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COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION

UN WOMEN JORDAN

STRATEGIC NOTE 2018-2022



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This evaluation was conducted by the UN Women Independent Evaluation Service. The independent evaluation team comprised Chaitali Chattopadhyay, UN Women Regional Evaluation Specialist, Arab States; Meredith Brown, International Evaluation Expert; and May George Ishaq, National Evaluation Expert.

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---

## Evaluation Team:

**Chaitali Chattopadhyay**, Team Lead and UN Women Regional Evaluation Specialist, Arab States  
**Meredith Brown**, International Evaluation Expert  
**May George Ishaq**, National Evaluation Expert

## Evaluation Management :

### UN Women Independent Evaluation and Audit Services

**Inga Sniukaite**, Chief, UN Women Independent Evaluation Service (IES)

**Malika Mukhitdinova**, Chief, UN Women Internal Audit Service (IAS)

**Lisa Sutton**, Director, UN Women Independent Evaluation and Audit Services (IEAS)

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# ACRONYMS

<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
<b>CPE</b>	Country Portfolio Evaluation
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>EVAW</b>	Ending Violence Against Women
<b>G&amp;L</b>	Governance and Leadership
<b>IAS</b>	Internal Audit Service
<b>IASC</b>	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
<b>IBV</b>	Incentive-based Volunteer
<b>IEAS</b>	Internal Evaluation and Audit Services
<b>IES</b>	Internal Evaluation Service
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>JNCW</b>	Jordan National Commission for Women
<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNEG</b>	United Nations Evaluation Group
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Fund for Children
<b>UNSDF</b>	United Nations Sustainable Development Framework
<b>UN SWAP</b>	United Nations System-Wide Action Plan for Gender Equality
<b>UN Women</b>	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
<b>WEP</b>	Women’s Empowerment Principles

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION

### UN WOMEN JORDAN

STRATEGIC NOTE 2018-2022

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION (CPE) OF THE UN WOMEN JORDAN COUNTRY OFFICE, CONDUCTED BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 2022 AND AUGUST 2023. A CPE IS A SYSTEMATIC ASSESSMENT OF THE NORMATIVE, COORDINATION AND OPERATIONAL ASPECTS OF UN WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT RESULTS RELATED TO GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL.

## JORDAN COUNTRY CONTEXT

- ◆ Jordan is an upper-middle-income country, heavily dependent on fossil fuel imports and one of the most water-poor countries in the world.
- ◆ 2021 unemployment rate in Jordan was **24.1 per cent**, **22.4 per cent** among males and **30.7 per cent** among females.
- ◆ Since 2012, Jordan has received hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria. As of 30 June 2022, **675,433** Syrian refugees were registered with UNHCR in Jordan, of which 542,614 live in host communities.
- ◆ Jordan ranked **131 of 156 countries** in the Global Gender Gap Index Ranking, up seven places compared to 2020.
- ◆ Only **15.6 per cent of women** are in the labour force despite high education attainment.
- ◆ Gender-based violence **remains a widespread issue**.
- ◆ Social attitudes towards gender-based violence: **68.7 per cent** of men and **42 per cent** of women believe it is justified for a man to beat his wife in some circumstances.

## Background of UN Women in Jordan

The UN Women Jordan Country Office has been in existence since 2010. The Country Office supports the Government of Jordan to implement global norms and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment; promotes women's economic empowerment; implements a resilience and empowerment model for Syrian refugee women and vulnerable Jordanian women; and supports the government and other national stakeholders to meet Jordan's commitments to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. The Country Office's engagement is built on a partnership with the national women's machinery and the government, particularly the Jordanian National Commission for Women, the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Women's Empowerment, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Planning & International Cooperation and the Ministry of Labour. The Country Office also has a collaborative relationship with the wider public, including civil society organizations (CSOs), the women's movement, academia, private sector, the UN Country Team and international development players.

The Country Office's Strategic Note (2018–2022) addresses a number of priority areas for gender equality and women's empowerment in Jordan over five impact areas (Governance and leadership, Women's Economic Empowerment, Women's Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action, Frontier Issues and Normative Change) with Ending Violence Against Women as a cross-cutting impact area. As of October 2021, the Country Office had a

total of 64 personnel positions. The total budget for the 2018–2021 period was US\$ 44,354,135. The financial portfolio, specifically non-core resources, almost doubled between 2018 and 2021, with non-core funding amounting to 88.2 per cent of its total funding during 2018–2021, making the Jordan Country Office the office with the largest resources in the Arab States region.<sup>1</sup>

## Evaluation purpose, objectives and use

The CPE was conducted by the UN Women Independent Evaluation Service (IES) in close collaboration with the UN Women Jordan Country Office as a primarily formative (forward-looking) evaluation to support the Country Office and national stakeholders' strategic learning and decision-making for the next Strategic Note (2023–2027). The evaluation also had a secondary summative (retrospective) perspective, to support enhanced accountability for development effectiveness and learning from experience. The evaluation aimed to:

- ◇ Assess the **relevance** of UN Women's programmatic interventions at national levels and alignment with international agreements and conventions on gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- ◇ Assess the **effectiveness, organizational efficiency** and **coherence** of Country Office programming in progressing towards the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment results as defined in the Strategic Note.

- ◇ Enable the Country Office to improve its strategic positioning to better support the achievement of **sustained** gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- ◇ Analyse how a **human rights approach** and **gender equality principles** are integrated in the design and implementation of the Strategic Note.
- ◇ Identify and validate **lessons learned**, good practices and examples of **innovation** that can be scaled up and replicated to support gender equality and human rights.
- ◇ Provide insights into the extent to which the UN Women has realized **synergies** from its integrated mandate (normative, UN system coordination and operational).



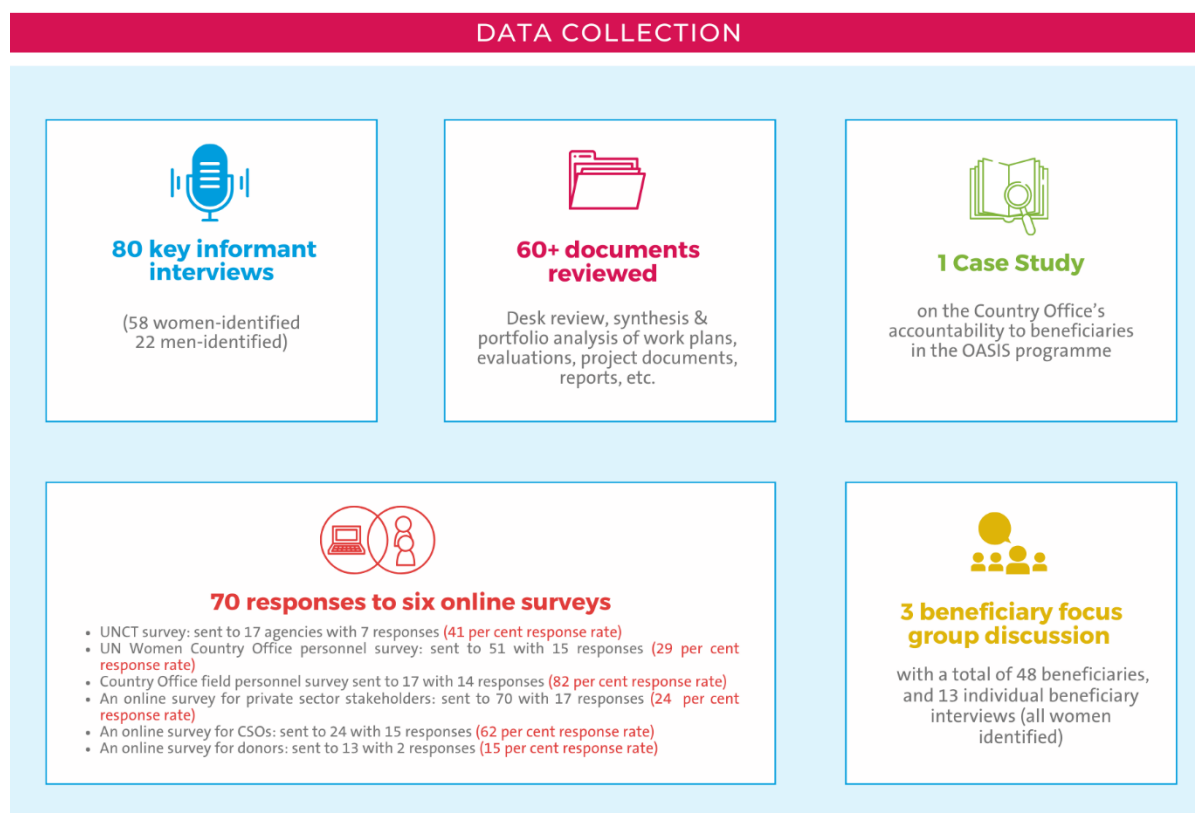


The primary intended users of this evaluation are UN Women management and Country Office personnel; the UN Women Executive Board, the UN Women Regional Office for the Arab States, UN Women headquarters and other Regional and Country Offices outside the Arab States region; target groups, their households and community members, programme and project partners; national and local governments in Jordan; civil society representatives; the donor community and other development partners; and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT).

Intended uses of the evaluation include learning and improved decision-making to support development of the next Strategic Note; accountability for the development effectiveness of UN Women’s contribution to gender equality and the empowerment of women; and capacity development and mobilization of national stakeholders to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women.

## Evaluation methodology and data collection

The evaluation followed the principles of Gender-Responsive Evaluations and had ‘a utilization focused lens’. It used theory-based design to assess the performance of the Strategic Note based on its stated assumptions about how change happens. The evaluation used contribution analysis to assess the contribution made towards policy and legislative reforms, the OECD “Gender Equality across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus” framework for the analysis of the OASIS programme and JONAP interventions. It also used the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Accountability to Affected People as a reference framework for the Case Study, Gender at Work analytical framework and the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale to assess the extent to which the Country Office had been gender transformative.



<sup>1</sup> This evaluation is taking place during the last year of Strategic Note implementation; hence the data for 2018-2021 is reflected. Full 2022 budget and delivery was not taken into consideration. Please note for 2018-2022 total budget was US\$ 58.95 million and expenditure US\$ 56.83 million.

## Conclusion and recommendations

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**Conclusion 1:** The Country Office's 2018–2022 Strategic Note was relevant and responsive to national, international and United Nations priorities for gender equality and the empowerment of women. Given the resource constraints, the Country Office managed to support the development pillars of its work by situating them within nexus programming. The Country Office achieved some tangible results through its existing programming. As the humanitarian financing envelope for Jordan shrinks, the Country Office needs to communicate more explicitly its vision, strategy and contribution towards the development pillars of work in its next Strategic Note.

**Conclusion 2:** The Country Office was recognized as an expert in gender equality in Jordan for its technical experience, contextual understanding, coordination work, strategic partnerships and ability to generate meaningful evidence and knowledge. There is opportunity for the Country Office to strengthen its partnership with donors, private sectors and CSOs to amplify a common and collective advocacy voice on women's rights and gender transformation in Jordan. Systems and processes to capture the impact of Country Office programming need strengthening.

**Conclusion 3:** The Country Office's staffing structure could be improved to ensure it is "fit for purpose", particularly for the direct implementation of the OASIS programme. At the time of the evaluation, the working environment was not conducive to the Country Office's optimal functioning. Regional management oversight needed to be more proactive and regular for countries such as Jordan with large programming and associated risks. UN Women's institutional approach to support leadership transition in such contexts needs to be tailor-made to minimize disruption.

**Conclusion 4:** The Country Office's work on leaving no one behind beyond its humanitarian programme to address the needs of the most vulnerable women (including those with intersectional vulnerabilities and disability) was limited and less systematic. Arrangements for accountability towards the affected population under its humanitarian portfolio were not fully effective and some of the Country Office's arrangements needed review and reconsideration. The Country Office had adopted some innovative and diverse approaches towards achieving gender transformation and social norms change and would benefit from a coherent strategy and systematic evidence gathering to confirm what is working and what is not to achieve gender social norms change.

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**Recommendation 1:** The Country Office should ensure that the development pillars of its portfolio (Women's Economic Empowerment, Women's Political Participation and Ending Violence Against Women) have a clear strategy and receive dedicated focus and resources in the next Strategic Note.

**Recommendation 2:** The Country Office should revisit the underlying theory of change for its humanitarian development nexus programming. It should strengthen the programme's monitoring function and accountability mechanisms towards the target beneficiaries.

**Recommendation 3:** The Country Office should strengthen its coordination and convening role with respect to its relationships with the UNCT, donors, civil society and private sector. The Country Office's coordination work on gender and humanitarian action should be supported by a knowledge management strategy and plan.

**Recommendation 4:** The Country Office should re-invigorate its approach to evidence management, programme monitoring, data quality, analysis and sharing to ensure there is meaningful information about programme impact, evidence uptake and use.

**Recommendation 5:** The Country Office, with the support of the Regional Office, should undertake measures to enhance a positive workplace environment and adherence to the highest standards of the code of conduct. UN Women corporate management oversight and leadership transition arrangements should aim to proactively identify and manage risks and disruption and support better positioning of Country Offices to provide support to host countries and their partners.

**Recommendation 6:** The Country Office should embed targeted leave no one behind outcomes in the next Strategic Note paying specific attention to disability inclusion across its portfolio. It should develop a cross-cutting social norms change strategy to positively transform gender stereotypes across the portfolio and strengthen adherence to established best practices towards accountability to the affected population.

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# BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

This section provides an overview of the national context, including the challenges experienced by women and girls in Jordan and the national focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women. It also introduces the Jordan Country Office's portfolio.

## 1.1 Jordan country context

Jordan is located to the north of the Arabian Peninsula and is bordered by Syria to the north, Iraq to the east, Saudi Arabia to the south and south-east, and the Occupied Palestinian Territory.<sup>2</sup> It is an upper-middle-income country, heavily dependent on fossil fuel imports and is one of the most water-poor countries in the world.<sup>3</sup>

The 2021 unemployment rate in Jordan was 24.1 per cent, 22.4 per cent among males and 30.7 per cent among females.<sup>4</sup> Over the next decade, Jordan's economy will need to absorb more than one million young Jordanians into the job market.<sup>5</sup> In June 2022, the Government of Jordan launched the Jordan National Economic Modernization Vision,<sup>6</sup> which is based on two strategic pillars: economic growth and improved quality of life for all citizens. The two pillars are underpinned by sustainability and address the key challenges facing Jordan and the Jordanian people: sustainable income opportunities and improving the quality of life.

Since 2012, Jordan has received hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria. As of 30 June 2022, 675,433 Syrian refugees were registered with UNHCR in Jordan, of which 542,614 live in host communities.<sup>7</sup> However, the total number of Syrian refugees (registered and unregistered) is estimated at more than 1.36 million.<sup>8</sup> With the protracted Syrian refugee stay in Jordan, it has been challenging for the government to maintain quality services for Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanians. In response to the Syrian crisis, the Jordan Response Platform for the Syrian Crisis, a partnership between the Government of Jordan, donors, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), was established in September 2013. After a sequence of comprehensive needs assessments that started in 2013, the Government of Jordan drafted three Jordan Response Plans in 2017–2019,<sup>9</sup> 2018–2020<sup>10</sup> and 2020–2022<sup>11</sup> highlighting a gradual shift from urgent humanitarian assistance to prioritizing resilience projects by sector along with the required budget.<sup>12</sup>

## 1.2 Gender equality in Jordan

Jordan ranked 131 of 156 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index Ranking, up 7 places compared to 2020. Rank results by subindex are: Economic participation and opportunity 133, Educational attainment 84, Health and Survival 145, and Political empowerment 144. Women's labour force participation in Jordan is noted to be extremely low, only 15.6 per cent of women are in the labour force despite high education attainment.<sup>13</sup>

Jordan ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1992. Since then, the government has introduced a range of policies and strategies to promote gender equality and empower women and girls. However, under CEDAW, Jordan has reservations about Articles 9.2 and 16 on women's ability to pass nationality to a foreign husband and their children and a woman's right to custody and guardianship over children after divorce and the right to choose a family name, occupation and profession.<sup>14</sup>

The first National Strategy for Women was launched in 2013 and was updated in 2020,<sup>15</sup> covering 2020–2025. The quasi-governmental Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) was established by a Cabinet decision as the national gender equality and women's empowerment machinery in 1992. In 2015 an Inter-Ministerial Committee for Women's Empowerment was formed to support the commission. Both the Jordanian National Commission for Women and Inter-Ministerial Committee for Women's Empowerment are guided by a range of strategies including the National Strategy for Women, the Comprehensive Action Plan for Human Rights and Women's Economic Empowerment Action Plan (Mashreq). Since 2017, the Government of Jordan has also introduced changes to laws to promote gender equality, including an expanded definition of domestic violence and changes to the labour law including flexible work arrangements, employer-provided childcare and prohibition of gender discrimination in wages. The Government adopted its first National Action Plan

<sup>2</sup> <http://dosweb.dos.gov.io/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specificcountry-data-/countries/JOR>

<sup>4</sup> <http://dosweb.dos.gov.io>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.jordanvision.io/en>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.jordanvision.io/en>

<sup>7</sup> Situation Syria Regional Refugee Response (unhcr.org)

<sup>8</sup> <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/35106>

<sup>9</sup> Jordan Response Plan 2017-2019

<sup>10</sup> Jordan Response Plan 2018-2020

<sup>11</sup> Jordan Response Plan 2020-2022

<sup>12</sup> Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis 2022

<sup>13</sup> Global Gender Gap Report 2021 World Economic Forum

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.undp.org/jordan/depth-2>

<sup>15</sup> <https://women.io/sites/default/files/2022-01/NSW%20General%20Framework%202020-2025.pdf>

(JONAP)<sup>16</sup> for implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in 2017.

