talking about it), focusing on sustainability mechanisms • Special attention to rural areas, maybe the most suffering the administrative reform • Key attention to GRB massive training (maybe online?) and Stats mainstreaming • At national level, further exchange of experiences (at ministries, municipalities level) • Continuation of sharing at regional level about Albania’s interesting approach of participatory budget as entry point for GRB at local level

Key Quotes to Substantiate Findings

Source	Quote
Robert M. (NGO representative)	“The best results our support is the growing confidence of women and girls in themselves, demanding more every year and fighting for better services and greater representation in the local public institutions”
David S. (UN Women)	“Having the international expert as regional manager. It is like a magnifying effect. Seeing it from both national and international perspective. The exchange among countries is very good”
Rezart Xh. (UN Women)	“Inclusion of gender equality principle in the Budget Organic Law is the crucial impact of our project”
Mirela A. (reference group - NGO representative)	“Without UNW I believe that the government will not be so advance and the civil society organizations not so aware”
Gentian O. (Ministry of Finance)	“UNW provide a positive externality only by being there. Their role is what it should be a little bit of everything, a lot of TA and awareness raising. To push the envelope this is what they did and do properly. Their role has been very critical”

Narrative

Albania has been engaged in gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) both at national and local levels for about seven years. The intervention is unique and involve different stakeholder at national and local levels. Key legislative frameworks¹ which supported GRB implementation includes the Law on Gender Equality in Society (2008), inclusion of gender equality as core principle in the Budget Organic Law², Council of Ministers Decision no 465/2012 and the National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015-2020 (NSDI). The ownership of the process from Ministry of Finance has created a solid base for success so far, nevertheless to sustain the GRB interventions in all line ministries and local government units' continuation of the support is considered crucial. Local government unit's continuation of the support is considered crucial. The increased political support for gender equality has leveraged women representation in both national and local decision making bodies. as core principle in the Budget Organic Law, Council of Ministers Decision no 465/2012 and the National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015-2020 (NSDI). The ownership of the process from Ministry of Finance has created a solid base for success so far, nevertheless to sustain the GRB interventions in all line ministries and local government units' continuation of the support is considered crucial. Local government

unit's continuation of the support is considered crucial. The increased political support for gender equality has leveraged women representation in both national and local decision making bodies.

Mainstreaming of gender equality in National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015-2020 (NSDI), inclusion of gender equality principle in the Budget Organic Law as well as in the Law for Local Governance seems to be a very effective approach in promoting gender equality in Albania. The ownership of the process from Ministry of Finance has created a solid base for success so far.

The Albanian gender equality law³ regulates fundamental issues of gender equality in public life. In addition, it appeals for gender mainstreaming into all legislative and policy development initiatives at the central and local levels and commands implementation to be equally beneficial to men and women. This law paved the way for UN Women intervention with regard to gender mainstreaming and gender response budgeting as an innovative approach to promote and ensuring gender equality in policy and budgetary frameworks.

In December 2015 the Law on Organization and Functioning of Local Governance⁴ (Law No. 139/2015) recognized and reinforced the role of local government units in providing equal opportunities and services as well as targeted support for gender related interventions (articles 9, 24, 28). Beside this, with UN Women support, *gender equality became one of the main principles of the budgetary system* in Albania (Law no 57 date 02.06.2016)⁵. By this, gender equality was not only embedded at the national budgetary processes, but also strengthened its position in the mid-term budget process already promoted by the Ministry of Finance since 2014.

Unlike any of the countries part of this regional project, in Albania *the Ministry of Finance is championing the process* of GRB application, initiated with three medium term budget programme in 2013, to 19 national programs in 2015, being presented by 10 line ministries (with specific policy statement /financing/ targets/commitments to advance GE). As a result, USD 61 mln of public finance were allocated by state

24 1. A joint Instruction no. 21, date 21.06.2013 on "Procedures to mainstreaming gender issues in the MTBP", was endorsed by MoF and Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth the technical support of UN Women.

2. Ministry of Finance in close cooperation with UN Women, has successfully introduced the gender equality principle as part of the amendments made to the existing OBL in early June 2016. Law no 57 date 02.06.2016 "FOR SOME ADDINGS AND AMENDMENTS ON THE LAW NO.9936 DATED 26.06.2008 "ON MANAGEMENT OF BUDGETARY SYSTEM IN THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA (AMENDED)"

3. The permanent instructions for the Budget Programming and Monitoring that were issued by the Minister of Finance in early December 2016, have made GRB mandatory for all the budget institutions, as well as keeping gender based, disaggregated data, during the preparation of MTBP requests and in the monitoring and evaluation of the annual budget.

4. The new Law on Local Finances that is foreseen to be approved within January 2017 by the Parliament, is set to include gender equality as a core objective and also make GRB mandatory for all the local government units in the budget programming, monitoring and evaluation phases.

25 Law no 57/2016. On changes and amendments to the law no 9936, date 26.6.2008, "For Budget System Management in the Republic of Albania", amended.

3 Law on Gender Equality in Society, no.9970, date 24.07.2008

4 https://www.parlament.al/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ligj_nr_139_dt_17_12_2015_25082_1.pdf

5 http://www.qbz.gov.al/botime/fletore_zyrtare/2016/PDF-2016/115-2016.pdf

to about 19 budget programmes in 10 line ministries to render gender equitable services. The provision of UN Women long-term technical expertise to the Ministry of Finance, enabled continuous coaching and on the job training for specialist of line ministries, including budget planning and at the same time, support to MoF to scrutinize/guide line ministries as per the gender equality criteria of medium term budget programme (MTBP). This support is accompanied by regular trainings and concrete discussions during hearing processes between MoF and line ministries are steadily leading to the increase of national programs addressing gender inequalities. The UN Women support to MoF has enabled a mechanism of analysis and planning that provides dedicated specific budgets for programmes analysed through the GRB project with gender lenses at national level. In the Albanian program GRB is considered a *fiscal innovation* due to the application of gender lenses in MTBP process and have specific budget commitment by respective line ministries to the gender programmes.

Initiatives such as a) Social housing for widowed women (Ministry of Urban Development); b) Credit lines for women (Ministry of Economic Development, Trade, Entrepreneurship and Tourism); c) targeted programs for women offender (Ministry of Interior) d) promotion of women artists projects (Ministry of Culture), e) social housing for single parent families, abused women, etc (Ministry of Urban Development), f) training programs for women offender (Ministry of Justice), and g) Dedicated start up support for women entrepreneurs (Tirana Municipality) are proves of success.

Even though the upper mentioned acts are pivotal elements in institutionalizing the gender responsive budgeting in Albania, gender focal points in respective institutions are not fully functional and gender data are still lacking both at national and local levels.

Deficiency in sex disaggregated data that would lead to earmarked policies underpinned the program intervention in the Institute of Statistics (INSTAT). Both INSTAT and Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (MoSWY) were being supported in adopting EUROSTAT standards for disaggregated data by sex mostly at national level. This led to the improvement and enrichment of the INSTAT's annual publication "*Women and Men in Albania*" in 2014, 2015 and 2016¹

1 http://www.instat.gov.al/media/295842/femra_dhe_meshkuj_n_shqip_ri_2015.pdf

“UN Women supported INSTAT initiative to share this experience with seven other countries in SEE and assess the availability of data in other countries, assess the methodology and provide comparative analyses between countries and the situation of women and men in the region.

The presence of an in house regional GRB expert was reported to be both enlightening and effective way of sharing and learning from other experiences and challenges and find different solution.

Combined with the inclusion of GRB as a training curricula for the school of public administration (ASPRA), this competence cloud be decisive for the sustainability of know how provision among bureaucrats.

Albania can offer a model on gender mainstreaming in participatory processes at local level. Supporting participatory budgeting processes (requested by law) to give voice to the needs and priorities of women, youth, and marginalized groups which became part of public debate and then presented in the budget planning as an innovative way of implementing GRB. Cases from Fier, Vlora, Tirana, Saranda, Permet showed the strength of the tool, but at the same time the fragility of the process and its dependence on the good will of local leaders. The role of civil society organizations was deemed crucial in supporting the process, raising women and men interest in participating in the hearing process as well as pressurizing local government units and holding elected people for accountability. As reported by RM, one of the NGO representatives “*the best results our support is the growing confidence of women and girls in themselves, demanding more every year and fighting for better services and greater representation in the local public institutions*”

The support for reaching out local government units and progressing towards tailored participatory budgeting processes was jeopardized though by the administrative reform of 2015. The existing 373 Local Government Units were amalgamated and reorganized in only 61 larger ones, having not only multiple number of inhabitants, bigger geographical coverage, but also different typology of socio – economical problems.