Gender-based violence remains a widespread issue with very few survivors of violence seeking help from official bodies. Social attitudes remain permissive of gender-based violence, with 68.7 per cent of men and 42 per cent of women believing it is justified for a man to beat his wife in some circumstances.<sup>17</sup> In Jordan, child marriage is on the rise again after a decade of decline, including as a negative poverty coping mechanism by families.<sup>18</sup> The Jordan Personal Status Law (2010) allows for a male guardian or husband to prevent a woman from working if it “harms” family unity. Article 340 of the Penal Code allows for mitigated sentences for family members committing murder in the name of “family honour.”<sup>19</sup>

### 1.3 UN in Jordan

The United Nations in Jordan is represented by 17 resident agencies, funds and specialised programmes, working together to deliver as One UN through the coordination, development and implementation of activities. The guiding framework under which the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) operates in Jordan is the United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF). The last UNSDF (2018–22) was signed by the UN and the Government of Jordan in December 2017 and is structured under the three pillars of:

- **Strengthened institutions** – Institutions in Jordan at national and local levels are more responsive, inclusive, accountable, transparent and resilient
- **Empowered people** – People, especially the vulnerable, proactively claim their rights and fulfil their responsibilities for improved human security and resilience.
- **Enhanced opportunities** – Enhanced opportunities for inclusive engagement of people living in Jordan in the economic, social, environmental and political spheres.

Despite being a middle-income country, Jordan receives high levels of official development assistance, particularly for humanitarian work, with substantial resources being channelled through UN agencies. UN resources in Jordan

are largely determined by donors and have continued to be dominated by humanitarian finance mainly to address the Syria refugee crisis. According to the UNSDF 2018–22 evaluation, the small scale of resources available for long-term development limited the UN’s ability to generate a critical mass of activities behind some of the UNSDF objectives. The UNSDF has not been an effective instrument for additional resource mobilization. The evaluation also states that the UN tends to be viewed by many stakeholders in Jordan as a humanitarian agency. This is partly due to the budgetary resources, but also to a lack of clear messaging about the UN’s development role.

Nevertheless, the UNSDF 2018–22 marked an important step in the evolution of the UN system in Jordan. For the first time since the advent of the Syria crisis, it brought together the UN’s humanitarian and development programming within a common strategic framework. It set out ambitious objectives in support of the UN’s global ‘Delivering as One’ Approach. Although the UNSDF has not led to an increase in joint programming, it has facilitated a large number of joint initiatives across agencies. The agencies that provide cash-based support have aligned their systems and processes, to avoid duplication and enhance efficiency. There is more dialogue between humanitarian and development actors, in accordance with the ‘Nexus’ principle, helping to place a number of key initiatives on a more sustainable footing.<sup>20</sup>

### 1.4 UN Women in Jordan

#### 1.4.1 Portfolio Overview

UN Women Jordan Country Office has been in existence since 2010. The Country Office supports the Government of Jordan to implement global norms and standards on gender equality and women’s empowerment; promotes women’s economic empowerment; implements a resilience and empowerment model for Syrian refugee women and vulnerable Jordanian women; and supports the government and other national stakeholders to meet Jordan’s commitments to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The Country Office’s engagement is built on a partnership with the national women’s machinery and the government – particularly the Jordanian National Commission for Women, the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Women’s Empowerment, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Planning

<sup>16</sup> <https://jordan.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/12/jordanian-national-action-plan>

<sup>17</sup> The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. 2019. Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2017-2018. <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR346/FR346.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> Jordan Demographic Health Survey, 2017-2018

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6ad6348.html>

<sup>20</sup> UNSDF 2018-22 Evaluation

& International Cooperation and the Ministry of Labour. The Country Office also has a collaborative relationship with the wider public, including CSOs, the women's movement, academia, private sector, UNCT and international development players.

The UN Women Strategic Note (2018–2022) addresses a number of priority areas for gender equality and women's empowerment in Jordan over five impact areas (Governance and leadership, Women's Economic Empowerment, Women's Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action, Frontier Issues, and Normative Change) with Ending Violence Against Women as a cross-cutting impact area. For the portfolio of programming and activities see [Annex 9](#).

### 1.4.2 Theory of Change

The 2018–2022 Strategic Note contained the following theory of change:

**If (1)** *Jordanian government and other stakeholders promote implementation of global, regional and national normative and policy frameworks for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls;*

**And if (2)** *more policies promoting access to decent work and social protection for vulnerable Jordanian women are implemented;*

**And if (3)** *more Syrian women and girl refugees and Jordanian women in vulnerable communities play a greater role and are better served by response, recovery and resilience efforts in Jordan, including women, peace and security policies;*

**Then (4)** *women and girls in Jordan will be able to claim their human rights;*

The 2018–2022 Strategic Note identified the nuanced forms of vulnerability women face due to the various intersectionalities, including:

- refugee women
- women living in rural areas
- women with disabilities
- elderly women and other vulnerable groups such as female-headed households.

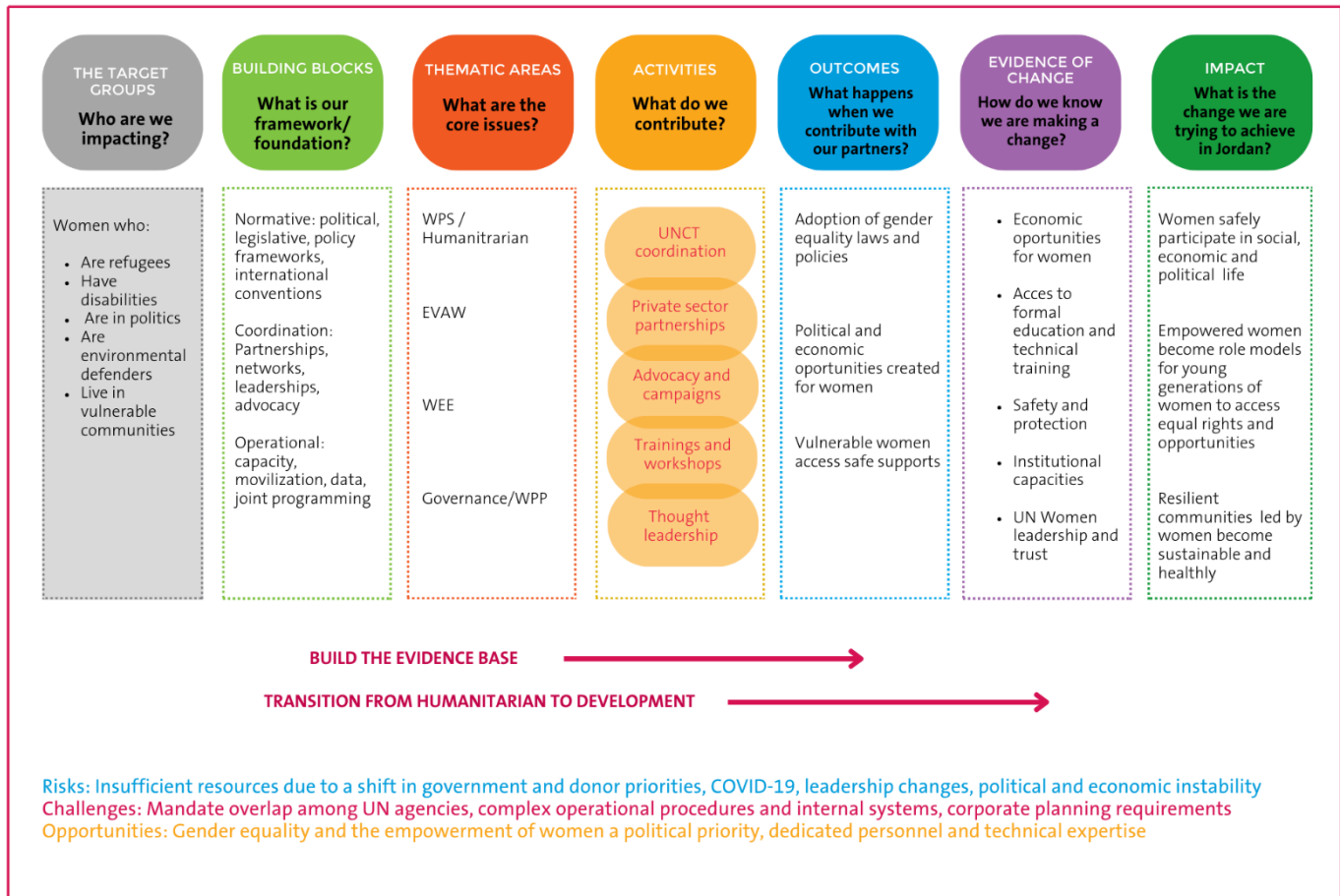
There have been seven previous country and regional evaluations covering Country Office programmes during the 2018–2022 Strategic Note period, a mid-term portfolio review and an evaluation of the UNSDF 2018–2022

**Because (5)** *women, including refugee women, will be empowered by a supportive government and society, increased economic opportunities, and improved peace and security.*

The Country Office identifies its approach as a synergy of five key functions: technical assistance, advocacy, knowledge generation and management, coordination and programming.

During the inception phase of the evaluation, it was evident that, while the original theory of change in the 2018–2022 Strategic Note in general was adequate, it did not capture the full results and resources framework of the Country Office's approach. As a result of these gaps, the evaluation team reconstructed the theory of change in consultation with the Country Office team.

Figure 1: Reconstructed theory of change (prepared by the evaluation team)



### 1.4.3 Budget and human resources

The Country Office is based in Amman and, as of October 2021, had a total of 64 personnel positions.<sup>21</sup> The Country Office’s total budget for the 2018–2021 period was US\$ 44,354,135.<sup>22</sup> The financial portfolio, specifically non-core resources, almost doubled between 2018 and 2021, with non-core funding amounting to 88.2 per cent of total funding during the 2018–2021 period making the Jordan Country Office the office with the largest resources in the Arab States region. Peace, Security & Humanitarian Action received the most funding. The key donors for the Country Office were: Finland, United Kingdom, Canada, the European Union (EU Madad Trust Fund), Italy (Italian Agency for Development Cooperation), Australia, Japan, Sweden (Swedish International Development Cooperation

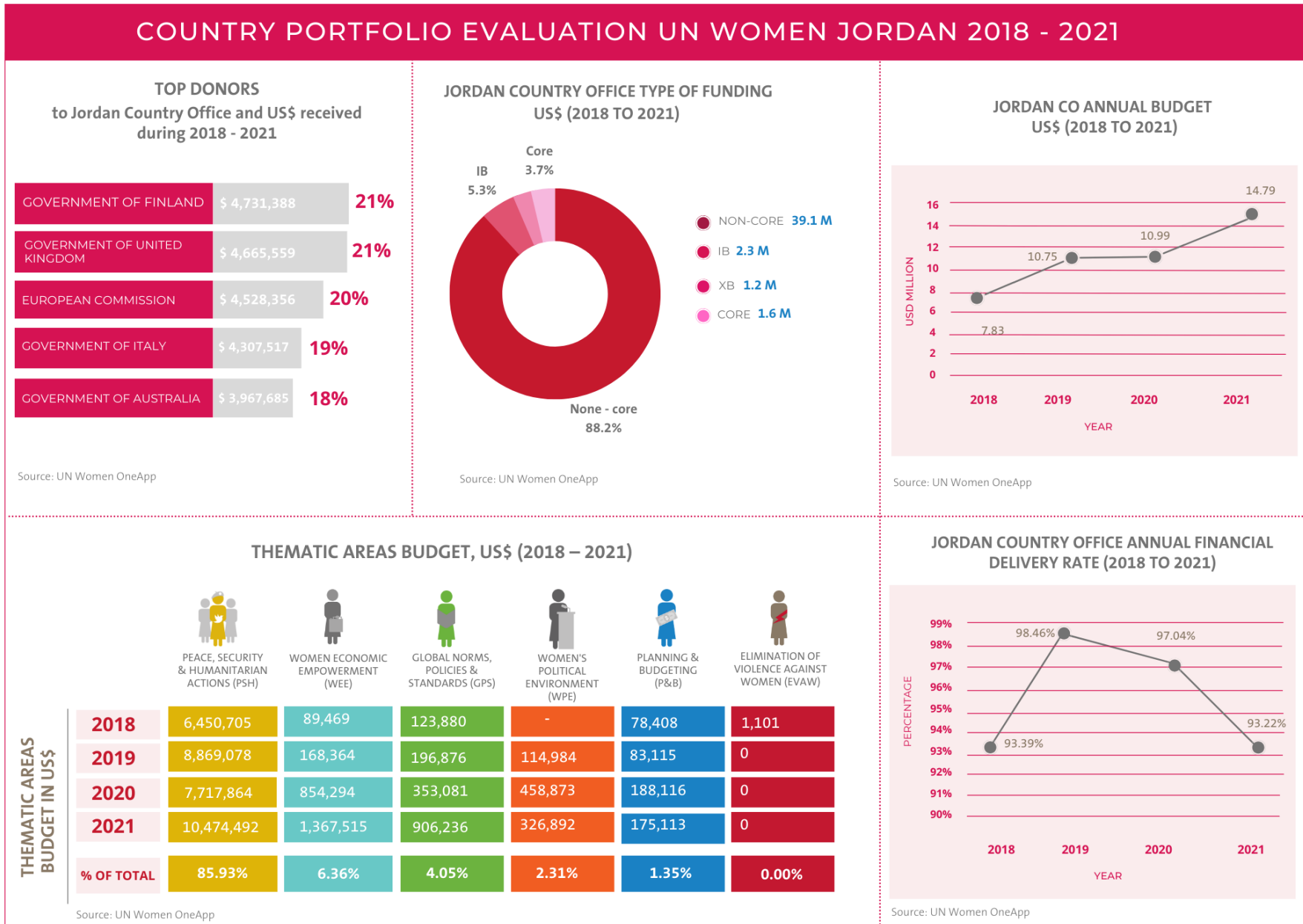
Agency), Norway, Spain, Iceland, France and the Zonta Foundation.

<sup>21</sup> This evaluation is taking place during the last year of Strategic Note implementation; hence the data for 2018–2021 is reflected.

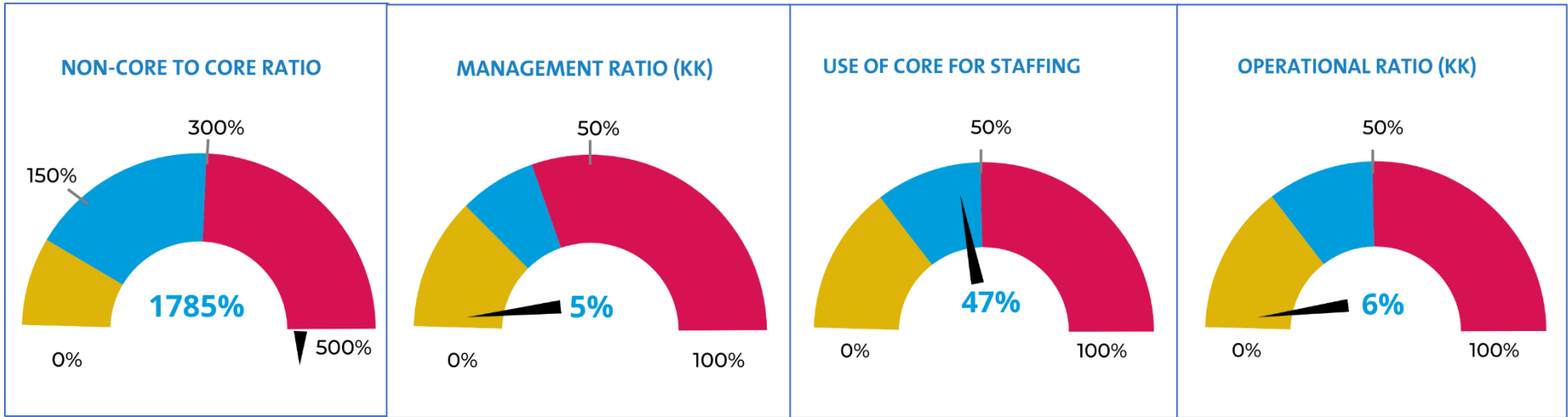
<sup>22</sup> This evaluation is taking place during the last year of Strategic Note implementation; hence the data for 2018–2021 is reflected. Full 2022 budget and delivery was not taken

into consideration. Please note for 2018–2022 total budget was US\$ 58.95 million and expenditure US\$ 56.83 million.

Figure 2: Country Office financial resources data, prepared by the evaluation team with information from the UN Women dashboard







REGION	COUNTRY/DEPARTMENT	NON-CORE TO CORE RATIO	MANAGEMENT RATIO (KK)	USE OF CORE FOR STAFFING	OPERATIONAL RATIO (KK)
Arab States	Jordan	1785%	5%	47%	6%

Data source: <https://dashboard-oneapp.unwomen.org/Dashboard/Index/COAT> (2018-2022)



Photo ©UN Women

# 2

## EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

This section provides an overview of the methodology used by the evaluation team for the CPE, including both the theoretical underpinnings and practical approach and challenges.

## 2.1 Evaluation purpose

This CPE was conducted by the UN Women Independent Evaluation Service (IES) in close collaboration with the UN Women Jordan Country Office as a primarily formative (forward-looking) evaluation to support the Country Office and national stakeholders' strategic learning and decision-making for the next Strategic Note (2023–2027). The evaluation also had a secondary summative (retrospective) perspective, to support enhanced accountability for development effectiveness and learning from experience.

## 2.2 Evaluation objectives

The following evaluation objectives were developed in consultation with the Country Office at the outset of the evaluation process:

1. Assess the **relevance** of UN Women's programmatic interventions at national levels and alignment with international agreements and conventions on gender equality and the empowerment of women.
2. Assess the **effectiveness, organizational efficiency** and **coherence of Country Office programming** in progressing towards the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment results as defined in the Strategic Note.
3. Enable the UN Women Country Office to improve its strategic positioning to better support the achievement of **sustained** gender equality and women's empowerment.
4. Analyse how a **human rights approach and gender equality principles** are integrated in the design and implementation of the Strategic Note.
5. Identify and validate **lessons learned**, good practices and examples of **innovation** that can be scaled up and replicated to support gender equality and human rights.
6. Provide insights into the extent to which UN Women has realized **synergies** from its integrated mandate (normative, UN system coordination and operational).

7. Provide **actionable recommendations** with respect to the development of the next Strategic Note.

## 2.3 Evaluation scope

The scope of this CPE included all activities undertaken by the Country Office under its current Strategic Note 2018–2022, including operational work, support to normative policy and UN system coordination. Programme work was considered in relation to the thematic areas established by the UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021.<sup>23</sup>

The geographical scope of the evaluation was Jordan. Most of the interviews were conducted either in-person or virtually with stakeholders in Amman, the capital, where normative, coordination and programmatic activities were implemented; at the Azraq refugee camp in Zarqa Governorate; Zaatari refugee camp in Mafraq Governorate; and at the OASIS Centre in Mowaqar host community, Amman Governorate.