The political rotation at local level in addition to newly raised priorities diminished the success of GRB. In cases like Fier, where historically, mayors have been very open towards participatory process, municipality stick to the commitment that up to **40%** of municipal

budget for social services goes to the priorities as addressed by citizens, women and men during the participatory budgeting.

In other cases, like Përmet and Këlcyrë the political interest shifted to infrastructure and development oriented projects.

The exchange platform among the 4 engaged NGOs was perceived inventive in multifold: first it served as the fora for the capacity building of involved activists, secondly, it proved to be a good and efficient way of

sharing and learning from each other experiences and thirdly it highlighted the need for original and novel approaches to imply GRB.

Last but not least, replicating the Bosnian experience in including GRB approach in academia was reported to be eye opener for the engaged academics and universities. Even though the process is in its early stages, focused approach in three universities and in last two years, and few courses are being provided, it seems to be interest by both academic body and students.

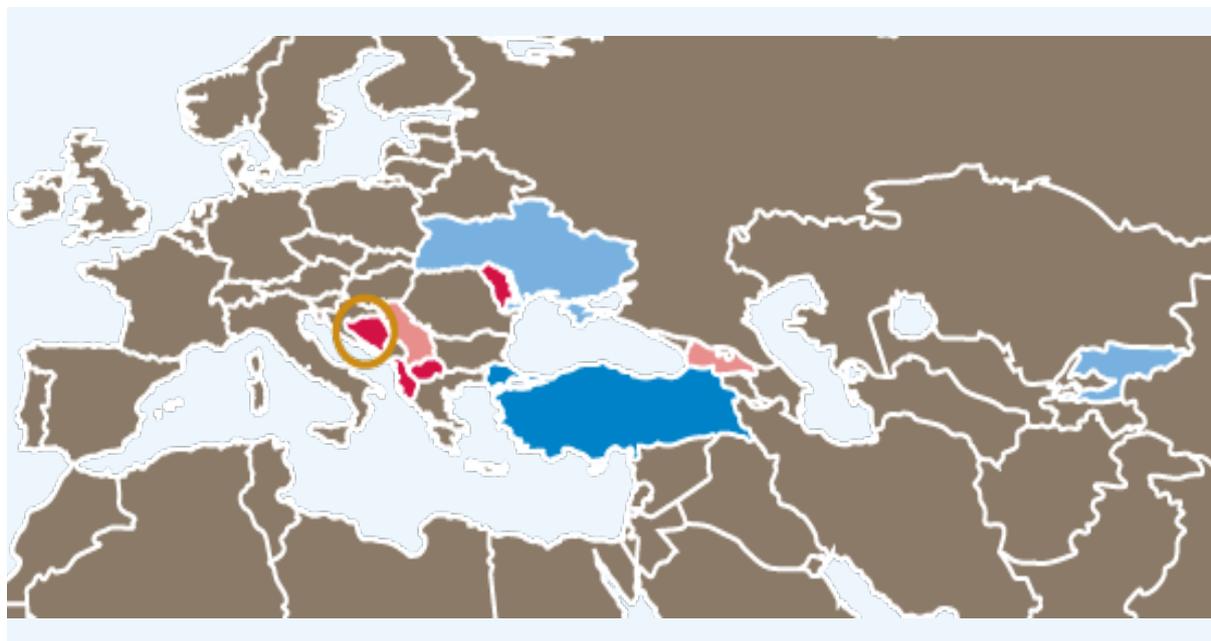
RECOMMENDATION

National Action Plans on violence against women should:

- Early stages of the mainstreaming from the MoF to other ministries and local level. “To go all the way down, we need as much support as possible” (M)
- Supporting knowledge and skills creation by continuous training is decisive for the sustainability. A ToT for ASPRA staff could be a mean for that.
- Gender disaggregated data should be institutionalized for gender and equity budgeting activities
- Continuation of sharing at regional level about Albania’s interesting approach of participatory budget as entry point for GRB at local level
- Continuous and higher support for the NGO campaigns and work associated with seed money for GRB related community project is crucial for both acceptability of the process and its sustainability
- Stimulation of students’ research and thesis on GRB and gender equality.
- Ongoing advocacy and lobbying with policy makers in all levels is a must to ensure GRB is institutionalized

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Case Study



Executive Summary – Key facts

<p>The policy environment – national policies and alignment with CEDAW, CSW and BPA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beijing Declaration 1995 • EU Resolution “Gender Budgeting: Building Public Budgets with Gender Perspective” (A5-0214/2003) • CEDAW recommendations for BiH: generally supported except for CEDAW recommendation related to harmonization of GEMS – a more coordinated approach is needed for future work (rather than a separate approach to and with each institute) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National/Entity level strategies: - State level: Aligned with State BiH GAP (2013-2017) - FBiH level: Aligned with Plan for Introduction of GRB - RS: Aligned with RS National Action Plan on the situation of rural women
<p>Summary of key contextual factors for advancing GRB (supporting and hindering factors) including politics, donors, and regional dynamics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The delayed roll out of PBB has influenced the ability of MPs to monitor and provide oversight of GRB (only able to examine line budgets; not able to look at gender-related allocations and expenditures); • Additional resources are needed to provide follow-up and provide ‘learning by doing’ support – going step by step through gender analysis process, Despite the fact that there were only two trainings for MPs and one study visit, the project was able to build important knowledge and strong champions and will for GRB (BiH GE/Budget Commission Chairs)
<p>The state of the women’s movement and the national women’s machinery</p>	

<p>Current national budgeting arrangements, agencies working on budget and/or decentralization reform and the national capacity for GRB. Key partners for the work. Coordination with other UN entities. Participation of CSOs in GRB.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutionalisation of GRB supported through involvement of MOFs and regulations/instructions that mandate all budget users to comply with having gender in their budgets
<p>Legacy of prior work on GRB, including response to evaluation of Phase 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targets were realistic but not enough resources are provided and deadlines were unrealistic – full PBB is being rolled out in 2017 and that is the time to intensify GRB analysis and work with MPs • Project Coordinator effectively measured results achieved but reporting toward Regional PM was cumbersome hindering project efficiency • Project management structure was inefficient <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o CO was not involved enough in the design phase o Project Coordinator was hired as a part-time position, which was not manageable given the workload • Inefficient communication between Regional PM and CO - delayed communication with up to two weeks wait period for simple contract approval which negatively impacted project dynamics • Unequal focus on countries included in the project – no focus given to BiH which was largely influenced by the placement of Regional PM • Regional PM – not involved enough in resource mobilization
<p>Key design features of UN Women's approach to GRB in the country (theories of change), and the coverage of the intervention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministries of Finance were the right entry point for GRB when the project was designed; however, due to delayed implementation of Program Budgeting, the project could only influence the planning process (not all phases of GRB set out in the outcomes)
<p>Adaptations to changing contexts and lessons during implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study visit proved to be effective in building champions and enabling authorities to 'see' and understand GRB in practice; to be cost-effective and relevant to the context, should focus at the regional level (added value as a regional project) – Albania held up as a good practice • Having the project as a regional one has important fundraising implications (easier to fundraise at a regional level) • ZELS through their GRB web platform is hosting a regional blog where GRB practitioners can share their examples, work etc. of their work in the region. The web is in English, Macedonian and Albanian language • Not enough knowledge sharing between countries and project staff. More opportunities needed for this and increased budget funds required to support this (i.e. annual meeting/experience sharing meeting with country project staff)
<p>Key achievements at the national level (policies, programmes, budgets)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PBB was the entry point for introducing GRB, which proved to be a good systemic solution / foundation for further development; thus, GRB has been institutionalized in MoFs (State and entity level) and is fully embedded in the budget preparation process (GE and GRB instructions provided to all budget users as part of budget instructions during the budget preparation phase) • Additional capacities are needed in order to ensure better application of GRB tools, as well as ensure translation of GE policies to budgets; specifically, support is needed in the work with budget users – understanding of each sector/budget user and GE needs and their translation into budget requests/budget user programs, as well as with MPs to increase analysis and monitoring capacities • In order to institutionalize GRB, a critical target group is staff in the MOF responsible for leading and advising budget users (ex: RC recommendations)
<p>Evidence of sustainable changes in knowledge, capacity and practices from GRB interventions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacities increased in terms of understanding how GRB is used as a tool to translate GE policies into implementation via budgets, and at which point and how can they get involved in the process of budget cycle

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The added value of the regional nature of the project was less evident for BiH in phase II • A very limited amount of the overall budget was spent on regional activities during phase II • There is a need to articulate what a regional programme is – reporting vs. technical and substantive cooperation • Exchange of knowledge helped in terms of understanding challenges faced and replicating some of the good practices – especially recognized by MoF • Expert from RS ministry of agriculture sent to FYR Macedonia to help with their rural women strategy/GRB approach • Many actors had no knowledge of the regional events and regional cooperation as such • Exchange with BL MoF – helped energize GRB commitment, facilitate exchange and open up communication
<p>Examples and nature of instrumental outcomes at the municipal/local level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the local level, raised awareness and capacity were achieved and in some instances institutionalised, but to ensure alignment with entity/state level priorities, the GC should be a more strategic entry point for GRB implementation • Organisation in some municipalities demonstrated interest and ability to influence budget preparation process and advocate for changes in budget distribution (Bratunac Municipality)
<p>Any emerging evidence of (potential) contributions to transformation in gender relations at the individual, household, community or group level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project focused on needs of unemployed, rural women through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Focus on agriculture/employment sectors in FBiH ◦ RS AP on Rural Women ◦ Focus on SMEs, crafts and agriculture at local/municipal level • Using sports as an entry point for GRB at the local level was aligned with locally identified priorities but less strategic in terms of addressing target groups of women and overarching project aims • The project contributed to rural, unemployed and economically inactive women at the local/municipal level. Few examples are provided below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Municipality of Bratunac was introduced to the GRB tool and methodology for analysis and implementation of measures through the budget; the GRB working group conducted the gender analysis of agriculture sector which pointed to numerous inequalities between men and women in terms of budget spending; in order to address the needs of rural unemployed women, financial incentives were placed in the budget in order to encourage women-owned agro production – contributing to economic empowerment. “The UN Women intervention contributed to analyzing the budget as a tool for gender equality, and ensuring its distribution in line with actual citizen needs and municipal development strategy”. • City of Siroki Brijeg was introduced to the GRB tool and methodology for analysis and implementation of measures through the budget; based on the citizen demand – given the large number of labor active unemployed women, they conducted a GRB analysis in the sector of small businesses and crafts, which alluded to gender inequalities. Based on the results, they developed incentives for crafts creation / women owned and led small businesses in order to encourage employment and economic empowerment.
<p>Innovations in the strategy and lessons from implementation of the project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The collaboration with USAID on training MPs and building on the tool kit they developed was an important means of maximizing synergies and resources (and having less training but with greater impact in light of training fatigue) • More time and resources are needed to have a result (and follow-up on sectoral analysis) – invest in capacity building that responds to needs of budget users and decision makers and enables practical understanding through using/applying (ex: of how GM understanding has evolved)

Key challenges, opportunities and options for the next steps in advancing GRB

Challenges - Internal UNW

- Project resource shortages
- Project Coordinator was hired as a part-time position – this was not optimal given the workload
- Staff turnover (resignation of project coordinator)
- Future uncertainty of funding
- Rigidity/not enough flexibility first phase was broad and the approach was accompanied by more resource
- country complexity – 3 MoFs, 3 Parliaments, 3 GE Agencies
- Not enough focus on BiH – influenced by placement of Regional PM; need for equal focus across all implementing countries
- Regional project management structure should be strategically placed (in a strategic location to serve regional needs) Management structure should be different – being part of a regional project was an obstacle for BiH CO (different from phase 1) – it appeared that BiH is not a priority, delayed approvals negatively affected project dynamics, cumbersome reporting hindered efficiency
- Regional PM – not involved enough in resource mobilization – needs to be more engaged with this
- Assessment and communication of project results was insufficient (hampered knowledge exchange and sharing between project staff). More opportunities needed for country project staff to meet (otherwise no added value as a regional project)
- Countries not involved enough in project design – outcomes were determined by Regional PM and then sent to countries (participatory planning/design meeting needed)
- Roll-out of the regional UNW architecture affected project performance - Creation of CO – took time and created vacuum

Challenges - External

- Complex layers of government – over 150 governments and budgets, constantly working with 3 MOF, 3 Parliaments and 3 GE Agencies – not enough capacity to engage at cantonal level due to resource shortage, incremental municipal involvement – not enough capacities to engage with all municipalities
- Delayed roll-out of PBB/GRB
- Lack of prioritization given to gender in BiH because of political context, although it will have to be in focus because of the Reform Agenda
- Lack of GRB experts with economic/budget knowledge
- Expertise needed when it comes to practical application of gender budgeting
- Gender data gap continues to exist
- Civil society organizations are often not capacitated to perform watchdog role and engage in advocacy towards ensuring gender mainstreaming and government accountability with respect to GRB process
- Cooperation among donors/international organizations is still insufficient

Opportunities

- Full PBB rollout is expected in 2017 – GRB support is needed during this process
- Given the fact that there are important PFM reforms ongoing in the country, including full transition to PBB, there is a unique opportunity for inclusion of gender perspectives in budgeting frameworks and tools, making it scalable and sustainable.
- There are ample opportunities for developing partnerships between policy and budget makers, CSOs and international organizations for addressing specific GRB challenges and working toward reducing gender gaps

Sustainability

- By focusing on putting in place regulatory frameworks, the project contributed towards sustainability of GRB; example of this is inclusion of gender perspective in the process of budget preparation (specific GE instruction given to budget users at State and entity level)
- Given that PB is implemented only in budget preparatory phase, rather than its implementation, monitoring and evaluation, it is necessary to invest further in order to ensure successful implementation and sustainability
- Additional buy-in is needed from various institutions, although perception about GRB and gender has changed significantly over last three years
- Additional capacity building is necessary within key executive and legislative bodies – government ministries/budget users and MPs; specific skills and support is needed to apply GRB knowledge and GRB tools in the process of analysis, budget preparation and watchdog function
- In municipalities involved in the project, important certain results were achieved and sustainability is likely; developed and adopted the Gender Action Plans are being part of the budget preparation process; it is also likely that further gender sensitive policy and budget planning will continue with little technical support needed; in some municipalities, criteria has been adopted to ensure women needs are met (Lukavac Municipality); ‘Sustainability is always better positioned when the services provided are demand driven – as was the case in Lukavac Municipality’ (OSCE Field Coordinator),
- Turnover of MPs always poses a challenge in terms of continuity of GRB initiative and its applicability

Municipal elections could hamper sustainability along with turnover of MPS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Management

- Have country specific outputs according to the country reality
- Knowledge products – distilled documentation package and tool kit needed to maximize regional value of project and promote exchange of knowledge and experience between project and wider ECA countries
- Identify added value of project and then invest accordingly
- Consistent project management structure and approach across countries
- Similar budget and prioritization across countries needed
- Regional PM should not be in charge of asymmetric project delivery
- Who supports GRB in RO? This needs to be clear and in place. RO advisors – limited capacity and their role unclear to provide strategic oversight.
- Thematic linkages should be at a country level
- Equal focus and support is needed across all implementing countries
- Regional PM should be strategically placed – in COs that have support and PM will not be filling in other functions, primary focus of PM should be management of the project and resource mobilization