## 2.4 Intended users and uses of the evaluation

The primary intended users of this evaluation are UN Women management and Country Office personnel; the UN Women Executive Board, UN Women Regional Office for the Arab States, UN Women headquarters and other Regional and Country Offices outside the Arab States region; target groups, their households and community members, programme and project partners; national and local governments in Jordan; civil society representatives; the donor community and other development partners; and the UNCT.

Intended uses of the evaluation include learning and improved decision-making to support development of the next Strategic Note; accountability for the development effectiveness of UN Women's contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment; and capacity development and mobilization of national stakeholders to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women.

## 2.5 Evaluation design

The evaluation methodology applied the OECD-DAC criteria, including relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency as well as the criterion of gender equality and human rights. The evaluation followed the principles of Gender-Responsive Evaluations and had 'a utilization

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<sup>23</sup> UN Women Strategic Plan\_2018-2021

focused lens’ to generate forward-looking and actionable recommendations ensuring the information needs of the Country Office and stakeholders are met.

The evaluation applied a theory-based design to assess the performance of the Strategic Note based on its stated assumptions about how change happens. It used contribution analysis<sup>24</sup> to assess the contribution made towards policy and legislative reforms, and the OECD “Gender Equality across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus” framework for the analysis of the OASIS programme and JONAP interventions.<sup>25</sup>

The evaluation also used UNHCR’s Accountability to Affected People<sup>26</sup> as a reference framework for the Case Study, Gender at Work Analytical Framework<sup>27</sup> and the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale to assess the extent to which the Country Office had been gender transformative.<sup>28</sup>

The evaluation followed the United National Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guiding Principles, particularly: 1) respect for dignity and diversity; 2) right to self-determination; 3) fair representation; 4) ethical protocols for vulnerable groups; 5) redress; 6) confidentiality; and 7) avoidance of harm. To operationalize these principles and UN Women policies, a Data Management Plan guided the evaluation team on how data was managed and stored, and ethical protocols adopted during data collection.

A mixed-methods approach utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data was used to triangulate and verify data, increasing the internal reliability and consistency of findings. The evaluation used a participatory approach to ensure the perspective and voices of all the stakeholders were considered, paying specific attention to the inclusion of women and individuals and groups who are vulnerable and/or discriminated against.

The inception phase included an evaluability assessment; a participatory workshop with Country Office personnel to discuss elements of the evaluation approach; the theory of change for the Strategic Note concerned; and a stakeholder mapping exercise. The results of these exercises were used to design evaluation questions and support analysis. The evaluation matrix can be found in [Annex 1](#).

## 2.6 Evaluation limitations and risk-mitigation strategies

During the inception phase, the evaluation team identified the following key limitations:

**Timing:** The majority of the evaluation data collection occurred as the Country Office was in a leadership transition; when many personnel had left the Country Office; it was preparing its next Strategic Note; and when the Government of Jordan had announced an important economic reform strategy. To support these critical considerations in a timely fashion, the evaluation team had to carry out additional consultations, particularly with some former personnel to conduct a comprehensive assessment. This led to a rather protracted data collection and report finalization process.

**COVID-19:** The COVID-19 pandemic continued to pose challenges to in-person meetings, as well as to the availability of individuals for consultation as they were in quarantine or caring for others. However, the in-person data collection mission was able to proceed in September 2022. Supplementary interviews and surveys were also conducted virtually to account for any interviews that could not occur in-person.

## 2.7 Data collection and analysis

Multiple methods of data collection and analysis were carried out using both primary and secondary data to triangulate evidence, including desk review, quantitative and qualitative analysis, and analysing and cross-referencing past evaluations. The evaluation team collaborated closely with the IAS team, which started an internal audit in January 2023 to triangulate and validate data and evidence.<sup>29</sup>

Specifically, the evaluation conducted:

- A review of more than 60 documents, including key policy documents, UN Women programme documents and other reports from the UNCT and donors, project progress reports, annual workplans, reports from partners and other documents (see [Annex 3](#)).
- One all-personnel inception workshop.

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<sup>24</sup> Contribution analysis Methodology for evaluations

<sup>25</sup> OECD, “Gender Equality Across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus” July 2021, <https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-equality-across-the-hdp-nexus-july2021.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> UNHCR, “Accountability to Affected People”, [https://www.unhcr.org/handbooks/aap/documents/UNHCR-AAP\\_posters-A3\\_final.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/handbooks/aap/documents/UNHCR-AAP_posters-A3_final.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> <https://genderatwork.org/analytical-framework/>

<sup>28</sup> UNDP’s Gender Results Effectiveness Framework (GRES)

<sup>29</sup> [Country office audit: UN Women Country Office in Jordan \(IEAS/IAS/2023/004\)](#)

- 80 key informant interviews (58 women-identified, 22 men-identified) including:
  - 57 key informant interviews with a diverse range of stakeholders from government, the private sector, development partners, CSOs (42 women-identified, 15 men-identified);
  - 23 key informant interviews with UN Women current and former personnel (16 women-identified and 7 men-identified) as indicated in the stakeholder list in Annex 2.
- Three field visits to OASIS Centres at Azraq and Zaatari Refugee Camps and host community Mowaqar involving three beneficiary focus group discussions with a total of 48 beneficiaries, and 13 individual beneficiary interviews (all women identified).
- Six online surveys (see [Annex 4](#)):
  - Online survey with the UNCT: sent to 17 agencies with seven responses (41 per cent response rate).
  - Online survey for Country Office personnel: sent to 51 Country Office personnel with 15 responses (29 per cent response rate).
  - Online survey for Country Office field personnel: sent to 17 personnel with 14 responses (82 per cent response rate).
  - Online survey for private sector stakeholders: sent to 70 individuals with 17 responses (24 per cent response rate).
  - Online survey for CSOs: sent to 24 individuals with 15 responses (62 per cent response rate).
  - Online survey for donors: sent to 13 individuals with two response (15 per cent response rate).
- Review of 10 past corporate, regional and country-level evaluations.
- One case study on the Country Office's accountability to beneficiaries in the OASIS programme (see [Annex 7](#)).

evaluation team collaborated with IAS, which had started an internal audit exercise in January 2023. The Country Office provided administrative, technical and logistic support for this exercise.

An Evaluation Reference Group was established to enhance the evaluation's participatory approach; national ownership of the process; and for validation purposes. It included a representative sample of key stakeholders from the UN Women Jordan Country Office, Arab States Regional Office, and the UNCT.

This evaluation report was validated by the Evaluation Reference Group. The draft report was shared with key management stakeholders for validation and their feedback and comments were integrated into the report.

IEAS provided quality assurance support to the process. The IEAS Director, IES Chief and IAS Chief provided oversight and methodological guidance.

## 2.8 Evaluation governance and quality assurance

The evaluation team was composed of the Regional Evaluation Specialist for the Arab States, who is a member of UN Women's Independent Evaluation and Audit Services (IEAS) and acted as the team lead for this evaluation process; an international independent evaluator and a national independent evaluator. The



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# 3 FINDINGS

## 3.1 Relevance

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**FINDING 1.** The Country Office's 2018–2022 Strategic Note was responsive to national, international and United Nations' priorities for gender equality and the empowerment of women and its portfolio was responsive to the Jordan refugee crisis, addressing the needs of women and girls in the context of the Syrian humanitarian crisis. The strategy and intentional approach of nesting development issues within nexus programming to mobilize resources was innovative and smart given the limited resources available for long-term development in Jordan. As the humanitarian financing envelope for Jordan shrinks, the Country Office needs to communicate more explicitly its vision and strategy towards the development pillars of work in its next Strategic Note.

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The Country Office's 2018–2022 Strategic Note was responsive to national, international and United Nations priorities for gender equality and the empowerment of women, including aligning directly to key national strategies such as the Jordan National Strategy for Women 2020–2025, National Plan for Women's Economic Empowerment in Jordan (2019–2024), Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis (2018–2020, 2020–2022), Gender Mainstreaming Policy (2020), Jordan National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2018–2021 (JONAP) and the Jordan National Social Protection Strategy (2019–2025). The Strategic Note was also aligned with and contributed to the UNSDF in Jordan (2018–2022), and to the Sustainable Development Goals (for details see [Annex 5](#)). The Country Office aligned well with the Government of Jordan's priorities, building a strategic partnership across the Jordanian National Commission for Women, the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Women's Empowerment, the Ministry of Social Development and other key ministries and departments. The stakeholders consulted during the evaluation viewed UN Women as one of the key relevant players in Jordan and a dedicated UN entity to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. For instance, the evaluation survey results from CSOs, including UN Women's implementing partners, indicated that UN Women in Jordan is undertaking highly relevant work in the area of gender equality. The UNCT evaluation survey and private sector evaluation survey reiterated the same (see [Annex 4](#) for the evaluation survey responses).

At the outset of the 2018–2022 Strategic Note period, the need for all agencies to contribute to the country's humanitarian response drove both donor and agency programming decisions. UN resources in Jordan were largely determined by donors and continued to be dominated by humanitarian finance. The Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action budget for the

Country Office during the period accounted for 86 per cent of the overall budget. Given the limited resources available for long-term development, the evaluation recognises the Country Office's strategy and intentional approach of nesting development issues within nexus programming to mobilize resources towards development issues that otherwise would not have been possible. The Country Office's two flagship Humanitarian and Women, Peace and Security programmes – OASIS and JONAP – both contained elements of key development pillars, including Women's Economic Empowerment, Women's Political Participation and Ending Violence Against Women programming. These elements were nested inside programmes with specific target groups; for instance, the JONAP I pooled fund programme included a component on policy work with the Public Security Directorate to ensure gender-sensitive prevention and protection policing services and to provide essential gender-based violence services for women and girls. Similarly, the Women's Economic Empowerment operational interventions were carried out under the Humanitarian portfolio. The effectiveness of these thematic areas of work are covered under the effectiveness section.

On the thematic area of Ending Violence Against Women, the evaluation noted that the Country Office did not have a dedicated pillar: rather it was mentioned in the Strategic Note as a cross-cutting thematic area. Country Office stakeholders indicated that this was a strategic decision made following an extensive consultation with the country stakeholders and with the UN Women Regional Office and headquarters. As the Country Office at that time did not have a clear comparative advantage over the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in this area, and it also had to adhere to the corporate guidelines to limit the number of programme pillars or outcome areas in the Strategic Note to demonstrate focus and concrete results,

Ending Violence Against Women was taken up as a cross-cutting area. However, during the later part of the Strategic Note (2021), the Country Office had developed a dedicated Joint Programme with UNFPA, building on its work to launch a strategic approach to Ending Violence Against Women.<sup>30</sup>

Some stakeholders indicated that the Women, Peace and Security and the Humanitarian-focused approach was relevant, but more work was needed to provide greater vision and visibility to UN Women's work under its

development pillars. Overall, the evaluation noted that while the strategy and intentional approach of nesting development issues within nexus programming to mobilize resources was the relevant strategy during the Strategic Note period concerned, as the humanitarian financing envelope for Jordan shrinks, the Country Office should communicate more explicitly its vision, strategy and contribution towards the development pillars of work in its next Strategic Note.

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**FINDING 2:** The Country Office adapted its programming and supported gender-responsive crisis management during the COVID-19 pandemic, leveraging the coordination structures put in place with the national gender equality mechanism, international community and civil society. Its blockchain cash-disbursement system established in partnership with the World Food Programme proved useful for beneficiary cash assistance, with minimal interruptions. The Country Office also used the COVID-19 crisis as an opportunity to intensify its messaging around the need for inclusive, gender-responsive, sustainable macroeconomic and labour market policies.

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The Country Office adapted to the challenges for women and girls that arose from the COVID-19 pandemic, leveraging the coordination structures put in place with the international community, civil society and the national gender equality mechanism to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in COVID-19 responses and to ensure the continuity/adaptation of programming. For immediate relief, the Country Office rapidly transitioned its cash-for-work programming into direct cash assistance for 1,261 OASIS beneficiaries during the 2020 COVID-19 lockdown.<sup>31</sup> In this regard, UN Women's blockchain cash-disbursement system established in partnership with the World Food Programme was useful and allowed payments to beneficiaries to be administered and transferred remotely, with minimal interruptions.<sup>32</sup>

The Country Office was also appreciated for its ability to adapt its implementation modalities to continue its programming with minimal disruption. For instance, some stakeholders indicated that implementation of the Jordanian National Action Plan continued through online meetings and events. Under strict safety and hygienic settings, the national training team of trainers was constituted to deliver the 2019 Political Leadership and Candidates' Training manual, an important activity delivered

ahead of parliamentary elections in November 2020 to support female candidates.

The evaluation team noted that following the escalation in violence against women in the context of the COVID-19<sup>33</sup> crisis, the Country Office worked in close partnership with the Jordanian National Commission for Women and supported the Civil Society Platform to form relevant recommendations to the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Women's Empowerment. According to the stakeholders consulted, these recommendations led to the formation of a National Committee on Domestic Violence to coordinate gender-based violence response efforts to inform the policies, strategies and budget on prevention and protection of gender-based violence during the pandemic.

Further, amid the pandemic, UN Women undertook gender analysis and developed meaningful knowledge products (rapid assessments, studies, guidance documents, recommendations and reports), contributing to making the national COVID-19 response gender-responsive. Specifically, the evaluation noted the gender-based violence gap analysis study carried out by UN Women in partnership with the Public Security Directorate. The policy and programme recommendations based on the study were

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<sup>30</sup> Joint Programme development was mostly conducted in 2021 but work had to be stalled to shift resources under COVID-19 and associated priorities, including for gender-based violence work in the COVID-19 context. At the time of the evaluation, the Joint Programme had not yet come to fruition.

<sup>31</sup> Jordan Country Office draft narrative Annual Report 2020.

<sup>32</sup> UN Women Jordan entered a partnership with the World Food Programme to use blockchain technology to assist Syrian refugee women participating in its cash-for-work

programmes at the Za'atari and Azraq refugee camps, building the system for the first transactions to take place in 2019.

<sup>33</sup> The incidence of violence was high (40 per cent) during the pandemic. For details see- [Violence against Jordanian Women during COVID-19 Outbreak, November 2020](#)



adopted by the Family Protection Unit to strengthen its gender-responsive policies and standard operating procedures to address the increased cases of domestic violence during COVID-19. See [Annex 8](#) for a list of the COVID-19 knowledge products developed or supported by UN Women.

The evaluation also noted that the Country Office used the COVID-19 crisis as the opportunity to intensify its messaging on the need for inclusive, gender-responsive, sustainable, macroeconomic, sectoral and labour market policies paying specific attention to the importance of the care economy, flexible working hours, and the sharing of household responsibilities by men. Through its joint programming with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Country Office also intensified its work with unions and workers' organizations to call for attention to workers' rights and gender equality during the COVID-19 crisis and beyond, such as by using the crisis to support female owners of private

kindergartens and schools to launch the National Committee of Independent Kindergartens.<sup>34</sup>

The evaluation noted that 67 per cent of Country Office personnel rated its COVID-19 response and adaptation as meaningful and relevant ([UN Women Personnel Survey, Q 11, n=15. See Annex 4](#)). Personnel specifically noted UN Women's contribution to the development and implementation mechanisms of the Socio-Economic Response Framework to COVID-19 with UNCT partners, and work with the Jordanian Ministry of Health's communication on the national Elak W Feed Campaign<sup>35</sup> by the UN Communication Group to raise awareness of COVID-19.

The Country Office can continue its meaningful contribution after the pandemic by ensuring recognition and support for the care economy and gender-responsive crisis response mechanisms, including through the inclusion of government and civil society gender representatives.

## 3.2 Coherence

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**FINDING 3:** The Country Office has been an active member of the UNCT (and the UN Humanitarian Country Team), and advanced gender equality priorities through its coordination mandate. The Country Office has been one of the proactive UN entities for joint programming in Jordan but there is potential to do more joint programming overall at the UNCT level. There is also potential to strengthen the systematic approach to knowledge harvesting and dissemination to development and humanitarian partners in the area of gender-responsive humanitarian development peace nexus work through a dedicated knowledge and learning strategy/plan.

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The Country Office exercised its coordination mandate with the UNCT and other partners through the following engagement mechanisms:

- UNCT Gender Theme Group Chair (prior to 2020 it was reported that the Country Office had no leadership role in the Gender Theme Group. In 2020, the Country Office took the lead and reformulated the group with the intention and commitment to provide technical support for gender mainstreaming in UNCT programming)
- Localization Task Force Chair
- Gender Partners Coordination Group
- Humanitarian and Development Partners Group
- Voluntary National Review 2022 SDG5 Task Force lead

- Co-Chair of the Sector Gender Focal Point Network
- Gender in Humanitarian Action Plan Reference Group
- Women's Economic Empowerment Platform
- UNCT Communications Group
- Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Sector Working Group
- Youth Task Force
- UNCT Preventing Violent Extremism Task Force
- Coordination mechanisms at the camps.

Gender equality and women's empowerment was embedded across UNCT framework documents in Jordan, including as a core priority and strategy for implementation of the UNSDF in Jordan 2018-2022 with

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<sup>34</sup> Joint Programme Draft Mid Term Evaluation, 2022

<sup>35</sup> <https://corona.moh.gov.jo/en/page/1038/ElakFeed>

gender outcome and indicators in the UNSDF Results and Resources Framework.

The stakeholders consulted acknowledged UN Women's leadership in driving the UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard exercise (in 2019) with support from the Resident Coordinator's Office. The evaluation noted the 2019 Scorecard performance wherein the UNCT in Jordan "met" eight indicators and "exceeded" one indicator,<sup>36</sup> thereby meeting or exceeding the minimum requirement for (60 per cent) of UNCT-SWAP performance indicators and meeting the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review<sup>37</sup> standards. The exercise came up with a set of recommendations and an action plan to strengthen the UNCT's work on gender equality and women's empowerment and UN Women subsequently chaired the Gender Task Team formed to ensure implementation of the Scorecard Action Plan. The result of UN Women's leadership was evident in the UNCT-SWAP 2021 Progress Report, wherein the UNCT either met or exceeded the scores. The evaluation noted that, in 2022, UNCT Jordan reported achievements in meeting or exceeding gender mainstreaming requirements for 14 of 15 performance indicators.

The evaluation also noted that the updated Country Cooperation Agreement in 2020 was guided by the recommendations from the 2019 UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard and included intersectional perspectives, sex-disaggregated data and a comprehensive leave no one behind analysis – a contribution made by UN Women as part of the task force to update the Country Cooperation Agreement. Subsequently, UN Women supported the development of a sub-group in the UNCT Gender Theme Group to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in the new/forthcoming UNSDF.

The evaluation also noted UN Women's leading role in developing the first national study on Gender Drivers of Prevention of Violent Extremist in Jordan as part of the UNCT Prevention of Violent Extremist Task Force. The

study was the first of its kind and was used to inform the design of JONAP II.<sup>38</sup>

On joint programming, the evaluation team noted that during the 2018–2022 Strategic Note period, while the UNCT only had three Joint Programmes, two were focused on gender equality and involved UN Women – one with the ILO (Promoting Productive Employment and Decent Work for Women in Egypt, Jordan and Palestine<sup>39</sup>), and another with UNDP and UNICEF (the Sustainable Development Goal Multi-Partner Trust Fund Joint Programme). The evaluation noted the Country Office had two Joint Programmes in the pipeline, one with UNFPA on Ending Violence Against Women and another with UNDP on Women's Political Participation. Development of the Joint Programme with UNFPA started in late 2021 and according to the stakeholders consulted, the design was completed in early 2022. However, at the time of the evaluation, it was noted that this had not yet come to fruition. Preparation of the Joint Programme with UNDP started in 2020, and subsequently a dedicated donor roundtable took place in July 2020 under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator. At the time of the evaluation, this Joint Programme had also not come into fruition due to resource constraints. According to the stakeholders consulted, the delays were mainly because the donor portfolio was geared towards humanitarian financing. Despite these constraints, the evaluation noted UN Women and UNDP collaboration tapping into respective technical and financial resources to boost collaboration. The stakeholders consulted noted that there was potential for more joint planning, joint programming and implementation across the UNCT and specifically on gender equality issues as a means to build on the strengths and expertise of other UN agencies. Overall, UNCT partners noted UN Women's positive contributions to UNCT accountability on gender commitments and its strong relationship with government partners. Some stakeholders raised the potential of further strengthening technical support for gender mainstreaming in UNCT programming.

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<sup>36</sup> Exceeds: Leadership for Gender Equality. Meets: Cooperation Framework Outcomes; Cooperation Framework Indicators; Joint Programmes; Communication & Advocacy; Cooperation Framework M&E; Engagement with Government; Engagement with GEWE CSO; Organizational Culture. Approaches: Common Country Analysis; Gender Mainstreaming Capacities; GEWE Results, Missing: Gender Parity; Gender Coordination Mechanism; Resource Allocation & Tracking

<sup>37</sup> that UNCTs meet or exceed minimum requirements for 50% of the Scorecard indicators. It "approached" minimum requirements for three indicators, and "missed" minimum requirements for three indicators

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/Preventing-violent-extremism-Integrating-gender-perspectives-en.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> [Promoting Productive Employment and Decent Work for Women in Egypt, Jordan, and Palestine](#)

In terms of Gender in Humanitarian Action coordination, the Country Office was part of three key inter-agency coordination structures to integrate a stronger gender perspective across humanitarian action in the country. Along with UNHCR, the Country Office was Co-Chair of the Sector Gender Focal Point Network to promote gender mainstreaming within the multi-sectoral response for the Syrian refugee crisis and part of the Gender in Humanitarian Action Reference Group to coordinate implementation of the Gender in Humanitarian Action Plan. The Country Office also Co-Chaired the Humanitarian Partners Forum, Localization Task Team with the Jordanian National NGO Forum and Jordan International NGO Forum to promote gender-responsive localization through the leadership and financing of local women's CSOs.

The evaluation noted positive feedback from most of the UN entities consulted about UN Women's contribution to mainstream gender in humanitarian action. Specifically, its role to lead the national Gender in Humanitarian Action Review that culminated into an action plan was acknowledged by most of the stakeholders consulted. The review among other things highlighted that the Gender with Age Marker (GAM) <sup>40</sup> had not been incorporated into the humanitarian monitoring systems and that there was no proper gender tracking mechanism for funding or financial allocation target.

Some stakeholders consulted indicated that they expected a more regular flow of information and lessons (positive as well as negative) from the large gender and humanitarian interventions in Jordan with the international community to guide the UN Humanitarian Country Team on ways to carry out gender transformative humanitarian-development-peace nexus work. Country Office stakeholders highlighted that this challenge was primarily because UN Women was not part of a donors-UN nexus working group and while UN Women worked to secure membership in this group, it simultaneously led the work to establish a platform with national stakeholders including JNCW, international, humanitarian and development partners on gender in humanitarian action as another route to guide and inform the nexus work. The evaluation team suggests developing a knowledge

management strategy/plan to harvest and disseminate lessons on this critical area of work.

While some stakeholders raised some concerns about the Humanitarian Partners Forum's Localization Task Team – chaired by UN Women and the Jordan International NGO Forum – indicating that the process of developing an accountability framework (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Framework)<sup>41</sup> was not fully participatory and consultation with many women-led NGOs was rather limited; others indicated that there was not full alignment between some critical UN entities in the context of gender in humanitarian action work. It is incumbent on UN Women and its partner UN agencies to reconcile the collective approach towards the gender in humanitarian approach work in the Jordanian context. Given that UN Women now has full membership in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee<sup>42</sup> to strengthen gender in global humanitarian action and, in Jordan, a seat at the Inter-Sectoral Working Group to provide technical advice and support on gender-related issues, this will provide an opportunity to strengthen cooperation between UN Women and its partner agencies.

Overall, the Country Office has leveraged its coordination mandate to make some tangible, meaningful contributions to advance gender priorities and has the potential to further strengthen its work through joint programming and by strengthening the systematic approach to knowledge harvesting and dissemination of its work related to gender-responsive humanitarian development peace nexus.

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<sup>40</sup> [Inter-Agency Standing Committee Gender with Age Marker](#)

<sup>41</sup> [MEAL Framework for Localization of Humanitarian Action in Jordan, May 2021](#)

<sup>42</sup> UN Women became a full member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee in October 2022.

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**FINDING 4:** The Country Office has established a wide range of meaningful partnerships to strengthen the gender equality and empowerment of women agenda in Jordan. Its partnership with government partners and specifically its contribution to strengthening the national women's machinery and the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) is widely recognized. There is an opportunity to further strengthen its partnership with CSOs and donors to amplify a common, collective advocacy voice on women's rights and gender transformation.

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The Country Office forged a relationship with the national government as a trusted partner on gender equality and women's empowerment. It advocated for and provided technical support to key government actors including the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Women for women's empowerment, the Jordan National Commission for Women (JNCW), the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Labour, the Department of Statistics and the Ministry of Planning & International Cooperation, among others. Specifically, the evaluation noted UN Women's contribution to mainstreaming gender in the Jordanian reform agenda, meant to guide the country's key policy decisions for the next decade – Political and Economic Modernization Vision<sup>43</sup> – and public sector reforms.

The Country Office was Co-chair of the Gender Partners Coordination Group, with the JNCW and the European Union. Through this arrangement, the Country Office convened national partners (including the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Women's Empowerment), the donor community (with attendance at the Ambassador level) and the UN (including the Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator) on key policy dialogues. The evaluation noted the feedback from a number of donor partners indicating that UN Women could do more to amplify the use of its donors as strategic partners and allies for gender transformative changes in Jordan. Although the Country Office organized field visits and convened workshops with its partners for donors, some donors indicated they would appreciate more such opportunities to engage with beneficiaries, civil society and implementing partners.

The evaluation's civil society consultations indicated an overall appreciation for UN Women's technical and

financial support. The Country Office's contribution to strengthen the voice and participation of CSOs, such as through restructuring the Civil Society Advisory Group (in August 2019) to a Civil Society Platform which is co-hosted by the JNCW; and carrying out dedicated programmatic work with local community-based organizations such as under JONAP I, and the Localization Task Team was well appreciated by the stakeholders. In the evaluation survey with civil society stakeholders, 7 of 15 respondents (47 per cent) found UN Women's role in convening stakeholders and networks to be valuable or very valuable; 2 somewhat valuable (13 per cent); and 2 did not find it valuable (13 per cent).<sup>44</sup> Full survey details can be found in [Annex 4](#).

Some civil society partners indicated that there was room for improving a common and collective advocacy voice on women's rights and partners look to UN Women to continue to strengthen such collective, feminist voices.

The evaluation noted examples of engagement with CSOs outside the capital such as during the National Women's Strategy formulation, Beijing +20 and the political reform recommendations through sub-national consultations. However, there was also feedback from some government stakeholders and CSO partners that UN Women needs to do more at the local level, outside Amman.

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<sup>43</sup> Economic Modernization Vision.

<sup>44</sup> One respondent said not applicable and three did not respond to this question.

### 3.3 Effectiveness

**FINDING 5:** The Country Office had a vision and design for implementing a gender-responsive humanitarian-development programme through the OASIS model. The OASIS programme aimed to target the most vulnerable women, including women with disabilities and was successful in providing them with dignity, confidence and some level of financial freedom. However, the design of the OASIS model and its underpinning theory of change, particularly the cash-for-work interventions supporting longer-term economic development, needs to be revisited. The protection component of the model could also be strengthened with a systematic application of a social ecological model. The Country Office's results monitoring system needed improvement to include independent validation of data and to capture impact level results.

UN Women has been responding to the Syrian refugee crisis in Jordan since 2012. The Country Office has used the OASIS model, designed to build short and medium-term resilience in the Syrian refugee community and then from 2019 to include vulnerable Jordanian women from host communities, while also promoting a long-term enabling environment for empowerment and sustainable development (see Box 1).

#### BOX 1: OASIS MODEL – THREE BUILDING BLOCKS

- 1) Secure livelihoods opportunities provided via cash-for-work that graduates into sustainable employment opportunities through job placement, entrepreneurship or work permit applications.
- 2) Gender-based violence prevention, protection and awareness-raising services.
- 3) Education opportunities linked to the labour market, leadership and civic engagement initiatives for women, while also engaging men on social issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Source of data: Eid bi Eid Prodoc

In this regard, the Country Office's refugee response model was meant to have a medium to long-term impact on vulnerable populations and their ability to recover from crises, as well as to prevent such crises – an approach articulated through the humanitarian development nexus. This was the Country Office's largest portfolio, with a budget of approximately US\$ 10 million based on a pooled-like funding arrangement from Canada, Finland,

France, Iceland, Italy, the Zonta International Foundation (previous donor) and Australia, Japan, Sweden and the European Union as non-pooled donors.

The interventions under this portfolio delivered cash-for-work, life skills training and gender-based violence information at the Azraq Camp, in three locations at the Zaatari camp and in 18 host community locations. The programme ran regular cycles of either three-month or six-month programmes with Incentive-Based Volunteers selected through an application and vetting process. UN Women personnel delivered programming directly in the camps and in partnership with Ministry of Social Development staff in the communities.

It was evident from the evaluation's beneficiary focus group discussions, the evaluation team's field visits and stakeholder interviews that the cash-for-work component of the programme had an immediate positive influence on the lives of the beneficiaries, and it was appreciated for providing them with dignity, confidence and some level of financial freedom. The programme aimed to target women who had the least opportunities for income, including women heads of household, elderly women and women with disabilities. The pooled fund donor report covering 2020 and 2021 indicated that 13 per cent of women beneficiaries were women with disabilities in 2020 and 17 per cent in 2021. This need for cash-for-work continues to exist in refugee camps where opportunities for income remain limited, and also in communities where the programme is run in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>45</sup> In host communities supporting Incentive-Based Volunteers were much lower than specialized.

One key strength noted by beneficiaries, field personnel and stakeholders, but not specifically articulated in the programme’s monitoring and reporting, was the safe space/community building nature of the OASIS centres. The evaluation team observed that the centres were a place where vulnerable women were able to safely and freely congregate, learn and build community. Some women participants were otherwise isolated from social interaction due to poverty, disability, age or family restrictions. In the camps, the evaluation team was told that, for some women, the OASIS centre was the only place where husbands or fathers allowed them to work. The programme contributed to women’s personal confidence by providing both vocational and life skills as well as friendships and social support networks. Beneficiaries commented that the programmes did not have age restrictions and allowed older women a means of income and community. As part of the programme, field personnel created Whatsapp groups that allowed women to continue to communicate with each other after the cash-for-work cycle had ended.

The evaluation noted some areas relating to the design of the OASIS model and its underpinning theory of change that needed to be revisited. The OASIS theory of change expected that the cash-for-work experience would train women and help them to secure livelihoods through external employment and entrepreneurship. Based on the evaluation consultations, internal audit data<sup>46</sup> and programme monitoring data, overall, there was limited success in this specific regard. The programme monitoring data (see Box 2) reflected limited success in women from the cash-for-work programme accessing work permits or opening a microbusiness within three months of UN Women cash-for-work rotation.

**BOX 2: PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE DATA ON OASIS CASH-FOR-WORK BENEFICIARY ACCESSING A WORK PERMIT**

Indicator 2: Number of women accessing a work permit or opening a microbusiness within three months of UN Women’s cash-for-work rotation.		
Target: 200 annually, Baseline value: 20 (2018)		
2019	2020	2021
20	15	No work permit data 167 women trained on micro-entrepreneurship, placement
Indicator 3: Number of women accessing job placement or opening business within three months of cash-for-work rotation.		
Target: 300 annually, Baseline value: 0 (2018)		
2019	2020	2021
143	73	41

Data source: Annual Report for OASIS Pooled Fund Donors for 2019, 2020 and 2021

The main reason for lower achievement reported to the donor was related to the protracted closure of various economic sectors during COVID-19. The consultation held by the internal audit team with more than 200 beneficiaries during its field visits and by phone call, indicated that only a few Incentive-Based Volunteers had opened their own business or obtained work.<sup>47</sup> The products created by the women had limited market to stimulate greater business opportunities. Some products such as baby kits were said to be distributed to new mothers by UNICEF and uniforms were distributed to schools in poor communities by the Ministry of Social Development in host communities. In the camps, there was potential for some sewing and beauty work for other camp inhabitants. In the communities, that same potential existed but these were rather limited in scope.

The evaluation team noted the contextual challenges regarding women’s employment in Jordan, including the issue of obtaining work permits for persons with refugee status in Jordan as well as the COVID-19 induced crises. The evaluation recognizes UN Women’s several initiatives to address these issues such as through coordination with other partners UN agencies (ILO and UNHCR) to support work permits for Syrian women through the UNHCR and ILO employment centre in the refugee camps as well as the partnership with the World Food Programme on the Healthy Kitchen initiatives in the Azraq and Za’atari refugee camps to provide livelihood opportunities for vulnerable women. The evaluation also noted attempts to

<sup>46</sup> Country office audit: UN Women Country Office in Jordan (IEAS/IAS/2023/004)

<sup>47</sup> ibid

provide employment opportunities through private sector partnerships, and through the involvement of the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEP) signatories, but these initiatives had not shown wide signs of success. The main reasons cited by stakeholders were the overall low labour force participation rate in Jordan; a mismatch of the required skills (for instance, the hotel industry required a different set of skills to employ women from the OASIS centres); and transportation issues. According to the WEP signatories involved in this intervention, their involvement was not particularly thought-through and they felt rather unprepared to offer tangible support. The evaluation team did note some success outside the refugee camps in terms of job placement in partnership with Education for Employment- Jordan<sup>48</sup> as well as the normative work in partnership with ILO to address bottlenecks related to women's access to decent work and their retention in the work force.

Overall, this indicates some potential issues with the original assumption in the ProDoc created in 2019 and gaps in the theory of change.

The evaluation team encourages the Country Office and donor partners to more deeply appreciate these contextual challenges in relation to the programme theory of change and aim for more realistic targets.

Another issue noted by the evaluation in the design of the OASIS programme was the two categories of Incentive-Based Volunteers/participants: (a) participants receiving specialized training (tailoring, hairdressing, handicraft and agriculture etc.<sup>49</sup>); and (b) participants who were engaged to support these main service lines, e.g. cleaners, receptionists, guards, etc. Some Incentive-Based Volunteers in the supporting role learned literacy, computer skills and financial literacy through the blockchain pilot. The evaluation draws on the recent internal audit of the Jordan Country Office,<sup>50</sup> which noted that the ratio of supporting roles compared to technical Incentive-Based Volunteers was high. In host communities this ratio was 84 per cent technical to 16 per cent supporting; while in the camps (Zaatari) the rate was 40

per cent to 60 per cent. Such a high ratio of camp-based Incentive-Based Volunteers in supporting roles was not foreseen in the ProDoc design, and the project was running the risk of losing its focus and spending a substantial amount of project funds on enrolling "non-technical" Incentive-Based Volunteers.

In respect of gender-based violence prevention, protection and awareness raising interventions within the OASIS programme, the evaluation noted various initiatives in both camps and host communities, including with the Ministry of Justice, the Jordanian Women's Union Association, Arab Woman Organization of Jordan, UNHCR (lead on referrals), including throughout the 16 Days of Activism. The programme provided approximately two hours of awareness-raising workshops in a group setting in both communities and the camps. According to the pooled fund donor progress report, a total of 2,914 women were provided with referral services from 2019 to 2021. Programme monitoring data reflected that beneficiaries had increased knowledge about how to report cases of sexual and gender-based violence and where to find proper help and support when they needed it. The monitoring data on women beneficiaries reporting a reduction in gender-based violence as a result of OASIS services (Output 1.4, Indicator 4, Percentage of women OASIS beneficiaries reporting a reduction in gender-based violence as a result of OASIS services)<sup>51</sup> also showed positive trends from 2018 to 2020.<sup>52</sup> As this was self-reported beneficiary data, collected by the OASIS programme team, the evaluation team recommends independent validation of data to confirm validity (see details on monitoring and data quality under the Efficiency section of this report).