Management

- Have country specific outputs according to the country reality

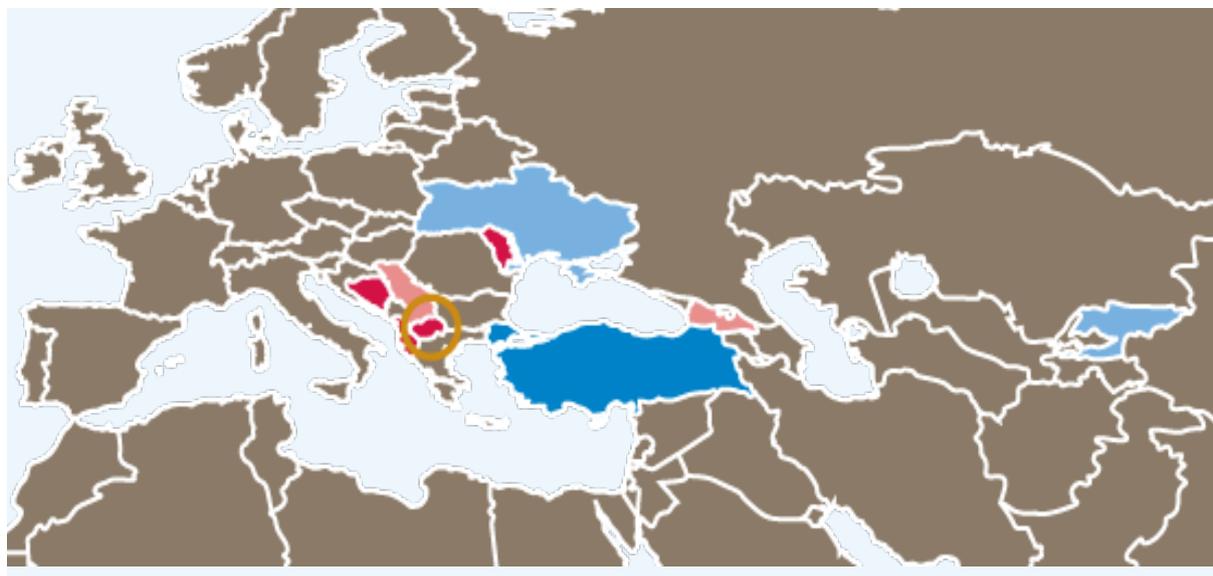
- Knowledge management is necessary – including a platform that systemizes all created documents/knowledge
- All stakeholders should be involved and consulted during the project design phase – to secure adequate design, targets, and ensure buy-in; this includes UNW as well as external stakeholders

Technical areas:

- Additional capacities are needed to ensure GRB implementation; at state and entity level, support is needed to enable GRB implementation through budget users – system is in place but budget users need to be further capacitated to engage in this area
- Pool of GRB experts needs to be increased and utilized – experts need to have economic background and profound budget understanding as well as gender understanding, rather than just theoretical gender background that cannot be applied in the current schema of GRB
 - o Capacities needed to advocate for inclusion of specific issues in the budget – CSOs need to increase capacities related to budget cycle, understanding of budget, and application of GRB, technical assistance understanding program budgeting / results oriented budgeting and linking gender as part of gender responsive budgeting process
- Additional technical assistance is required for further gender budget analysis and recommendations with action plan for improvements of the selected sectors/ programs in order to promote and support gender equality in specific areas.
 - o Technical assistance to carry out budget analysis, understanding GE OVIs, and performing regular gender analysis in order to assess the OVIs, collection of gender segregated data
 - o Technical assistance is needed to ensure more in depth gender analysis where this initial budget gender analysis demonstrated significant gaps – in order to understand the underlining causes of inequality
- Technical assistance in ensuring that MPs understand the budget cycle and all the points where GE can be introduced through GRB (including legislative framework for budget cycle – preparation, implementation, and monitoring) and skills to carry out specific gender analysis of budget users. MPs need to be involved in the whole budgetary process – preparation, implementation and monitoring, including the involvement during the program budgeting steps (budget in 10/11 steps).
- Gender Centers should be used as resource in the process of GRB and accompanying analysis; requests need to be concrete given the limited resources Gender Centers have.

FYR Macedonia

Case Study



Executive Summary – Key facts

<p>The policy environment – national policies and alignment with CEDAW, CSW and BPA</p>	<p>In Macedonia, several key policy documents have been adopted setting the base for GRB interventions. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>the National Strategy for Equality and Non-discrimination (2016-2010)</i> - <i>the Strategy for Gender Equality (2012–2020) and consequent national action plans,</i> - <i>the amended Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (2012)</i> - <i>the Government Strategy for the Introduction of Gender-Responsive Budgeting (2012–2017),</i> - <i>the Methodology for GRB for central level government institutions (2014)</i> - <i>CEDAW report 2013.</i>
<p>Summary of key contextual factors for advancing GRB (supporting and hindering factors) including politics, donors, and regional dynamics</p>	<p>The political tensions from the last two years which culminated with the leaked intercepted communications and consequent Przino agreement in 2016 placed GRB and many other gender relevant issues at the bottom of the political agenda. Even women MPs who are very much supportive of the topic cannot provide political commitment within their political parties for pushing forwards the issue. The political divides are such that even women MP's club is not functioning and cannot be used for advocating.</p> <p>Data (un)availability is also an important factor that hinders analysis necessary for implementing GRB practices and monitoring change.</p>

	<p>On the positive side, many policy changes have taken place (laws, strategies, action plans) but have not yet been effectuated in order to be able to show direct effect of GRB. Still these represent the main basis for placing GRB on the political map. Trained CSOs and individuals (experts) show capacity to implement GRB on their own or with other funding. UN Women are seen as a forerunner in GRB in the region positioning them as key player in all GRB related actions. Other donors have complemented ideas, actions started by UN Women even if still on a low-scale.</p>
<p>The state of the women's movement and the national women's machinery</p>	<p>The National women's machinery as well as key CSO and gender experts have been capacitated and have the skills to lead GRB. CSOs and individuals have acted as mentors to both local and central government institutions in mainstreaming GRB. The Ministry of labour and social policy also has been capacitated for GRB and has coordinated work of other Ministries for mainstreaming GRB in selected programs.</p>
<p>Current national budgeting arrangements, agencies working on budget and/or decentralization reform and the national capacity for GRB. Key partners for the work. Coordination with other UN entities. Participation of CSOs in GRB.</p>	<p>FYR Macedonia has mix of line and performance budget</p>
<p>Legacy of prior work on GRB, including response to evaluation of Phase 1</p>	<p>This phase of the project has built upon the previous one and included the recommendations from its evaluation findings. In that context the following has been undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance focused on building the capacity of the Ministry of Finance to lead and support the integration of gender into planning and budgeting processes into the five pilot ministries, • Organization of high-level study tours continued as way to establish "buy in" to GRB concepts • Support continued to be provided to MLSP to increase its capacity to monitor the results of GRB-supported sectors in the pilot ministries, • Co-operation with parliament also continued in the ways it was possible, including through building the capacities of the Parliamentary Institute.
<p>Key design features of UN Women's approach to GRB in the country (theories of change), and the coverage of the intervention.</p>	<p>The intervention covered both national and local level and focused on analysis of sectoral programs, capacity building and regional exchange. All sector' analyses were followed by direct interventions and introduction of gender specific measures, for example out of 10 pilot municipalities 7 have amended their sectoral local programmes and introduced gender measures (12 local programmes in total were engendered)</p>
<p>Adaptations to changing contexts and lessons during implementation</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Key achievements at the national level (policies, programmes, budgets)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 line ministries analysed their programmes from a gender perspective and developed output indicators and submitted gender budget statements to MoF; • Programs in 10 municipalities analysed using GRB methodology and adequately aligned; • Public administration staff capacitated for GRB analysis; • Increased capacity of CSOs on Budget literacy and monitoring, Advocacy, networking and gender watch dog
<p>Evidence of sustainable changes in knowledge, capacity and practices from GRB interventions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public administration staff at both local and national level has increased knowledge on the GRB concept and methodology for analysis; • CSOs are capacitated and undertake watchdog role for GRB; • An informal network of mentors/experts for GRB exists and can be utilized by different stakeholders;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZELS and NALAS have included gender equality in their strategic documents and approaches (e.g. ZELS action plan, NALAS e-module); • NALAS adapted a policy position paper on gender equality at local level, they introduce gender indicators to their fiscal decentralisation monitoring work and add it separate chapter on gender. • ZELS initiated the process of developing on action plan on Gender Equality of their organisation. • Parliamentary institute has been capacitated in GRB and can support MPs with necessary analysis in this regard; • Study tours have increased understanding of concept for GRB and ensured increased “buy-in” of public officials.
<p>Examples and nature of instrumental outcomes at the municipal/local level</p>	<p>Out of 10 pilot municipalities 7 of them have amended their sectoral local programmes and introduced gender measures (12 local programmes in total were engendered). Additionally 5 municipalities have developed local strategies on GE out of which 3 have been adopted by Municipal Council with specific budget allocation.</p>
<p>Any emerging evidence of (potential) contributions to transformation in gender relations at the individual, household, community or group level</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Innovations in the strategy and lessons from implementation of the project</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Key challenges, opportunities and options for the next steps in advancing GRB</p>	<p>Key challenge continues to be the political commitment to GRB which is declarative rather than essential. The legal instruments that are in place provide a good basis for mainstreaming GRB however the organizational culture within state institution which is based on adherence to legal obligations does not enable for significant changes in culture. As a result direct community impact in terms of improving the life of men and women is difficult to attain at this point. Linked to this are other challenges such as lack of gender disaggregated data, role and position of equal opportunities coordinators within institutions, role of MOF and MLSP, role of MPs etc.</p> <p>The coverage which the project has achieved by including numerous actors from different levels and sectors provides the opportunity for sustaining the GRB process however without additional push by political leadership cannot develop. At the same time it is not clear who can provide this leadership. Usually it takes one knowledgeable and motivated individual in a position to influence decision-makers to make a change.</p> <p>Other aspects in terms of sustainability relate to refining the system with GRB indicators to be required within the budget circular template and not only in the guidelines, spreading the GRB analysis to all ministries and programs, integrating multiple programs in one GRB statement, case-studies to be developed from the existing and forthcoming analyses to show direct impact on people’s lives and thus raise awareness, UN to have a more unison voice in the country in terms of GRB commitments regardless of projects/ funding issues.</p>