The stakeholders consulted by the evaluation team indicated that UN Women has the potential to do more transformative work in this area such as by systematically engaging with men, families and communities in the refugee camp as well as in the host communities. This issue was also noted by some previous evaluations.<sup>53</sup> In this respect, the evaluation team noted that the intervention logic for prevention of gender-based violence could be more systematically underpinned by a socio-

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<sup>48</sup> EFE-Jordan partnered with UN Women on an 18 month-programme in the refugee-hosting communities in the targeted governorates by delivering three demand-driven job placement training programmes for 1,000 marginalized young women from very low socioeconomic backgrounds on: job training and placement, career direction and micro-entrepreneurship.

<sup>49</sup> Confined to only one host community.

<sup>50</sup> *ibid*

<sup>51</sup> Pooled fund indicator

<sup>52</sup> The data for 2021 was not available as a result of the role out of the "Gender Sensitive Resilience Capacity Index".

<sup>53</sup> Final Project Evaluation for Eid bi Eid project phase I and II, 2019 "UN Women programming addressed the prevention and response to SGBV, though there were a few areas where the programme did not challenge gender stereotypes". Strengthening the Resilience of Syrian Women and Girls and Host Communities programme (EU MADAD) evaluation, 2021: "The programme's efforts aimed at gender awareness for men were relatively limited both in scope and in effect, especially in Jordan (and Turkey)."

ecological model involving engagement with men, boys, communities and other social institutions to address the structural causes of gender-based violence and potentially transform gender relations.<sup>54</sup>

In regard to the portfolio’s monitoring framework, the evaluation team noted that data collection for the OASIS programme was mostly carried out by field personnel. As also noted by the internal audit team, ideally, key elements of programme monitoring should be conducted by independent specialists qualified in results-oriented monitoring. The Monitoring & Evaluation unit was not always able to validate the data reported by project managers on the number of beneficiaries. This creates a risk that data could be incomplete, inaccurate or potentially overlap.

The data generated for periodic reporting to donors was inadequate in capturing the post-implementation, long-term results of the OASIS programme in the lives of women. This is covered in more detail under the Efficiency section.

Overall, the provision of programming that attempts to achieve both humanitarian and development outcomes is complex. In the case of the OASIS programme, it provided humanitarian cash-for-work and safe spaces for women, improved their confidence, friendships, social networks, vocational skills and some level of financial freedom. However, the programme’s design now needs reconsideration based on the country context and the evidence gathered so far to ensure longer-term, sustainable economic gains for women in camps and host communities.

<b>BOX 3: TESTING THEORY OF CHANGE: INCORPORATING A GENDER PERSPECTIVE ACROSS THE HUMANITARIAN, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE NEXUS</b>	
<b>Assumption</b>	<i>The Country Office is working consciously at the macro, meso and micro level to incorporate a stronger gender perspective across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus. Its work at the normative level such as with the Gender in Humanitarian Action Group, UNCT Gender Task Team; engagement with local authorities and at the community and individual level is interacting and informing each level to demonstrate a successful gender-responsive humanitarian, development and peace nexus model.</i>
<b>Evidence</b>	<i>The Country Office’s work on its largest programme, OASIS, provided humanitarian cash-for-work and safe spaces for women, improved their confidence, friendships, social networks, vocational skills and some level of financial freedom. However, it has not fully translated into longer-term, sustainable economic gains for the target women in camps and host communities.</i>

Source: Created by the evaluation team

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/about/social-ecologicalmodel.html>

Also refer to the Final Evaluation of MWGE-Phase II programme, 2022, <https://gate.unwomen.org/Evaluation/Details?evaluationId=11636>



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**FINDING 6:** The Country Office’s Women, Peace and Security work through the Jordan National Action Plan I (JONAP) was a participatory endeavour that built national ownership across a broad range of stakeholders and facilitated strong donor coordination, including formation of a pooled-like funding arrangement for its implementation. JONAP I demonstrated some key achievements under the security sector and prepared the foundation for an ambitious agenda for a gender-responsive security sector. Engaging men was a key pillar of JONAP I, and a clear strategy and guidance to deal with the gender backlash will further strengthen this work. The Country Office worked closely with national institutions and the international community to shape institutional and normative elements of gender-responsive prevention of violent extremism work but the community-based interventions would benefit from an open dialogue and discussion with donor partners.

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The Jordan National Action Plan I (JONAP I), 2018–2021<sup>55</sup> was launched in 2018 to advance implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and to respond to the country’s security and military challenges. It was a wide-ranging plan for Women, Peace and Security in Jordan with four strategic goals:

- 1) Security sector reform and peace operations;
- 2) Preventing violent extremism;
- 3) Response to women and girl refugees in Jordan; and
- 4) Building a culture of peace and gender equality with a particular focus on youth and preventing gender-based violence.

All stakeholders commented on the highly participatory development phase of JONAP I, which was led by UN Women. According to these stakeholders, it not only built national ownership across a broad range of stakeholders, but also facilitated excellent donor coordination including formation of a pooled funding type arrangement to implement JONAP I. Stakeholders specifically noted UN Women’s partnership and support to JNCW as a key success factor from the outset. The evaluation noted acknowledgement of Jordan’s achievements in implementing the Women, Peace and Security agenda in the UN Secretary-General’s 2021 Annual Report on

Women, Peace and Security,<sup>56</sup> which praised JONAP I for having a dedicated goal on gender-responsive prevention of violent extremism with funds allocated to its implementation as a good practice that was delivering positive results.<sup>57</sup>

#### Box 4: JONAP I KEY RESULTS REPORTED

- 13 partner community-based organizations, NGOs and government partners, 5 donors in a pooled fund
- 400 women in the Jordan Armed Forces trained in English
- 40 men and 12 women trained as gender focal points in the Jordan Armed Forces and 16 trained as Master Trainers
- An all-female peacekeeping unit deployed internationally
- 30 per cent of JONAP funds to NGOs and community-based organizations
- US\$ 8 million budget earmarked for four years of JONAP

Data source: JONAP Annual Report 2021

Of the four strategic pillars, the evaluation noted meaningful results in building a gender-responsive security sector, comprising the Jordan Armed Forces and the Public Security Directorate. The stakeholders credited UN Women, in partnership with JNCW, for increasing the percentage of women security sector personnel across the Jordan security institutions. In particular, from the beginning of JONAP I to 2021, the number of women in

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<sup>55</sup> (2018-2021) JONAP

<sup>56</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/report-secretary-general-women-and-peace-and-security-s2021827-enarruzh>

<sup>57</sup> United Nations Security Council. 2021. Women and Peace and Security: Report of the Secretary-General. 27 September. S/2021/827. p. 22.

the Public Security Directorate increased from 4.77 per cent to 6.4 per cent and in the Jordan Armed Forces from 6.8 per cent to 9.6 per cent.<sup>58</sup> The percentage of women deployed in UN peacekeeping missions increased from an average of 8.65 per cent at the beginning of JONAP to 11.5 per cent in December 2021.<sup>59</sup> The gender-responsive procedural changes in the security sector resulted in the first deployment of the Jordanian all-female Formed Police Unit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in February 2021 by the Public Security Directorate. Twenty-five women were deployed for the full year. This was a substantial achievement in enrolling Jordanian women in non-traditional field positions in peacekeeping.

The evaluation noted the work carried out by the Country Office on prevention and protection pillars of gender-based violence under JONAP I in partnership with Formed Police Units. Specifically, the capacity building of national police officers to ensure gender-sensitive prevention and protection policing, which was intensified during COVID-19; development of tools such as the Pocket Guide for police officers outlining how to respond to gender-based violence incidents or referrals during their engagement with communities; as well as a gender-based violence gap analysis study in partnership with the Formed Police Units looking into the gaps, challenges, legislation, referral paths, accessibility of information on services, what to improve and how to improve them. According to the stakeholders consulted, the study presented a set of recommendations on how to improve the prevention and response to gender-based violence issues based on an inter-agency approach which provided the foundation to develop a Joint Programme with UNFPA in 2021. Through the Joint Programme, the plan was that UN Women would lead on normative work and UNFPA on service delivery with both entities conducting joint advocacy work.

Under JONAP I, the Country Office also worked to strengthen gender equality in the justice sector through a Memorandum of Understanding with the judiciary to provide training and networking for young women judges. One of the key results of the increased gender awareness in the security and justice sector was a heightened response to the increase in gender-based violence during COVID-19. According to the stakeholders consulted, gender trained police and judges were able to provide

support to survivors and gender-based violence reporting also showed an upward trend.

Stakeholders also acknowledged the Country Office's work with the Ministry of Education and National Centre for Curriculum Development in partnership with UNESCO to support the Gender and Curriculum Task Force in mainstreaming gender in the education system, such as through the Guidance Note for Using the Gender Equality Analysis Tool in the Jordanian National Curriculum Framework.<sup>60</sup>

The stakeholders consulted attributed this success to a systematic approach and technical leadership from UN Women. The Country Office worked with the Public Security Directorate and the Jordanian Armed Forces to develop a gender mainstreaming strategy (2021–2024) and implement gender-responsive policies. The appointment of gender advisers/focal points,<sup>61</sup> and training and preparing them for the role helped to drive the gender-sensitive implementation of the military and police operations. According to stakeholders, it was an important and galvanizing programme for the government, international and national actors – the credit for which was given to UN Women.

Another positive feature of JONAP I as explained by stakeholders was the availability of its performance data<sup>62</sup> that facilitated evidence-based decision-making. UN Women, in partnership with JNCW established an online monitoring and evaluation platform (ActivityInfo) for JONAP results monitoring, constituted a JONAP Monitoring & Evaluation Technical Working Group (TWG)<sup>63</sup> and strengthened their capacity to manage data collection and monitoring of JONAP implementation.

The evaluation noted some areas that could be enhanced. While JONAP I focused on involving men as part of implementing the gender mainstreaming strategy in the Public Security Directorate as well as in the Jordanian Armed Forces, such as by appointing them as gender champions and training them on gender issues, there was a need for a strategy or guidelines to deal with potential backlash due to changing gender roles. For instance, some men raised the issue of “reverse discrimination” as they felt the preferential actions towards women were

<sup>58</sup> JONAP Annual Report 2021

<sup>59</sup> Specifically, this grew from 4.3 per cent to 8.5 per cent within the Public Security Directorate and from 13 per cent to 14.5 per cent in the Jordan Armed Forces from the beginning of beginning of JONAP I to 2021. JONAP Annual Report 2021

<sup>60</sup> <https://jordan.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/jonap-gender-equality-analysis-tool>

<sup>61</sup> Jordan Armed Forces and Public Security Directorate collectively appointed 77 Gender Advisers/Focal Points and six Gender Champions, significantly exceeding the target, which was four per institution. The Public Security Directorate appointed 49, and the Jordan Armed Forces, 28.

<sup>62</sup> See JONAP national progress report 2018–2019

<sup>63</sup> Which includes 30 members (18 female and 12 male) of national agencies

discriminatory against them. UN Women needs to be prepared to address such issues to prevent losing hard-earned gains.

The baseline data (2019) indicated that 55.2 per cent of males and 69.6 per cent of females had a positive perception of women's entry, advancement and leadership in the security sector with an aim to increase positive perceptions among women and men by 20 per cent by the end of the programme. However, no monitoring data<sup>64</sup> were available at the time of the evaluation to assess changes in men's perceptions and if the existing interventions led to any intended or unintended changes in their perceptions, especially among men in leadership positions.

The JONAP 2021 monitoring data showed that the number of women in senior leadership and high-ranking positions within the Jordan Armed Forces increased from 0.2 per cent to 1.64 per cent, while the Public Security Directorate showed a declining trend from 2.9 per cent to 2.3 per cent since the start of JONAP I.<sup>65</sup> The evaluation noted the support provided by UN Women to the Public Security Directorate to secure funds from the Elsie Initiative Fund in June 2021<sup>66</sup> to build dedicated accommodation and a training facility inside the Royal Police Academy campus to provide specialized training to women. Stakeholders emphasized that more such actions needed to be taken to address the practical barriers preventing many women from fully engaging in the security sector, beyond the usual working hours, such as through the provision of childcare and nursery facilities, separate sleeping room, changing rooms, toilet and prayer rooms to allow women to work a 24-hour shift.

In terms of Prevention of Violent Extremism, the evaluation noted that UN Women was a partner of choice for ensuring a gender responsive approach in this highly sensitive area of work, as part of JONAP I. UN Women's work included a dedicated goal on gender-responsive Prevention of Violent Extremism, with funds allocated to its implementation, which was praised as a good practice in the UN Secretary-General's 2021 Annual Report on Women, Peace and Security.<sup>67</sup> The Country Office worked closely with national institutions and the international community to shape institutional and normative elements

of this work. Some key results included successful advocacy to include the JNCW as a member of the national steering committee for the national Prevention of Violent Extremism action plan under the Prevention of Violent Extremism Unit within the Prime Minister's Office. Another success noted was the first national research study (in January 2022) supported by the EU-funded programme on Gender Drivers of Prevention of Violent Extremism. The study did a gender analysis of the drivers and dynamics of violent extremism and social cohesion in Jordan and was completed in partnership with the Prevention of Violent Extremism Unit and the JNCW and examined different roles that women in Jordan can play in preventing violent extremism. It was used to inform policies and strategies on Prevention of Violent Extremism, including the JONAP II.<sup>68</sup>

At the community level, according to 2021 UN Country Annual Results Report for Jordan, UN Women worked in partnership with national organizations to build the skills of 4,335 women and youth to safely and confidentially detect and address early signs of radicalization and violent extremism. However, stakeholder consultations, particularly with donors, indicated that the tangible impact of this grassroots level work was yet to be seen and they felt the work was at a relatively nascent stage. According to some of the stakeholders, although UN Women worked in partnership with NGOs, community-based organizations and had allocated nearly 30 per cent of the JONAP I funds to the NGOs and community-based organizations for implementation on the ground, the community level interventions were rather scattered. They questioned whether the interventions had sufficient geographic and demographic coverage to create meaningful impact. Another concern related to some of the approaches used by implementing partners that had the potential to reinforce traditional and stereotypical gender roles around radicalization and violent extremism. These approaches promoted women's roles as mothers with a moral duty to prevent radicalization in their family and communities and undermined the role of men and boys as change agents to prevent radicalization and violent extremism. A similar concern was raised in the

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<sup>64</sup> JONAP I Indicator 1.1.1. Percentage of security sector staff holding a positive perception of women's entry, advancement and leadership in the security sector and Indicator 1.2.2: Percentage of security sector staff holding a positive perception of women's deployment in peace operations and international missions. The data will be collected in 2023.

<sup>65</sup> The target for all security agencies, an average of 4 per cent by 2022. Please note that this was defined after the merging of the Public Security Directorate with the CDD and GDG since 2019.

<sup>66</sup> [https://mptf.undp.org/sites/default/files/documents/2023-05/2022\\_narrative\\_report\\_elsie.pdf](https://mptf.undp.org/sites/default/files/documents/2023-05/2022_narrative_report_elsie.pdf)

<sup>67</sup> United Nations Security Council. 2021. Women and Peace and Security: Report of the Secretary-General. 27 September. S/2021/827. p. 22.

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/Preventing-violent-extremism-Integrating-gender-perspectives-en.pdf>

strategic review of the UK's<sup>69</sup> contribution to JONAP I. Stakeholders also indicated that perhaps community implementation in this area was not UN Women's strength. On the community approaches being used for preventing violent extremism, the evaluation team noted a difference in viewpoints between some donors and UN Women key programme personnel: the evaluation recommends an open dialogue between these two parties.

At the UN coordination level, the evaluation noted UN Women's participation and contribution to the Prevention of Violent Extremism Working Group, led by UNDP. UNDP was involved as a member of the advisory committee for the UN Women Gender Drivers of Prevention of Violent Extremism national study. Some of the UN entities expressed interest in collaborating with UN Women on this area of work.

Other stakeholders flagged the limited representation of vulnerable Syrian and Jordanian women from the community and camps in developing JONAP. Stakeholders interviewed by the evaluation team indicated that their perspectives were reported by CSOs but were mediated through a CSO's perspective and organizational agenda. Including women affected by conflict would have perhaps

strengthened the outcomes of the consultations. The evaluation noted that a recommendation on this matter had been made by an earlier evaluation (Women, Peace and Security in the Arab States - Final Independent Evaluation, 2018)<sup>70</sup> that in Jordan, UN Women should support regular consultations with refugee women on JONAP through their membership on the technical working group of the JONAP governance structure. While the evaluation team noted the limitation of specifically providing refugee women with membership to the technical working group, the recommendation highlights the need to strengthen mechanisms to systematically incorporate the views of refugee women. The stakeholders expressed their hope that the voice and perspectives of refugee women would be further strengthened in JONAP II.

Overall, stakeholders indicated satisfaction with the first JONAP but expressed some concern that the next phase, currently in development with the government, is overly ambitious and would not solidify or sustain the particular gains made already. These concerns could evolve into resource implications for JONAP II.

<b>BOX 5: TESTING THE THEORY OF CHANGE: WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY PORTFOLIO THROUGH JONAP</b>	
<b>Assumption</b>	<i>The partnership with government, donors, CSOs and beneficiaries such as women affected by conflict will facilitate the adoption of quality accountability frameworks to Women, Peace and Security, which are locally contextualized, to meet emerging threats and challenges.</i>
<b>Evidence</b>	<i>The underpinning intervention logic of the Country Office's work on the Women, Peace and Security portfolio through JONAP in partnership with JNCW was valid. A thorough participatory approach led to a successful development, adoption and implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. However, the voice and perspectives of women affected by the conflict could be further strengthened through actual representation.</i>

Source: Created by the evaluation team

<sup>69</sup> Strategic Review of the FCDO's contribution to the Jordanian National Action Plan (JONAP) Donor Project Draft Report, March 2022

<sup>70</sup> <https://gate.unwomen.org/Evaluation/Details?evaluationId=11275>

**FINDING 7:** The Country Office's Women's Economic Empowerment portfolio had a broad set of interventions covering normative work, private sector engagement and social norms change focusing on occupational segregation. The portfolio contributed to some successful normative work, such as by mainstreaming gender into the Government of Jordan's new Economic Modernization Vision. It made some concrete contributions to strengthen a gender-responsive private sector in Jordan through the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) approach and influenced the work of some key players such as the World Bank and ILO. A clear strategy for the Women's Economic Empowerment portfolio, as well as a road map to guide the translation of the WEPs commitment into tangible actions would have amplified the Country Office's work in this area.