Good Practice Examples/Case Studies

Amendments to the budget circular: merging finances with women's health

The induction of Gender responsive budgeting as a strategy for achieving more just policies in FYR Macedonia has been embedded firstly in the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, as well as in the Strategy on Gender Equality, strategic document of the Government, which provided activities to promote gender equality. Following the adoption of the Strategy, UN Women has supported the first pilot, gender budget analysis of active employment policies and social protection in 2009.

Lately, with a support of UN Women a Strategy on Gender Responsive Budgeting 2012-2017 year, was developed and adopted with the main focus on three strategic areas: 1) the introduction of a gender perspective in the programs and budgets of budget users at central and local level, 2) improving the legal framework for inclusion gender-responsive budgeting, and 3) strengthening the institutional mechanisms and capacity building required for gender mainstreaming in the creation of policies and programs and corresponding budgets.

At a regional level, support for gender responsive policies, programming and budgets has been a focus of UN Women's work since 2006. Stronger focus on GRB in Macedonia was provided with the project implemented between 2011 and 2013 "Promoting Gender Responsive Policies in South East Europe" which aimed at improving individual and collective capacities of governmental institutions, CSOs and parliamentarians in South East Europe (with particular focus on BiH, Albania and FYR Macedonia) on utilizing gender responsive budgeting as a tool to promote, implement and monitor policies and programmes in the employment and labour, social protection and social assistance and rural development sectors. During this phase emphasis was placed on capacity building especially increasing the level of knowledge of civil servants on GRB, establishment of dialogue between civil society organizations, government institutions and MPs and regional networking. In this regard, only two programs were analyzed, one located within the Ministry of Labour and social policy and another in the Ministry of agriculture. Despite good practices and concrete results the general impression of participants involved in the process of GRB at that time was that there is lack of high level GRB champions such

as the Ministry of Finance and/or General Secretariat and the absence of a program based budgeting which makes it difficult to identify entry points as well as the challenging political environment.

Based on the findings and recommendations from the previous phase UN Women in Macedonia acknowledged the need to strengthen their focus at national level by engaging with partners aside from the traditional gender machinery such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. This Ministry, as a central government institution that leads the GRB process, continued to be supported in the role of main coordinator of processes thus continuing to be capacitated for monitoring the results of GRB-supported sectors in the pilot ministries.

Introducing Participatory Budgeting in Ministry of Finance and Health

The Ministry of Finance manages public finances and aims to reach a higher economic growth and improve lives of citizens in Macedonia. As an institution it envisages to strengthen functional market economy based on knowledge, innovation and sustainable development. Within its structure, Treasury is one of the key sectors responsible for managing the funds of all state institutions which also includes monitoring of budget spending. Also the perception of the power which one or another institution holds is no less important than the actual one it has, because these perceptions will impact the activity of the other institutions, as has been confirmed in other cases. The Ministry of Finance is considered as one of the most powerful institutions that can impact others and urge them to make room for gender perspectives in public policies and strategic process.

One of the major achievements of the GRB in the previous project period was the amendment of the budget circular to include gender responsive indicators for state institutions. In the period 2013-2016 UN Women started the next phase of GRB introducing new dimension to the process by making full use of partnership with Ministry of Finance as well as with five other line ministries in order to access their programs and build their expertise.

In the beginning of the process with the support of UN Women, ministry administrative officials were provided with capacity building trainings on gender responsible policy making and budgeting in order to improve capacities of newly engaged civil servants in

the initiative of Gender Responsible Budgeting from a variety of state institutions and other governmental bodies (Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and Employment Agency of the FYR Macedonia; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Culture and Ministry for Information Society). The aim of the training was to explain gender mainstreaming and budgetary process as essential tool for improved and gender aware public policies. Since the trainees were representatives of institutions that would be developing the gender specific budget statement and initiating actions in line with the gender equality policy approach, the training was designed to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills for the approach. The same group was also trained in gender policy monitoring and evaluation in order to understanding of the processes of monitoring and evaluation of programs subject of gender budget analysis and reporting on progress. It was also a possibility to learn from the current practices in the pilot phase in order to improve the process further.

Additionally, the ministries benefited from this support by contracting (through UN Women) experienced and previously trained experts (mostly from civil society organizations) to act as mentors and guide them through the gender analysis of selected programs within their institutions. This approach helped to identify bottlenecks with regards to the financial implications of some of the programs and the data requirements.

The mentorship was central to the entire process and lasted almost 6 months. The briefing sessions initially covered aspects such as GRB concepts and EU good practices in this regard as well as review of current activities on GRB central government institutions and the role of the Ministry of Finance. Further the sessions delved deeper into the practical case on the programs selected for analysis in each line ministry. Even though the mentor officially had three briefing sessions she was available for additional support and all ministries praised her and this approach.

In order to emphasize the importance of the GRB process and ensure smooth implementation as well as to the guarantee the process the Government adopted a mandatory “Methodology for Gender Responsive Budgeting” as a guiding principle for achieving gender equality and promoting a more in-depth understanding of the GRB process. In addition a “Manual on GRB”

for state administration, has been developed which explains the importance and the process in setting gender based priorities and objectives, provides examples on financial implications of policies based on gender analysis and emphasis the importance of measuring achievements through appropriate gender based indicators.

The approach was finalized with eight out of the ten pilot ministries/institutions developing and submitting Gender Budget statements to the Ministry of Finance as well as assessing the progress using the gender indicators developed for their programs.

From analysis to improved women’s health

An illustrative example of direct impact of GRB strategies is the Ministry of Health and the analysis of its Program for early detection of malignant diseases in the FYR Macedonia. Within the Ministry the Sector for preventive health protection and the Sector for secondary and tertiary health protection were included in the process of mentoring with 4 staff trained and mentored for the GRB approach.

Within the Gender Equality Strategy health is one of the specific strategic areas and improvement of the health of women and men in Macedonia as well as the increasing of quality and accessibility of health services is an important issue for citizens of the country.

Cervical cancer is one of the most frequent malignant diseases in the world covering 10% of all tumors. Globally, cervical cancer is 12th by incidence and 5th by mortality rate among women. Around 16 per 100.000 women get ill and around 9 of 100.000 women die. There are around 490.000 newly registered cases of this type of cancer annually. Over 80% of cases ending in death are registered in the developing countries.

The Macedonian Ministry of Health follows the trends from the developing countries regarding reproductive health. In this context, the Ministry of Health on the basis of a Government decision developed the Program for early detection of malignant diseases which includes activities for cervical cancer prevention. The general aim of these programs is decreasing the incidence and mortality of women from cervical cancer via preventive activities at institutional level. This includes detecting persons with a pathology or in early stages of the illness when there are still no symptoms.

Malignant diseases are the leading cause of death in Macedonia followed by cardiovascular diseases. For the purpose of early detection and appropriate treatment, the Ministry of Health undertakes continuous activities to raise awareness among the population about the need for preventive checkups and healthy lifestyle. Cervical cancer is the leading cause of death in women, with more than 290 women diagnosed annually out of which 47 women do not survive.

The socio-economic implications of malignant diseases are many and the not only refer to high mortality rate but also to costly diagnostics and lengthy expensive treatment, disability, premature death, deteriorated quality of life of patients and psychosocial effects on the extended family of patients.

Ministry of Health selected the Program for early detection of malignant diseases in the FYR Macedonia to undergo a gender budget analysis. The program includes screening for cervical cancer and opportunistic screening for colorectal cancer as well as screening of breast cancer.

Calculations based on the period 2000-2010 estimate the rate newly-registered cases of cervical cancer as 23.9 on 100.000 citizens. The rate of newly-registered cases of colorectal cancer is 22.5 to 27.9 on 100.000 citizens.

The death rate of these malignant diseases can be prevented in 40% of the cases by decreasing risk factors, early detection and adequate treatment. For all three types of cancer there is a possibility for early detection and consequently for timely treatment. As a result the program envisages adequate screening tests for men and women for colorectal cancer on the territory of the whole country, screening for women on cervical cancer as well as screenings for breast cancer for women aged 49 to 60 years of age in four municipalities (Strumica, Veles, Struga and Vevcani). Until 2014 the number of women included in the preventive screening was 36% of the targeted population. This low number of women covered with the screening was attributed to the low interest of the women to participate resulting from poor information and awareness. However the, analysis of the program revealed that the targeted age group was not the adequate for detecting illness since cancer is attacking much younger women. For that purpose a change was made in the Program to increase the age group and include also women from the age group 36 to 48 years of age.

The screenings took place in the 10 Public Health Centres, located in 10 different cities of the country in the period 01.01.2014 to 01.12.2014.

Monitoring of the program implementation has shown that in this period 41.542 women from a total of 150.736 women who fall within the group for screening and in these age groups (36-48 and 49-60) which in 2013 did not undertake PAP test were invited for screening.

From the invited 41.542 women invitations were returned from 2.9% (1.201) for various reasons. The lowest percentage of returned invitations (0.4%) are from the Public Health Centers in Ohrid and Gostivar and the highest of 6.6% from the Public Health Center in Veles. The percentage of women who received the invitation is 97.1%, and of those 34.9% did not attend the screening. The largest percent of those that received an invitation but did not appear for screening was in the Public Health Center in Veles (68.5%).

As a result in 2014, 26.260 women have been screened which is 63.2% of those that were invited and 65% of those that received the invitation. PAP tests have been made for more than 50% of the women showing up for screening, cytological analysis have been made for 58.3% of the invited women and 92.2% of screened ones. From the cytological analysis in 3.8% of cases epithelial cell abnormalities have been noted.

Out of the total number of women in Macedonia in the age range 49-60 150.736 as well as those in the age range 36-48 who in 2013 did not undergo PAP test, in 2014 with the screening were included 17.4%. (age range 49-60).

The index for number of PAP tests performed for the period 2010-2014 in the country is 149.3 which means that there is an increase in 2014 in the number of PAP tests performed as compared to 2012 for 49.3% while compared to 2013 the increase is 27.5 index points.

The increased number of performed PAP tests means an increased coverage of cervical cancer screening.

Additionally, Ministry of Health is establishing a registry of cancer screening for cervical cancer in the country, through the development of software to quickly and accurately enter data required to obtain adequate checks and reports. This in turn will enable unification of the data collection and recording for patients with cervical cancer.

Lessons learned and New Challenges

Focus group discussions and interviews with key stakeholders pointed out that assessing one program per Ministry/institution despite the changes it can create still constitutes a small contribution to the larger-scale GRB initiative at state level. An opportunity can be provided by requests to integrate multiple programs in one GRB statement which might have implications on the Methodology for monitoring GRB.

Part of the training which refers to Methodology of GRB and in which institutions made an outline of the GRB statements, based on the policy instruments makes the approach more explicable and easy to implement. However, institutions will need further guidance, support in preparation of GRB statements. In this context, it is evident that the GRB indicators as requirement are not included in the format for the budget circular but rather in the guidelines for its preparation. It would be easier if they were included in the format itself. In addition, it was noted that the Ministry of Finance only technically checks that the GRB indicators are included in the budget statement of the ministries (institutions) while the analytical assessment is conducted by the MLSP which is monitoring the GRB process.

One of the biggest remaining challenges is to make the leap from adherence to the legal requirements to the change in the culture of the institutions which would probably require a higher political commitment for mainstreaming GRB.

Creating Synergies

An important factor that is beneficial for the project and increases its achievements is the establishing of synergies with other donors either directly or indirectly by sharing resources.

The evaluation noted at least two such examples:

- One example is the decision to work with NALAS, a regional umbrella organization serving the local governments associations in around 16 countries. GIZ which is providing institutional support to NALAS has acknowledged the importance of gender equality and GRB in that context and provided support to NALAS for as developing a gender equality e-course for local government officials. It is also assisting NALAS in mainstreaming gender institutionally with elaborating policies and efforts to improve gender equality at local

level and committing to statutory reform to reflect this commitment.

- Another example relates to the Municipality of Bogovinje and its commitment to gender equality. In that context the municipality has identified two distinct groups of disadvantaged citizens being youth and women who have the highest unemployment rate in the municipality. In order to alleviate the situation within the local economic development and in line with their commitment to gender equality they have established a fund together with USAID and a private company which provides grants to women who want to set-up their business. They have complemented the initiative with additional funds from EU by setting up a business incubator within the municipality also led by women and providing support to potential entrepreneurs.

Moldova

Case Study



Executive Summary – Key facts

The policy environment – national policies and alignment with CEDAW, CSW and BPA

Budgetary policy:

Government policy and strategic planning context are beneficial to the implementation of GRB in financial planning.

Since 2011 Moldova introduced Program-based budgetary planning, which builds on performance based budgeting.

The New Public Finance Law and fiscal responsibilities has been approved on 1.01.2016. The Law contains the Methodological Framework for budget elaboration, approval, executing and reporting.

Still, there is no emphasis on GRB or HR approach to budgetary process in the document.

Gender Equality:

Law Nr.45/01.03.2007 on prevention and combating domestic violence

Law Nr. 121/25.02.2012 on ensuring equality

Law Nr.5/09.02.2006 on Ensuring the Equality between Women and Men
National Programme for gender equality for 2010-2015 and Plans of Action (2013-2015 the latest)

A new Strategy on Ensuring gender Equality is being developed at the moment.

GE policies are in line with CEDAW, CSW and BPA. Still, in the majority of the cases, GE policies do not have budgetary support and are implemented with the support of international partners, UN Women being the most present in promoting and contributing to GE in Moldova. Rarely, other institutions mainstreamed gender into development strategies (Strategy of Culture, Strategy of Diaspora have dedicated programs for women)

<p>Summary of key contextual factors for advancing GRB (supporting and hindering factors) including politics, donors, and regional dynamics</p>	<p>Series of reforms have been initiated across the Government, including GE and HR approach to policy making. The implementation of EU Association Agreement Action Plan is a priority for Moldovan Central Public Authorities (CPAs). Also, regarding financial and budgetary processes, all the CPAs, including Ministry of Finance (MoF) specified the importance of complying with the requirements of IMF.</p> <p>Since 2013 Moldova have passed a big political crisis (3 Prime-Ministers have changed in 3 years) and is in the middle of a financial one. Signing the agreement with IMF is crucial for the country. Thus, all Government's efforts are directed to comply IMF requirements. There has been a big delay in approving the Budget for 2016.</p> <p>At the moment the MoF is working on 2016 Budget Amendment, on the new 2017 Budget, on 2017-2020 Program-Based Budget and on building the informational system for the budgeting process. Clearly GRB is not a priority for the authorities. Still, at the MoF, the deputy Minister expressed the interest to implement GRB in the future. The Department of Budgetary synthesis will be in charge to incorporate GRB in the Methodological Framework. The Framework is mandatory for central and local public authorities.</p> <p>Influencing factors:</p> <p><u>Political level:</u> the political crisis and governments' change affect the quality of the budgetary process and Government's agenda and priorities. The delay of the decentralization process affects the autonomy of LPAs in implementing GRB.</p> <p><u>Administrative level:</u> MoF and Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family are both in charge with GRB. The lack of coordination and partnership among the ministries is a risk factor in GRB implementation. However, the leading partner for UN Women in this particular project should be the MoF, which would be involved from the very beginning in the design of the project. MoF stresses the importance of capacity building in the area, but do not have necessary resources (financial and human) to start and develop the process.</p> <p><u>Attitude and behaviour level:</u> most of the stakeholders understand the importance of GE and GRB but do not commit to policy change and improvement.</p>
<p>The state of the women's movement and the national women's machinery</p>	<p>Government bodies:</p> <p>The Governmental Commission for ensuring men and women equality (2006) Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, Department of Equality between Women and men Gender Focal points in every CPA</p> <p>Local Government bodies:</p> <p>Joint Bureau of Information and Services, established at district (raion) level offer multidisciplinary services to women and men. (supported initially by UN Women and later on by the rayon bodies)</p> <p>Civil Society Organizations</p> <p>In Moldova there are over 35 registered NGOs that aim at ensuring HR and GE. In 2015 A National Platform for GE has been created. The Platform has 26 members (NGOs and individuals). The Feminist movement is active. The latest achievement of the Platform is the adoption of 40% political participation quota for women in the Parliament (Law nr. 71/14.04.2016). According to the same document, every Central Public Entity has to create Gender Equality Coordination Groups. The groups will serve as a coordination and monitoring entity within the authorities and will ensure Gender mainstreaming into the policies.</p>
<p>Current national budgeting arrangements, agencies working on budget and/or decentralization reform and the national capacity for GRB. Key partners for the work. Coordination with other UN entities. Participation of CSOs in GRB.</p>	<p>Ministry of Finance is responsible for developing, monitoring and implementing budgetary and financial policies at the national level. According to the new Law on Public Finances, all national and local authorities have to comply with the requirements of developing performance-based budgets. The Medium Term Budgetary Framework (MTBF) is based on budgetary programs and is mandatory and developed for the next 3 years. Normally the elaboration of a new MTBF starts in May every year and finishes in early September and involves participatory process.</p>