The Women's Economic Empowerment portfolio had the second largest thematic budget in the Country Office (6.3 per cent of the thematic budget from 2018 to 2021) comprising normative work with the Ministry of Labour, private sector engagement with a specific focus on the WEPs, a dedicated Joint Programme on Women and Decent Work with ILO<sup>71</sup> and research work on key issues impacting women in the labour force in Jordan. In addition to targeted programmes, Women's Economic Empowerment was also a pillar of the OASIS programme. The Country Office also worked with other key players such as the World Bank and ILO to influence and support more gender-responsive interventions.

Figure 3: Mapping of women's economic empowerment portfolio Jordan country office, prepared by the evaluation team



The evaluation noted some key contributions towards facilitating normative changes to promote women's economic empowerment. The most significant contribution acknowledged by stakeholders was the Country Office' work to mainstream gender within the Government of Jordan's Economic Modernization Vision<sup>72</sup> – one of the country's most important economic strategies. Some UNCT members were of the opinion that even though the process of drafting this document was not the most participatory, UN Women's strategic action under the leadership of the Inter-ministerial Committee for Women's Empowerment played an important role in influencing and mainstreaming gender in this important policy document.<sup>73</sup>

The Country Office also worked with key players in the field of Women's Economic Empowerment such as the World Bank and ILO to influence their agenda and interventions. For instance, the stakeholders consulted reported that UN Women was able to influence the World Bank's programming to take up gender and transport and social norms in employment as key issues in Jordan. In a similar vein, UN Women was able to work in partnership with ILO to take up the issue of work permits for refugee women. The Country Office ensured these issues were prominent in key advocacy platforms including the Gender Partners Coordination Group where donors and others were actively engaged in key policy issues.

The Country Office contributed to some key policies, particularly in partnership with ILO (see Annex 6 for details). Some of the normative changes highlighted by

<sup>71</sup> UN Women and ILO are implementing a four-year (2019 -2022), multi-country Joint Programme to promote decent employment opportunities for women in Egypt, Jordan and Palestine by addressing the structural causes of inequalities that women face in the region. The programme seeks to address barriers through a comprehensive approach that works both at the macro, meso and micro levels, aiming to enhance productive employment and decent work for women by: (a) promoting gender-responsive labour laws and related policies; (b) promoting a gender-responsive private sector that

attracts, retains and promotes women; and (c) challenging gender stereotypes about women and men's responsibilities for unpaid care, household work and gender occupation segregation.

<sup>72</sup> <https://www.jordanvision.jo/en>

<sup>73</sup> The Engendered Strategy of Jordan's Economic Modernization Vision was launched in December 2022: <https://jordantimes.com/news/local/womens-empowerment-key-pillar-jordans-economic-modernisation-vision%C2%A0>

stakeholders include three days of paternity leave for private sector workers approved in 2019 and the Maternity Social Protection regulation under the Social Security Law,<sup>74</sup> a regulation that enables working mothers to return to work by securing childcare for their children either at a childcare facility or at home. The result of this work was recognized by the International Social Security Association in March 2022.<sup>75</sup> The evaluation noted a fruitful partnership with ILO that played a key role in facilitating these policy changes. The following factors specifically contributed to the key achievements under this partnership: (a) UN Women and ILO's convening power as trusted partners of the government to facilitate policy dialogue; (b) ILO's established relationships with the tripartite committee and different public sector entities (JNCW, Ministry of Labour, Social Security Corporation, etc.), and related committees especially the National Committee for Pay Equity, the maternity insurance committee "Re3aya"; (c) the technical expertise in gender to review labour policies from a gender equality perspective; and (d) strategic investment to build quality evidence (see Annex 8 for a list knowledge products).

The evaluation also noted the Country Office's contribution to strengthening institutional capacities to operationalize these policies, such as its contribution to establishing and supporting Gender Units within the Ministry of Labour in Jordan. In this respect, stakeholders also appreciated the training of government personnel on gender-responsive policymaking (including budgets, services and workplans)<sup>76</sup> as well as training on prevention of violence and harassment in the workplace; and its

contribution to developing a cadre of labour inspectors from the Ministry of Labour for conducting gender-sensitive labour inspection in Jordan. However, there was room to improve the Country Office's "contribution story" towards these policy reforms as well as to monitor implementation of such normative and legislative changes through earmarked budgets.

Including the private sector as one of the Country Office's key programme partners was a relevant strategy considering the main employer for women in Jordan is the public sector and building a gender-responsive private sector has the potential to expand and strengthen private sector employment for women. The Country Office made some concrete contributions to strengthening a gender-responsive private sector in Jordan through the WEP approach. Its focus and achievements resulted in the expansion of WEP signatories from 7 in 2018 to 93 by the end of 2022.<sup>77</sup> According to the stakeholders consulted, the WEP programme maintained an active and engaging schedule with signatories, regularly holding training and networking sessions to support them. They found tools such as the Gender Gap Analysis Tool<sup>78</sup> useful to assess and subsequently reform their policies and processes for more gender-responsive companies. Signatories reported overall satisfaction with the WEP programme – 81 per cent of private sector respondents to the evaluation survey said the training and capacity building provided was valuable or very valuable and all stakeholders to whom it was applicable said the coordination/convening support with the network or stakeholders was valuable or very valuable<sup>79</sup> (see Figure 4).

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<sup>74</sup> It also allows for registered childcare centres to receive direct cash benefits to cover operational costs.

<sup>75</sup> To implement the regulation, the Social Security Corporation launched the "Ri'aya Programme" (in Arabic "Care") in 2021 to support working mothers returning to work after maternity leave and support centres caring for children of working families. As of December 2021, according to Ri'aya records 9,163 mothers were eligible to benefit from

childcare subsidy. Of these women, 5,484 applied for assistance, and 4,757 received support. Data source- Joint Programme Annual Report 2021.

<sup>76</sup> Ministry Of Manpower in Egypt, Ministry of Labour in Jordan and Ministry of National Economy in Palestine

<sup>77</sup> UN Women ILO Joint Programme Annual Progress report, 2022

<sup>78</sup> <https://weps-gapanalysis.org/>

<sup>79</sup> Q7, Private Sector Survey, prepared by Evaluation Team, Annex 4.

Figure 4: Responses to evaluation survey question “what are the strengths of the partnership with un women”, private sector partner survey, prepared by the evaluation team (see annex 4 for full survey results)



The Country Office contributed to enrolling an impressive number of WEP signatories, but it needs to develop a road map to guide and oversee the translation of WEP commitments into actual actions. The signatories urged the Country Office to ensure that the Country Office was making best use of the partnerships to bring forth meaningful changes.

The WEP programme also tried to find synergy with other work, for example by introducing representatives from WEP signatory companies to OASIS centres to facilitate job placements for the cash-for-work target beneficiaries. However, the participating signatories noted that it was not a very thought through initiative: it did not have clarity or a road map and created some false expectations with beneficiaries. The evaluation noted that perhaps with a clear results framework and risk management to mitigate and address any false expectations, this could be a good way forward for employment opportunities. The evaluation noted that although the Country Office had

launched a WEP Jordan Network<sup>80</sup> to facilitate knowledge sharing and collaborative work between like-minded WEP signatories in the country, it was missing an institutional arrangement such as a national committee that could provide oversight and follow-up on the WEP commitments.

A number of stakeholders indicated the Country Office would have benefitted from a clear vision and strategy on Women’s Economic Empowerment during the Strategic Note period given how critical this issue is in the Jordanian context.<sup>81</sup> Some external stakeholders drew a parallel between the Women’s Economic Empowerment portfolio and JONAP and stated that the Country Office’s Women’s Economic Empowerment portfolio needed the clarity, vision, commitment and resources allocated to JONAP to make a real difference.

<b>BOX 6: TESTING THE THEORY OF CHANGE: WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT INCLUDING A GENDER-RESPONSIVE PRIVATE SECTOR</b>	
<b>Assumption</b>	<i>The Country Office is working strategically with the private sector to create a gender-responsive private sector in Jordan; generate resources from the sector including economic opportunities for vulnerable women at scale; and foster an enabling environment for the private sector to contribute to gender equality and the empowerment of women in Jordan.</i>
<b>Evidence</b>	<i>The evidence suggested that the Country Office has successfully engaged the private sector in advancing gender-sensitive policies through the WEP model. However, it was not clear that this work had led to the generation of economic opportunities for vulnerable women at scale. Work to foster an enabling environment has begun through the Country Office’s strong partnership with the Ministry of Labour.</i>

Source: Created by the evaluation team

<sup>80</sup> <https://jordan.unwomen.org/en/stories/news/2022/01/womens-empowerment-principles-weps-jordan-network-launched>

<sup>81</sup> For instance, women’s participation in the labour force stands at 15.6 per cent, representing a 77 per cent gap between males and females, World Economic Forum (2021) Global Gender Gap Report 2021

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**FINDING 8:** The Country Office's Women's Political Participation portfolio has influenced some key normative work and the office carried out some operational activities to address the challenges facing women's political participation. Given the limited resource availability for development work in Jordan during the Strategic Note period, the Country Office supported this portfolio creatively through JONAP and its partnership with UNDP. However, moving forward, this portfolio will need a more ambitious vision, clear strategy and dedicated resources.

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Promoting Women's Political Participation and representation in the political sphere was outlined as a priority area of work in the Country Office's Strategic Note 2018–2022. Given the challenges regarding limited financing for development work, the portfolio was largely supported through funds from other programming, such as JONAP I. The evaluation noted some key contributions made by the Country Office, particularly with respect to its normative work to guarantee women's equitable and active participation in politics, election participation and reform. For instance, at the normative level, UN Women's technical support to include gender perspectives and gender issues in the Royal Committee to Modernize the Political System – established to modernize Jordan's laws on political parties and elections in June 2021 – was widely acknowledged and appreciated by the stakeholders consulted. According to these stakeholders, due to this work, several gender-related draft laws and constitutional amendments were under consideration by Parliament. Once endorsed by Parliament, a new phase in political life was expected in Jordan (see [Annex 6](#) for more details). The evaluation noted UN Women's fruitful partnership with the Chair of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Women's Empowerment and JNCW; its technical knowledge and grasp over subject matter in the Jordanian context; as well as its trusted and fruitful relationships with CSO contributed towards these results.

The evaluation also noted UN Women's work with the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs to lead a nation-wide discussion on the gender-related recommendations arising from the Royal Committee on Political Reform, particularly at the governorate-level consultations<sup>82</sup> and with female members of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The Country Office's technical support to the Independent Elections Commission for the formation of the Women's

Empowerment Unit and to strengthen its focus on ending violence against women in politics and in elections was also well appreciated by the stakeholders involved.

At an operational level, the Country Office's support to promote women's representation in the November 2020 parliamentary elections through a Political Leadership and Candidates' Training manual and its delivery through the deployment of 26 national trainers was acknowledged by the stakeholders. According to the programme monitoring data, the Country Office provided support to nearly 389 politically active women to develop their political campaigning skills and enter national politics through the electoral process.

The evaluation noted that following the 2016 parliamentary and 2017 municipal elections, UN Women and UNDP had increased their collaboration during the relevant Strategic Note period. Both entities developed annual joint programming, tapping into respective resources to boost collaboration.<sup>83</sup> UN Women worked with UNDP to enhance women's participation in Jordan's 2020 parliamentary elections and to build the capacity of members of parliament on gender equality issues and support elected female representatives in their new capacities. Preparation of a Joint Programme began in 2020 and subsequently a dedicated donor roundtable was conducted in July 2020 under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator. However, at the time of the evaluation, the Joint Programme had not come into fruition. According to the stakeholders consulted, this was mainly because of the COVID-19 crisis and resource constraints as the donor portfolio was predominantly geared towards humanitarian financing.

Some stakeholders expressed that UN Women's work was focusing too much on the "soft issues" and that it needed to move beyond strategic "entry points" to tackle tough

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<sup>82</sup> 12 governorates and the three Badiya districts

<sup>83</sup> UN Women collaborated with UNDP during the Strategic Note period to conduct a national survey on public perceptions towards women's political participation and a post-election report.



issues to achieve real change such as social norms and social cultural practices that discourage women's participation in political and public affairs as well as comprehensively address the issue of violence against women in politics. According to some of the internal stakeholders consulted, this portfolio could have benefitted from more attention from Country Office leadership as well as better visibility.

Overall, noting the limited resource availability for development work in Jordan, as well as corporate priorities to raise more non-core resources along with programming at scale, the Country Office found ways to support this critical area of work through partnerships and JONAP resources. There were elements of transformational work contained in the Women's Political

Participation portfolio at the legislative reform and policy level as well as some operational work to address the challenges facing women's political participation. Moving forward, this work would benefit from a more ambitious vision, clear strategy and dedicated resources – a challenge that is not specific to UN Women but to the UNCT and other development partners in Jordan.

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**FINDING 9:** The Country Office demonstrated some useful approaches to strengthen the institutional capacity of government partners in relation to gender mainstreaming, gender data and statistics, gender budgeting and institutional capacity development. However, further efforts would help to amplify the work and achieve scale.

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The Country Office introduced approaches that aimed to provide knowledge, skills and systems to its government partners to support gender-responsive policies and implementation plans. The Country Office has worked in partnership with the Department of Statistics since 2005 when the Department opened a Gender Division with the support of UNIFEM. During the period of the Strategic Note, the partnership and, in particular the “Making Every Woman and Girl Count” programme, contributed to some meaningful, tangible results. This included an assessment of the Status of Gender Statistics in Jordan that led to integration of gender in the Department's institutional performance development to develop and improve the provision of gender statistics; technical and analytical support for the launch of the Jordan National Gender-Specific SDGs Indicators; and technical support in applying a gender lens to the public expenditure review for climate change (see [Annex 6 for details](#)).

The stakeholders consulted attributed the success on gender data and statistics to UN Women's systematic and ongoing technical support. According to a respondent:

*“The Department of Statistics has made significant progress on gender data and statistics and has a clear road map to strengthen it further, including at the decentralized/local level, thanks to UN Women's consistent support”*

*A participant of a focus group discussion from the Department of Statistics*

It was also noted by stakeholders that work on improved data and statistics with a development lens was under way through a number of UN agencies. In this regard, stakeholders recommended that the Country Office work more closely with the UNCT to align efforts and ensure that gender is a criterion across all statistical work.

The Country Office's Institutional Capacity Development programme was another example of a model to ensure that gender is considered in all aspects of institutional performance, which was successfully introduced in the Ministry of Social Development<sup>84</sup> (one of UN Women's key partners). According to stakeholders, the approach helped enhance the organizational environment to support gender mainstreaming and served as a practical means to help them develop their institutional performance for gender mainstreaming. The evaluation noted that at the

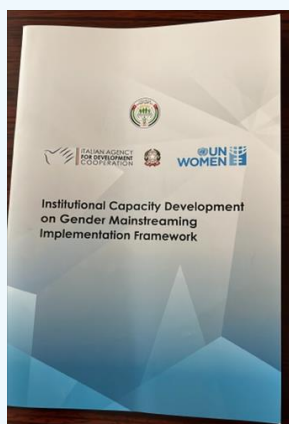
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<sup>84</sup> In partnership with the Ministry of Social Development, the Country Office developed an extensive information and training manual for gender mainstreaming in the Ministry and introduced a training and train the trainer model.

time of evaluation data collection, over 560 Ministry of Social Development employees had been trained on gender mainstreaming by the master trainers, formed and run independently by the Ministry. Although the Institutional Capacity Development programme had proved an effective model for the Ministry of Social Development, the evaluation team could not find clear evidence of a strategy to integrate this work more broadly across programming or with other ministries.

Finally, the evaluation noted the Country Office’s contribution to institutionalize gender-responsive budgeting as a national tool for state budget planning and allocation. Stakeholders appreciated the Country Office’s strategic partnership with the General Budget Department under the Ministry of Finance to support introduction of a Gender Functional Classification in various national budget guidelines. This in turn will allow the Government of Jordan to specify and track the resources allocated to gender equality within each government institution.

**PHOTO OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT MANUAL DEVELOPED BY THE COUNTRY OFFICE FOR THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**



The Country Office’s work to develop a gender-responsive budgeting online module in Arabic, its targeted work with the four line ministries (Education, Health, Labour, and Parliamentary and Political Affairs) to support implementation of the gender-responsive budgeting interventions and its partnership with Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and French Development Agency to mobilize resources<sup>85</sup> for scaling up gender-responsive budgeting at a national<sup>86</sup> level also received acknowledgement from stakeholders.

Overall, the Institutional Capacity Development model had generated institutional ownership and long-term sustainability at one ministry, with scaling up potential to other ministries. The work on gender data and gender-responsive budgeting continues to support critical gender-responsive policy decision-making.

**BOX 7: TESTING THE THEORY OF CHANGE: INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT APPROACH**

<i>Assumption</i>	<i>An Institutional Capacity Development approach and focus on generating gender data, statistics and evidence will contribute to the successful adoption, implementation and monitoring of the normative and policy frameworks on gender equality.</i>
<i>Evidence</i>	<i>The evidence suggests that the Country Office has contributed to positive normative decision-making and national ownership of gender mainstreaming through both its partnership with the Department of Statistics and its Institutional Capacity Development programming with the Ministry of Social Development. However, for the Institutional Capacity Development work, a strategy is required to integrate this work more broadly across programming or with other ministries.</i>

Source: Created by the evaluation team

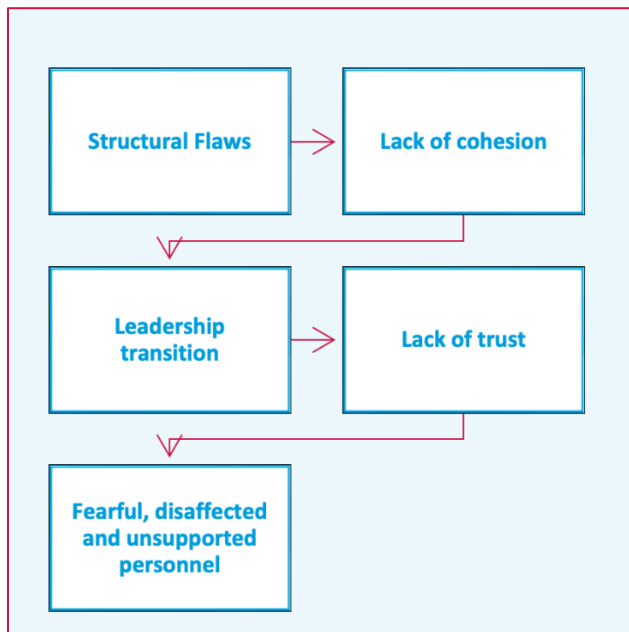
<sup>85</sup> EUR 1.5 million

<sup>86</sup> The new gender-responsive budgeting programme was launched in April 2022 and will run until June 2024.

### 3.4 Efficiency

**FINDING 10:** The Country Office’s staffing structure could have been more “fit for purpose”, particularly for the direct implementation model of the OASIS programme. At the time of the evaluation, the working environment was not conducive to the optimal functioning of the office. There was a lack of communication and coordination between the teams and fragmentation, leading to efficiency losses and potential risks. Regional management oversight measures needed to be more proactive and regular and the corporate approach to support leadership transition needed to be stronger.

Figure 5: Jordan country office’s efficiency bottlenecks, prepared by the evaluation team



The Country Office mobilized significant resources during the Strategic Note period with a relatively large direct humanitarian implementation portfolio compared to other offices in the region. At the time of the evaluation, evidence collected through personnel interviews, surveys, review of regional support mission reports;<sup>87</sup> documentation provided by the Country Office; and observations during field visits indicated that the Country Office’s staffing structure was not fully “fit for purpose”, particularly for direct implementation of the OASIS

programme. OASIS went through rapid growth, including expansion to host communities, and there should have been a functional review to assess its delivery model vis-a-vis required staffing structure to efficiently implement and monitor such a rapidly expanded and geographically dispersed programme. Given the risks inherent in direct humanitarian implementation programming, certain functions were under-resourced or under-valued (e.g. monitoring and evaluation, grievance mechanisms and safeguards). The evaluation team noted the complaints raised by beneficiaries on the issue of late payments in 2022. This has an impact on the lives of the people the Country Office seeks to serve and also raises potential reputational risks for the organization. For more details refer to the internal audit report on the Jordan Country Office.<sup>88</sup>

The evaluation noted that the Country Office had created a Programme Support Unit during the Strategic Note period to support programme management functions, including quality assurance, and support services to the programme unit to allow programme managers to focus on the technical or thematic side of the work. The Programme Support Unit was dissolved in 2021. At the time of the evaluation, several issues were noted including limited systems and oversight for the complex financial management of a combination of pooled and bilateral funding under JONAP and OASIS; and some HR structures were not well documented under the umbrella prodoc for the humanitarian portfolio (e.g. Eid Bi Eid), making it challenging to track staff assigned to projects and correlate this with their actual contribution. The evaluation also noted that in some cases personnel’s

<sup>87</sup> These concerns are also articulated in the report from the Quality Assurance Review of the Jordan Country Office, undertaken by Regional Office representatives 4-15 September 2022. IAS noted similar concerns in its internal audit report in 2022.

<sup>88</sup> Country office audit: UN Women Country Office in Jordan (IEAS/IAS/2023/004)

Terms of Reference were not updated when the programmatic scope changed or expanded. For instance, the Terms of Reference/job description of the personnel involved in implementing the OASIS programme were not always aligned with tasks and responsibilities listed in the standard operating procedures resulting in personnel performing duties or activities outside of their Terms of Reference/job description.<sup>89</sup>

Mechanisms for accountability towards the affected population needed strengthening, including better oversight. The role of some personnel directly involved in programme implementation was not sufficiently segregated from grievance mechanisms to ensure the independence of the complaints procedures. The OASIS protection team reported to the OASIS Project Manager, which is not aligned with accountability to affected population principles. At the time of the evaluation, the evaluation team noted that the protection role was not uniformly understood. Complaints handling responsibilities were moved from project personnel and reporting was channelled directly to the Country Representative towards the end of 2022. At the same time, some project personnel were still involved in receiving some complaints, e.g. submitted via complaint boxes. Therefore, the mechanism should be mapped and revisited to ensure accountability to affected population principles are fully respected (for more details, including a case study, see [Annex 7](#)).

The evaluation noted that monitoring and learning capacity was not adequate to support the Country Office's diverse programme portfolio and complex programming. Most of the donors consulted as part of the evaluation expected the Country Office's monitoring systems to capture and report on results and impact. The Country Office explained that monitoring of the OASIS programme was mostly carried out by the programme manager. Ideally, key elements of programme monitoring should be performed by independent specialists qualified in results-oriented monitoring (see Finding 11).

The evaluation also noted that the OASIS programme was behind in achieving its targets, according to the 2021 progress report submitted against the pooled funds. The annual target of 4,200 beneficiaries receiving cash-for-

work assistance was reduced to 2,100 due to a decision to increase the rotation period from three months to six months to allow for a more sustainable intervention; however, the actual number reached as per the report was 931 and the number of women accessing work permits or opening business within three months of the cash-for-work rotation was 41 against an annual target of 300. Although one of the key reasons for this was reportedly due to the impact of COVID-19, it still raised questions about results-focused management, and the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme.

At the time of the evaluation, Country Office personnel indicated limited two-way communication between supervisors and supervisees, and strained communication between management and personnel. The evaluation also noted some concerns about the potential lack of adherence to the Code of Conduct expected of UN personnel, i.e. some personnel were not acting in a mission-appropriate fashion. The leadership transition in the Country Office also exacerbated the issues in the working environment. The Country Office did not have a Country Representative from May 2022 until September 2022; and while this period may not seem particularly long, it occurred concurrently with other human resource challenges in the office. Two ad interim Country Representatives were deployed for a short period (two months) on Detailed Assignment, which was not sufficient to learn and make effective decisions about existing issues. There also appeared to be limited continuity between the two assignments, which resulted in a lack of clarity and continuity in the office during the short period of transition and an increase in personnel tension and disaffection. These challenges were also noted by some external stakeholders and donors. According to Country Office personnel, the office experienced high staffing turnover and ad interim replacements were made.

The Regional Office provided support to the Country Office through missions (two) to support human resources issues in 2022 and for quality assurance (one in September 2022). Although useful, such management oversight missions should have been carried out on a more regular basis to ensure increased independent management oversight of such large programmes and associated risks. There was also a need to regularly monitor the implementation of actions against the recommendations arising from such oversight missions.

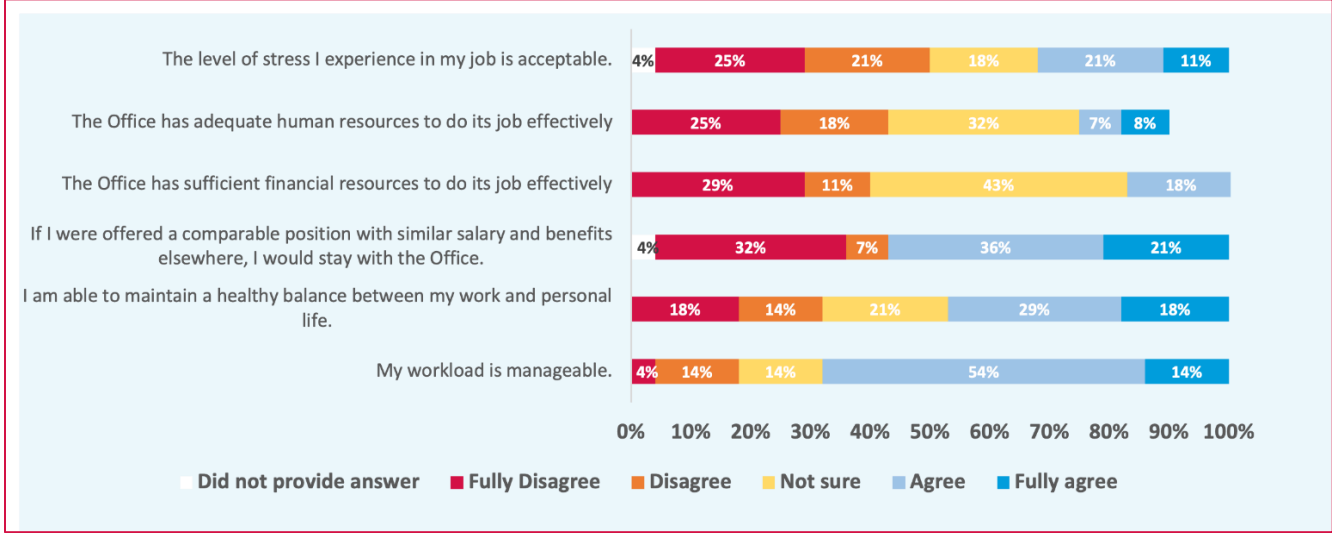
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<sup>89</sup> [ibid](#)

The Country Office’s structural gaps, leadership issues and strained internal communication led to a less conducive working environment. At the time of the evaluation, the Country Office presented a picture of demoralized staff: personnel advised the evaluation team that they did not have meaningful insight into the work of their colleagues, nor did they have appropriate information to work as a

team on strategic programmes; and personnel were concerned about the stability of their own positions. While the personnel survey conducted by the evaluation team reflected some of these concerns (see Figure 6); there were also some positive responses with regards to work life balance and manageability of workload (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Personnel responses to q.7: personnel and field personnel surveys. Prepared by the evaluation team

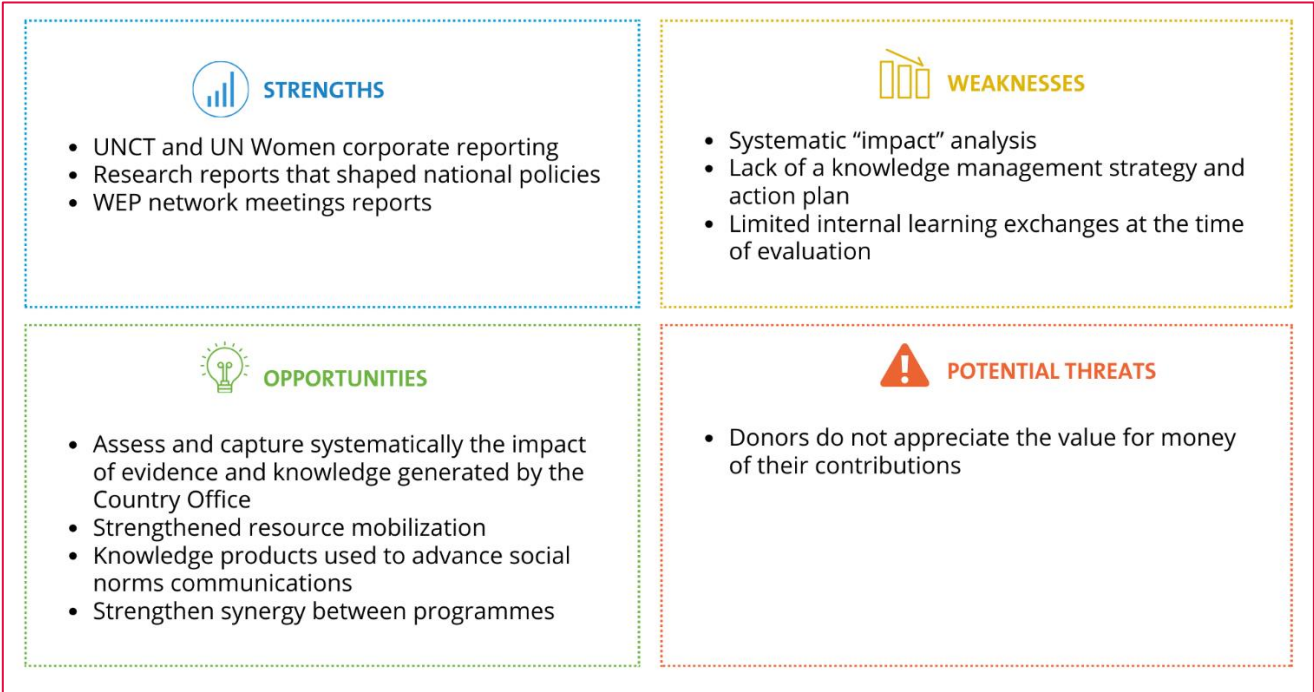


Source: UN Women personnel and field staff survey (n=28). For full survey results see Annex 4.

A new, full-time Country Representative began in September 2022 and the evaluation team took note of the steps taken to address some of these issues through an open and systematic engagement of all personnel with management, reinvigorated regular Programme and Operations team meetings and open and transparent internal communication.

**Finding 11:** The Country Office generated some meaningful evidence and knowledge products that influenced some gender equality transformative policies and programmatic decisions. A knowledge management strategy and a plan would have strengthened its approach to evidence building and management. The Country Office’s monitoring and reporting systems needed to better support the analysis and understanding of the outcomes and impact of its work.

Figure 7: Swot analysis of the country office’s reporting and knowledge sharing approach, prepared by the evaluation team



The Country Office’s reporting and knowledge sharing processes have some strengths and some challenges as summarized in the SWOT analysis created by the evaluation team – see Figure 7. It was widely acknowledged by UNCT partner agencies, and apparent in the document review, that the Country Office supported UNCT reporting through the Gender SWAP, outcome reporting on the UNSDF and at key committees. The Country Office was active on the UNCT information reporting platform. The Country Office’s corporate reporting was also up to date.

The Country Office was valued by stakeholders for the research reports that it produced (see Annex 8 for a list of products). Some stakeholders spoke highly of the gender

equality knowledge shared by the Country Office, both in terms of specific programmes and more broadly.

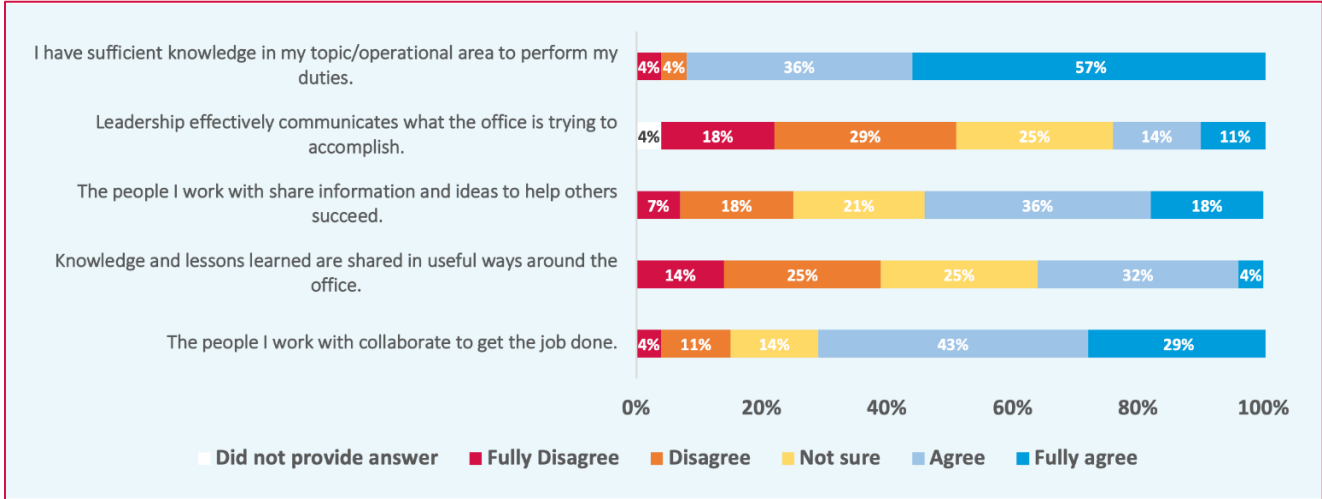
More than half of the Country Office’s private sector stakeholders rated the data or research on gender equality and women’s empowerment issues as valuable or very valuable.<sup>90</sup> However, the evaluation noted that the Country Office did not have a knowledge management strategy or plan and most of the knowledge products did not have a dissemination plan. Further, the Country Office did not systematically monitor the uptake of these knowledge products and their impact.

At the time of the evaluation, Country Office personnel raised concerns that they were not supported with knowledge management or evidence expertise in terms of providing deeper level programme analysis and that there

<sup>90</sup> Q7 of Private Sector Survey, prepared by the evaluation team (see Annex 4).

was limited knowledge and information sharing across programmes in the office.

Figure 8: Personnel responses to q.8 personnel and field personnel surveys, prepared by the evaluation team (see annex 4 for full survey results)



Source: UN Women personnel and field staff survey conducted by the evaluation team (n=28)

Programme Steering Committee partners indicated that programme-level reporting did not contain adequate outcome or impact-level reporting, particularly with respect to long-running programmes such as the humanitarian response programmes. The evaluation team also noted that the independent verification of data and data quality assurance systems needed improvement. Particularly for the OASIS programme, the programme generated baseline, midline and endline data for each round of cash-for-work. The field officers were trained to collect this data and relied on the data reported by the beneficiaries to them, making the data vulnerable to a reporting bias. In 2020, the programme introduced the Gender-sensitive Resilience Capacity Index (GS-RCI) measurement,<sup>91</sup> developed jointly with FAO, to cover the Japan-funded component of the portfolio (named as Women's Leadership, Empowerment, Access, and Protection, LEAP) and expanded this analysis to the EU Trust Fund-funded component (known as MADAD programme) in 2022. The evaluation noted that this was a step in the right direction to capture the resilience and factors critical for strengthening resilience. However, this initiative was not applied to the Incentive-Based Volunteers after each rotation to measure outcomes and

impact to systematically assess how their lives had changed, for instance 6 or 12 months after the cash-for-work experience. The Country Office could consider differentiating the Gender-Sensitive Resilience Capacity Index between technical specialized Incentive-Based Volunteers and supporting Incentive-Based Volunteers, and should cover the full OASIS portfolio. The evaluation also noted the urgency of building data quality assessment and assurance systems to ensure data accuracy, completeness and independence. Similar areas for improvement were noted in the IAS internal audit report.<sup>92</sup>

At the time of the evaluation, the evaluation team also noted concerns raised by some Steering Committee partners regarding the timeliness of reports. Some partners indicated that reporting was provided in a 'just-in-time' fashion and did not provide sufficient time or agenda space for questions or strategic discussion by Steering Committee members. Some stakeholders indicated that UN Women needed to strengthen its response to the feedback and comments they provided. They noted that information was not shared in time to add it to their own communications or advocacy cycles and

<sup>91</sup>Gender sensitive resilience capacity index, Women's Leadership, Empowerment, Access, and Protection (LEAP)- Iraq  
<sup>92</sup> Country office audit: UN Women Country Office in Jordan (IEAS/IAS/2023/004)

that they were frequently notified of information and events too late to participate. The evaluation team noted differing views from some Country Office personnel in this regard, who indicated that the Country Office had well-functioning systems in place and perhaps the recent

transitions in the office had affected usual performance. Overall, the evaluation recommends that these systems are resurrected and strengthened to address the concerns raised by Steering Committee partners.