<p>Summary of key contextual factors for advancing GRB (supporting and hindering factors) including politics, donors, and regional dynamics</p>	<p>State Chancellery (Decentralization department) of the Government of Moldova is coordinating decentralization reform. Due to political crisis, the reform has been delayed for some years and Local Public Administration have limited autonomy in Moldova. Still, there is a part of the budget, coming from local resources and taxes that LPAs have the right to plan and spend autonomously. For this money, GRB could be easily implemented at the local level. But the amount of resources is very limited and do not allow to spend money on specific needs or separate innovative programs”³⁰.</p> <p>Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family has a separate section in the MTBF, dedicated to GE. The majority of the programs envisaged refer to Domestic Violence, Human Trafficking, Trainings on Gender³¹. All those policy domain are the responsibility of the Ministry and are not extended to the other authorities, for example to Ministry of Interior and to the Bureau of Migration and Asylum, which also deal with the mentioned topics.</p> <p>All the interviewed representatives of state institutions (CPAs) complain lack of capacities in explaining and implementing GRB, including the Deputy Minister of Finance. The difficulty comes, on one hand from the terminology used in defining and operating GRB and by the other in little understanding of what performance-based budget is and how to develop indicators and new budgetary programs.</p> <p>Thus, key partners for GRB implementation are and should be:</p> <p><u>At the National Level</u> Ministry of Finance – developing, monitoring and evaluating the budgetary framework and its methodology Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family – responsible for the implementation of GE policies.</p> <p><u>At the Local Level</u> LPAs of all levels, including districts (raion). <u>CSOs</u> CALM – information and capacity building for LPAs National Platform for Ensuring Gender Equality – as the national consortium of NGOs Other NGOs, that aim at ensuring HR Grass-roots local organizations <u>Academia</u> Academy of Economic Studies Academy of Public Administration (responsible for long life learning and instructing public servants)</p> <p>UN Women created innovative practices when making links to the other programs (Women in Politics (UN Women), Migration and Local Development (UNDP), Democracy Program (UNDP)), programs developed for different vulnerable groups (Roma Women, migrant Women). The synergies created allowed to increase awareness on GRB. Still, within UNDP there is an independent Gender Sensitive Focal Team which ensures that every Program is gender sensitive. There are Gender Specialists across different programs (Migration and Local Development Program).</p> <p>UN Women created good cooperation practices with national CSOs as well as grass-root organizations at the local level³².</p>
<p>Legacy of prior work on GRB</p>	<p>JLDP (Joint Integrated Local Development Program) integrated participatory approach to budgetary and strategic planning process. UN Women coordinated the entire process.</p> <p>UN Women role in coordination with other UN agencies is to: a. make sure that the methodologies were gender-sensitive, b. the program is structured the way of approaching communities, c. supporting national decentralization strategy</p>

³⁰ Focus group in Rusestii Noi village, confirmed by interview with CALM (Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova, CSO)

³¹ Interview with the representative of the Ministry of Labour, Social protection and Family.

³² Will be presented in best practices and achievements.

<p>Legacy of prior work on GRB</p>	<p>JLDP (Joint Integrated Local Development Program) integrated participatory approach to budgetary and strategic planning process. UN Women coordinated the entire process.</p> <p>UN Women role in coordination with other UN agencies is to: a. make sure that the methodologies were gender-sensitive, b. the program is structured the way of approaching communities, c. supporting national decentralization strategy</p>
<p>Key design features of UN Women’s approach to GRB in the country (theories of change), and the coverage of the intervention.</p>	<p>Project outcomes stated by project document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector programs and budgets at the central and local levels which reflect GE concerns better; • Strengthened oversight of central and local government, policies, programs, plans and budgets towards GE commitments; • Exchange of knowledge and learning on GRB facilities replication of good practices and lessons learned. <p>For UN Women Moldova office there are two assumptions that would make the implementation process efficient and the GRB sustainable.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The success of the project itself depends on behaviour and attitudes of the stakeholders <p>In order to build a system of accountability one needs to put together different stakeholders and instruments and getting to general public and the change agents within a system.</p> <p>1. Thus, if selecting the partners that have the “right” attitude towards HR and GE the project implementation might be a success. For the moment, the institutional partners have been selected according to the positions. They may be aware, have the necessary knowledge and skills, but the commitment that would enable action is not there.</p> <p>What then is needed to detect/create institutional attitudes and behaviors that would lead to success?</p> <p>1A. If using the top-down approach by informing general public, local grass-roots organizations and national CSOs, then population might put pressure on Government in order to implement GRB. This way people behavior will change the institutional behavior.</p> <p><i>Potential risks:</i> is difficult to have a critical mass committed to GRB that would press the Government and the Parliament. Also this is a long term strategy (at least one planning time cycle – 4 years). This measure will not lead to creating commitment and institutional change, but</p> <p>If the changes are made to the Methodology then GRB would become mandatory to all central and local institutions.</p> <p>1B. If identifying agents of change in national and local government institutions were trained accordingly, then GRB would be easily implemented. This measure would take less time (2-3 years) if the partners are carefully chosen.</p> <p><i>Potential risks:</i> the agents of change and committed partners may not be in the decisive positions and that would not enable the success either.</p> <p>If the strategy of building partnerships is designed to target people responsible with Budgetary process, then the success is ensured. For that reason, the strategy to address different stakeholders needs to be changed: for example, several key ministries could be included in the list (Ministry of economy, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Culture, State Chancellery (Policy and Analysis Department) and all the deputy ministers or state secretaries may have a retreat on HR and GE where GRB would be presented as a tool to make budgets accountable and efficient.</p>

<p>Adaptations to changing contexts and lessons during implementation</p>	<p>UN Women team is evaluating its strategy on approaching and developing partnerships. Lesson: the partners must be involved from the very process of conceiving a new program. For a new GRB program the key partners to participate are: Ministry of Finance (executive and decision making level), Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Economy.</p> <p>Changing political context put on hold the implementation of GRB at the central level (budgetary policy) Lesson: working with Women MPs to lobby GRB in the new Public finance law</p> <p>Difficult terminology for GRB use make the commitment hard Lesson: the complexity should be explained in mentoring processes and in concrete support given to national institutions (MoF) when developing methodology</p> <p>Value of GRB is not fully seen by partners Lesson: GRB should be promoted as an instrument of budget efficiency, rather than as philosophy of GE.</p>
<p>Key achievements at the national level (policies, programmes, budgets)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Plan and Roadmap for GRB implementation developed • A new NPGE is being developed, GRB implementation is a separate action line • Costing exercise violence against women almost finalized and in preparation to be published • Academy of Economic Studies from Moldova introduced GRB as a mandatory course to 2 MA programs³³ • GRB tools used in local planning in targeted localities • Good synergy between different UN programs • Enlarger capacity building trainings provided for Women MP, central and local government, CSOs and vulnerable groups
<p>Evidence of sustainable changes in knowledge, capacity and practices from GRB interventions</p>	<p>GRB course edited (handbook) and introduced as a mandatory course for Academy MA students</p> <p>Violence against women cost exercise seen as a major GRB intervention</p> <p>Capacity building gives awareness to the efficiency of GRB as a tool both to civil society and to government bodies</p> <p>Local initiatives developed participatory approach to strategic and budgetary planning.</p>
<p>Examples and nature of instrumental outcomes at the municipal/local level</p>	<p>The participatory process in local planning integrated GRB. As a result, in Rusestii Noi commune:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of 18 local councillors – 8 are women • One Women social group was created • More people are involved in decision making process (since women are participating the Council meetings are shorter, the decisions are faster and better and take into account women and men needs). • Different groups are involved and are building their own projects <p>Innovative approach to social groups (Roma women, migrant women) advanced GRB by providing trainings and developing projects based on GRB approach. As a result, the quality of life of women changed. Projects on women economic empowerment are implemented.</p>
<p>Any emerging evidence of (potential) contributions to transformation in gender relations at the individual, household, community or group level</p>	<p>The role women are playing in the community has changed. Women are participating in decision making process and are creating their own projects. For the moment the projects are non-productive. But with a meaningful support – the economic projects will start.</p> <p>By involving women in decision making – the needs of different social groups are taken into account when developing local policies.</p> <p>Local best practices could serve as a catalyst for national authorities in order to implement GRB at the national level.</p>

33 <http://diez.md/2016/09/26/premiera-la-asem-studentii-vor-studia-un-nou-curs-obligatoriu-bugetarea-sensibila-la-gen/>

<p>Innovations in the strategy and lessons from implementation of the project</p>	<p>Creating synergies with other UN programs (UN Women, UNDP) Building on education and long term sustainability by introducing a GRB course into the university Elaborating evidence-based studies (Costing domestic violence) Creating lobby groups among civil society organizations and grass-roots organizations at the local level</p>
<p>Key challenges, opportunities and options for the next steps in advancing GRB</p>	<p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a critical mass among CSOs and public in order to promote GRB and lobby into the Parliament • Weak inter and intra-institutional coordination of the institutions on GRB • Low quality of gender analysis of programmes and policies. • Lack of culture of data finding and analysis • Political situation in the country creates lack of political commitment • Government is not committed to complex reforms and serious institutional changes • Transfer from non-productive projects to productive at the local level <p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance based budgeting and yearly budgetary planning to be used for GRB implementation at the national level • Partnership with UN could provide solid bases for a new program • Extend the academia access to the Government by implementing the e-platform for learning at the Academy of Public Administration and creating universities consortia • Working with WiP to engage other women and men from different parties in GRB promoting and lobby • Building capacities in the Court of Auditors (National Audit Authority) • Creating an Budgeting Education Program with the support of the present donors • Creating a helpdesk/Resource center at Academy of Economic Studies • Expanding Costing exercise to other domains (creating synchronicities with new polices elaboration) and providing support to national partners in indicators elaboration during budgetary planning process • Working intense with National Platform for GE and creating national championship at the local level <p>Critical future steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with MoF on the Methodology and introducing GRB into national laws. Creating a joint budgetary program (HR mainstreaming) • Creating partnerships with EU and IMF representatives in GRB and HR budgeting promotion

Key Quotes to Substantiate Findings

Source	Quote
Rusestii Noi Mayoralty	The gender-related issues are to be discussed with women. They are our “pride” and “face”. With women participating - decision making process is more efficient and a better output of the work of the council could be seen.
UN Women Team	You cannot change behaviours in 3 years, but you can change attitudes. Education is the strategy for long-term sustainability
Former Academy of Economic Studies student, at the moment Consultant in National Statistics Bureau	I have chosen to write my thesis on Women Entrepreneurship because is innovative, is close to me and I have all the necessary data for research
Mr. Andrei Petroia, ASEM	The project helped experts to come together and become a team that is able to provide lobby for GRB and different GE initiatives

Veaceslav Balan, 1st local coordinator in Regional GRB project, now National Human Rights Coordinator at OHCHR in Moldova	GRB should be included in a wider program related to Right-based Approach to budgeting. HR should be mainstreamed. UN Women should be one of the main partners in this program
Angelina Zaporojan, Women Law Center of Moldova	UN Women is to be appreciated for the attempt to do this analysis (costing domestic violence) in this situation. This report will be used to pass on the message to the state. You are spending, but not on prevention. You are spending a lot on mitigations. Meaningfully supporting CSOs means building sustainable change.

Good Practice Examples/Case Studies

Education as a long term sustainability strategy for GRB in Moldova

UN Women CO in Moldova acknowledged the importance of innovation and strategic vision for long term sustainability. The main idea of the initiative is to focus on awareness, capacity and commitment of new generations, trained in universities. By the other hand, with the technical assistance of UN Women, universities are creating background for university research in GRB area.

Since 2009, a core-team was created within the Academy of Economic Studies in Moldova with the scope to implement GE in the academia environment. The team consists of 6 people that have a multidisciplinary approach to GRB. Having as objective to build a university GE culture, the team developed a manual on GRB. “The manual is exposed to the students, we are teaching it”³⁴. Initially GRB subject has been introduced in different modules, taught across different economic subjects. This allowed to create awareness among students and university teachers. Several students have chosen GE and GRB as major subjects for their Bachelor Thesis. “We didn’t have the course but we have MA thesis on the subject”³⁵

A Regional Colloquium on the subjects have been organized at the university. Teachers and students worked together and presented academic papers related to GRB. This event created favorable conditions for enriching the awareness and promote GRB as a mandatory course at two MA programs: Public Finances and Taxation and Accounting in public institutions. Those two programs are usually chosen by students who are becoming public servants.

34 Focus Group excerpt, Chisinau, 2-nd of September, 2016

35 idem

At the same time, several trainings for university teachers have been organized. Through the trainings and handbooks (GRB manual, compendiums for MA students, GRB Guide for Implementing GRB in Local Public Administration), GRB is promoted and long term sustainability is ensured.

For the future, GRB course is planned to be extended to other academia. Mainly the strategy is to introduce it to the Academy of Public Administration, which is a core institution that is training present public servants at the national and local level. The course will be introduced on an on-line platform and will be used by other academia. Consequently a Center of Resources will be opened in the Academy of Economic Studies.

Building evidence-based data and studies for sustainable GE policy

Moldova started to implement performance-based budgeting since 2011. Yet, only few budgetary programs are built on evidence-based studies. GE is reflected precarious in some programs that tackle domestic violence, anti-trafficking and trainings on GE.

UN Women Moldova understands the importance of evidence-based data in public policy elaboration and the necessity to collaborate closely with public institutions and CSOs in providing reliable data for GE provision.

That is why an innovative study on “Costing Domestic Violence in Republic of Moldova” is launched. The study intends to analyze the manner in which the state tackles domestic violence by providing an extensive analysis of the costs and spending in the area. The study is realized by Women’s Law Center³⁶ (WLC) with the technical support from UN Women. In this context, UN Women Moldova and WHO provided for international expertise and WLC with local experts

36 Women’s Law Center is a women led CSO and provides juridical and psychological assistance to women victims of domestic violence. Interviewed on September, 1, 2016

on financial, statistical and legal subjects. “We had to adjust the methodology to the Moldova realities”³⁷

The study is an innovation for all post-soviet countries from two perspectives: it is the first costing exercise and is the first multi-disciplinary study in GE area. The preliminary findings show that a careful and evidence-based policy development would lead to cost-efficient measures against domestic violence in Moldova. The State is spending a lot of resources on mitigation of the effects and plans and spends none on prevention.

The report offers recommendations for the implementation of GRB in Moldova and will be used as an advocacy tool in working with state institutions and will create conditions for building stronger ties with the Government.

37 Angelica Zaporojan, Director of Women’s Law Center, Interviewed on September, 1, 2016

**UN WOMEN IS THE UN ORGANIZATION
DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY
AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN. A
GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR WOMEN AND
GIRLS, UN WOMEN WAS ESTABLISHED
TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS ON
MEETING THEIR NEEDS WORLDWIDE.**

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards. It stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on five priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



**Planet 50-50 by 2030
Step It Up for Gender Equality**

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