### 3.5 Gender Equality and Human Rights

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**FINDING 12:** The Country Office’s largest and most prominent portfolio on humanitarian work targets women with vulnerabilities, including those facing intersectional challenges. The evaluation noted the availability of sex, age and disability disaggregated data for the humanitarian portfolio, although analysis of the same for learning and programme improvement was limited. However, beyond the humanitarian programme, engagement with women in particular target groups appeared to occur in a less systematic manner.

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The Strategic Note (2018–22) identified specific target groups in Jordan that have intersections between gender and other types of vulnerability, including:

- Refugee women
- Women living in rural areas
- Women with disabilities
- Elderly women and other vulnerable groups such as female-headed households.

Country Office personnel highlighted that they also identify women in politics and women who are environmental defenders as particularly vulnerable.

The Country Office’s humanitarian portfolio targeted refugee women in camps and vulnerable women in host communities (both refugee and Jordanian women in the host communities). The programme intentionally targeted and aimed to include the most vulnerable women such as women with disabilities, women heads of households and elderly women. The application process required women to self-identify with respect to these categories. The beneficiaries consulted indicated that one of the strengths of the programme was its inclusive nature, particularly referencing older women who may be excluded from other economic programming.

The evaluation noted the availability of sex, age and disability disaggregated data for the humanitarian portfolio. Although analysis of the same for learning and programmatic improvement was rather limited.

The evaluation team received contradictory evidence from stakeholders and implementing partners for other thematic areas. While some partners noted that the Country Office was one of the loudest voices in the room when it came to leave no one behind principles, others indicated that UN Women’s portfolio was not systematically addressing the needs of the most vulnerable groups such as those living with disability. In the words of one of the respondents:

***“They targeted youth in their meetings with civil society municipality councils however, there were no support for participants with hearing impairment or speech disability”.***

Similarly, the survey of personnel revealed similar contradictions with approximately half the personnel respondents indicating that they were either very unsatisfied, somewhat unsatisfied or not sure about how well the Country Office engages with or identifies the



most marginalized and vulnerable populations in line with the principle of leaving no one behind.<sup>93</sup>

Programme documents and donor reporting revealed a limited meaningful data collection in terms of a systematic approach, engagement and impact of programming for targeted groups.

Figure 9 below outlines the evaluation team’s review of documents and interview evidence regarding the ways in which thematic areas were either systematically including target groups in programme design and implementation

or were including them in implementation, albeit in a less systematic fashion.

There is opportunity in the next Strategic Note for the Country Office to implement a systematic and strategic approach to reaching the most vulnerable women in Jordan across all programming and with an eye to reaching the wider array of target groups already identified. This will require a multi-pronged approach to programme design, implementation and monitoring.

THEMATIC AREA	REFUGEE WOMEN	WOMEN IN RURAL AREAS	WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES	ELDERLY WOMEN	WOMEN HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS	WOMEN IN POLITICS	WOMEN WHO ARE ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS
Humanitarian							
Women, Peace and Security							
Women’s Economic Empowerment							
Women’s Political Participation							

programming in thematic area systematically addresses target group in design and implementation  
 programming in thematic area includes target group in implementation  
 Data not available

Figure 9: Country office’s programmatic approach to leave no one behind, prepared by the evaluation team

Box 8: TESTING THE THEORY OF CHANGE: LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND	
<b>Assumption</b>	<i>The Country Office is working systematically to operationalize the commitments to leave no one behind principles by assessing who is left behind and why; prioritizing solutions; tracking and monitoring progress; and ensuring follow-up reviews.</i>
<b>Evidence</b>	<i>The evidence suggests that the Country Office has specifically addressed refugee women and women in host communities, including where these women experience other intersectional challenges. However, leave no one behind principles have not yet been operationalized across the portfolio in a systematic manner.</i>

Source: Created by the evaluation team

<sup>93</sup> See q9 of Personnel Survey, Annex 4, where respondents indicated their satisfaction level with UN Women’s work: Engage with the most marginalized and vulnerable populations in line with the principle of leave no one behind: 7 per cent very unsatisfied; 13 per cent somewhat unsatisfied; 27 per cent not sure; 27 per cent somewhat satisfied; and 27 per cent very satisfied (n=15). Identification of the most marginalized and

vulnerable populations in line with the principle of leave no one behind: 7 per cent very unsatisfied; 20 per cent somewhat unsatisfied; 27 per cent not sure; 20 per cent somewhat satisfied; and 27 per cent very satisfied (n=15).

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**FINDING 13:** The Country Office adopted some innovative and diverse approaches towards achieving gender transformation and social norms change. These interventions would benefit from a coherent strategy and systematic evidence gathering to confirm what is working and what is not to achieve gender equality social norms change. Most of the Country Office’s interventions were gender transformative, but some of its work should adopt a more socio-ecological approach to ensure an enabling environment for gender transformative changes; and some of the Country Office’s work posed a risk of yielding negative results by reinforcing gender stereotypes.

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A critical aspect of achieving gender equality transformation is addressing gender discriminatory social norms and behaviours. The evaluation noted some well-designed interventions to address gender stereotypes in Jordan. For instance, the Joint Programme with ILO included work with the Ministry of Youth to break gender occupational segregation by promoting women’s entry into the male dominated sports/fitness sector. The mid-term evaluation of this programme noted evidence that this component was playing a tangible role in changing social norms.<sup>94</sup> Similarly, the current evaluation noted anecdotal evidence of training carried out as part of the WEP network of signatories on concepts such as unconscious gender bias, critical to addressing stereotyping. The Country Office supported the HeforShe network (one of the largest in the Arab States region) and did some innovative work in partnership with the young people to raise awareness on gender equality and women’s empowerment in a fun and engaging way such as through a gamification app ‘WeRise’. The app was adopted and taken forward by the Arab States Regional Office. The Country Office also developed a dedicated programme<sup>95</sup> to address discriminatory norms and attitudes which included a legislative review to examine the extent to which patriarchy is embedded in national legislation and societal practices. The evidence-based policy recommendations to enhance gender equality in Jordan were shared with parliamentarians.<sup>96</sup> Under JONAP, the Country Office’s work with the Jordanian Army and National Police Service was counteracting stereotypes by promoting women in security roles, including

supporting an entirely female platoon of peacekeepers which could be further strengthened by a well-defined modality for dealing with gender backlash dynamics.

The OASIS programme was somewhat contradictory in terms of its social norms change work. According to some of the stakeholders consulted, while the programme was seeking to empower women economically, some of the cash-for-work programming was supporting stereotypical social conventions of ‘women’s work’ such as sewing and hairdressing. The evaluation noted that in the camps, part of the cash-for-work money went to men who were employed as security guards at the gates of the centres. There was perhaps a missed opportunity to involve these men in programming related to challenging social norms and gender-based violence<sup>97</sup> and consulting women (and training them)<sup>98</sup> on unconventional occupations such as security guards. The evaluation team appreciates the cultural sensitivities around gender roles but also notes that there was room to engage men and community leaders in a broader dialogue about the opportunities for women beyond conventional vocations.

It is acknowledged that social norms work in general is challenging. As in many countries, cultural stereotypes and behaviours in Jordan are deeply rooted and inform decision-making at all levels. It is incumbent on UN Women to find innovative and meaningful ways to address social norms change. The evaluation team noted that the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)<sup>99</sup> study is set for release, which should provide

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<sup>94</sup><https://gate.unwomen.org/Evaluation/Details?EvaluationId=11678>

<sup>95</sup> Funded by the Netherlands.

<sup>96</sup> UN Women in partnership with the Information and Research Center conducted a study to explore the prevalence and root causes of gender discrimination and patriarchy in Jordan. It examined the extent to which patriarchy is embedded in national legislation and societal practices and provides evidence-based policy recommendations to enhance gender equality in Jordan.

<sup>97</sup> Results of the data collected from beneficiaries in 2022 and collated by the Regional Office as part of its August 2022 review of beneficiary data, showed that, particularly with respect to tolerance of gender-based violence, participation in the programme had minimal or no impact on the views or experiences of women participants. See 2021-2022 MADAD Midline Analysis, prepared by the Regional Office, August 2022.

<sup>98</sup> This aligns to humanitarian-development nexus gender-sensitive approaches that note that engaging with norms for male behaviour is a critical element of transformation in fragile settings. See for example OECD, “Gender Equality Across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus” July 2021, <https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-equality-across-the-hdp-nexus-july2021.pdf>

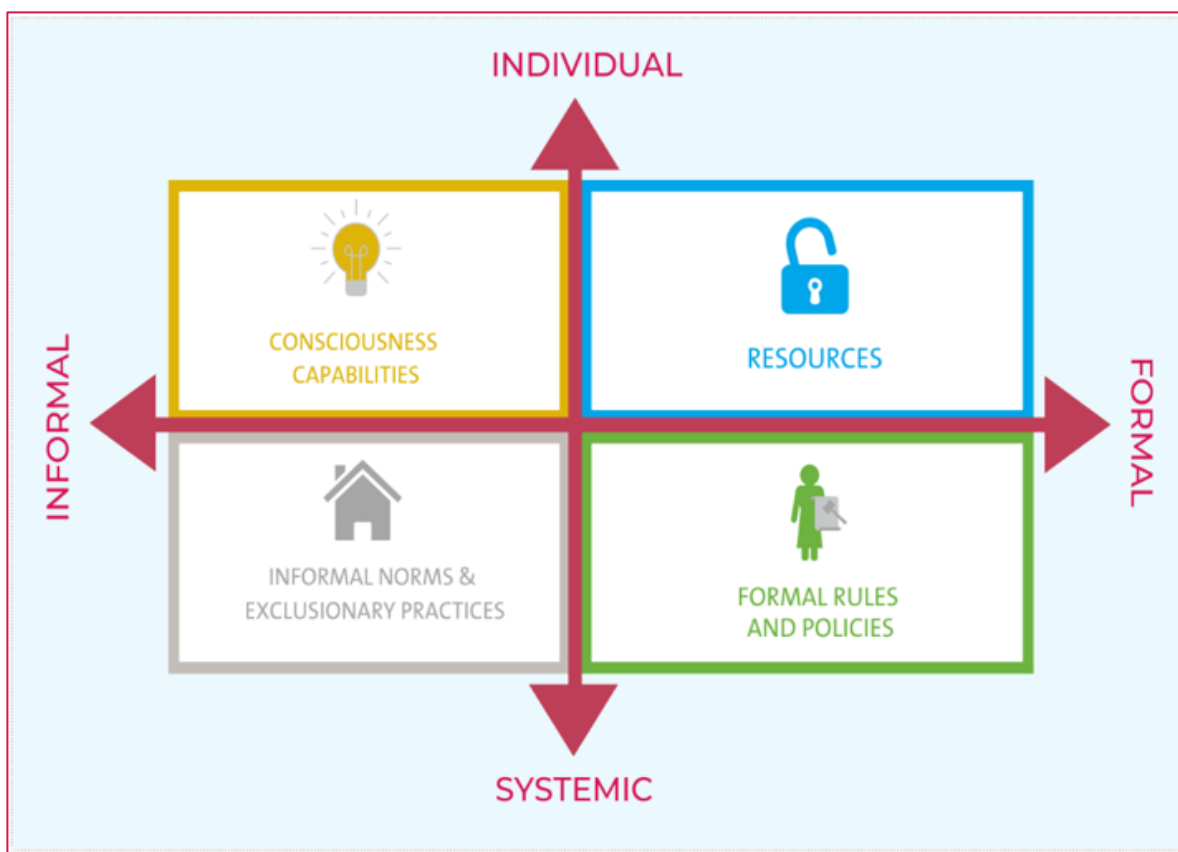
<sup>99</sup> The International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) is a comprehensive study on men’s attitudes and practices – along with women’s opinions and reports of men’s practices – on a wide variety of topics related to gender equality and women’s empowerment. Consisting of both a household survey and companion qualitative research, the overall goal of IMAGES is to build understanding of men’s practices and

important data and direction for social norms work. Social norms change interventions also need relevant monitoring and learning systems to adequately capture and track gender transformative changes, such as changes in resistance to change, the existence of sanctions, men’s engagement in household duties or evidence of religious and community leaders speaking out in the advancement of gender equality and women’s empowerment. Establishing a means of capturing and analysing this data will support the Country Office’s transformation efforts.

Overall, the evaluation noted some innovative and diverse approaches towards achieving gender transformation and social norms change. These interventions would benefit from a coherent strategy and systematic evidence gathering to confirm what is working and what is not to achieve gender social norms change.

The evaluation used the Gender at Work Framework<sup>100</sup> (see Figure 10) to assess the overall impact of the Country Office’s portfolio and the interrelationship between gender equality, individual capabilities, organizational change and institutions, and the power dynamics within communities. The Country Office’s work was mostly geared towards gender transformative changes but some of its work needs to adopt a socio-ecological approach to ensure an enabling environment for gender transformative changes and changes in social norms. Some of the Country Office’s interventions also ran the risk of reinforcing gender stereotypes as outlined above.

Figure 10: Gender at Work Framework



attitudes related to gender equality and women’s empowerment to inform gender equality and women’s empowerment policies through the engagement of men and boys.

<sup>100</sup> [Gender at work analytical-framework](#)

When the Country Office's portfolio is viewed across the four quadrants, it is evident that its work targeted the formal quadrants of formal rules and policies, services and resource availability. It had also targeted the informal quadrant of generating individual capability but this could be further strengthened through a coherent strategy on social norms change.

With respect to the formal quadrants, it is clear that the normative improvements in legislation, policy and adherence to international conventions had been positively impacted by the Country Office's work and advocacy. The Country Office had contributed to strengthening institutional capacity as well as generated empirical evidence – both gender data and research. Its ongoing work with the Department of Statistics to build gender data in Jordan will have long-term, positive impact.

Similarly, UN Women's work made gains in the service delivery and resources available to women through gender-responsive budgeting; cash-for-work support for some of the most vulnerable women; and work on a

gender-responsive private sector through the WEPs. The Country Office also strengthened the individual capacity of women in the security sector through JONAP I as well as in political participation through the Women's Political Participation portfolio. The humanitarian portfolio theory of change however needs re-examination to ensure that the cash-for-work component is translating into medium and longer-term economic independence as well as challenging gender occupational segregation.

The Country Office's work on the informal norms and exclusionary practices as described above needed a clear coherent strategy to bring forth gender transformative changes in social norms. Some of the Country Office's interventions risked reinforcing gender stereotypical messages and potentially could do harm to the gender transformative agenda. Almost all stakeholders interviewed as part of the evaluation process indicated that changing gender norms remained one of the most significant areas of work in the context of Jordan to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment.



Photo ©UN Women

# **4** LESSONS LEARNED

This section provides generalizable lessons from the experience of the Jordan Country Office that have potential application in other UN Women offices and programmes.

**Lesson 1: Donors can be valuable allies for collective advocacy on gender equality and women’s empowerment issues beyond their funding support.**

Donors are valued development partners and valuable allies and could support Country Offices beyond funding with expertise, diplomacy, contextual insight and advocacy at high levels. In contexts where working on gender transformative changes is challenging due to structural gender inequalities; deep-rooted gender discriminatory social cultural beliefs and practices; as well as potential backlash, they could play a pivotal role as UN Women’s partners. However, to facilitate this, UN Women needs to strengthen its convening role, provide donors with high-quality, credible programme data and be open to act on the feedback and advice provided by donors. In the case of Jordan, donors believed in UN Women’s convening role to bring them and CSOs together to facilitate a united voice on gender transformative issues, particularly those that were deep rooted in socio-political structures.

**Lesson 2: For gender transformative changes, social norms change principles and interventions should be cross-cutting with relevant measurement indices to capture change as well as learning.**

Social norms change is critical to advance transformation in gender equality. Country Offices may miss opportunities to address negative social norms and stereotypes if they limit their social norms activities to one or two programmes or wait for larger-scale regional programming such as Men and Women for Gender Equality. A gender equality transformative approach requires social norms change interventions to be cross-cutting throughout all programming, finding opportunities to apply a socio-ecological model targeting the micro, meso and macro level of change to facilitate an enabling environment, including the engagement of men and boys, family, communities and opinion leaders in the solution. Such an approach also needs to be supported with a relevant set of measurement indices to capture change and learning regarding what is working and what is not working well. UN Women in Jordan have developed some innovative interventions for social norms change that could be better connected through a strategy to facilitate coherence across the portfolio.

**Lesson 3: Regional and global UN Women management oversight and change support mechanisms should be structured based on the nature of Country Office programming, including its size and resource envelope, and an assessment of the potential risks relating to accountability to the affected population and the Entity’s reputation.**

The measure of a Country Office’s success is frequently linked to its resource mobilization capability. In other words, a Country Office with a large budget may be viewed as highly functioning and therefore in less need of management oversight. This approach has the potential to miss key indicators of concern or not respond to challenges at an early stage, particularly in those Country Offices that are conducting direct implementation programming. Additional rigour should be introduced at regional and global levels in management oversight of direct implementation programming, including accountability to beneficiaries, value for money, long-term impact studies and ongoing staff training. In the same vein, leadership transitions should be managed and supported proactively to minimize disruption and support the smooth functioning of the office and programme delivery.

**Lesson 4: Implementing a gender equality transformative humanitarian, development and peace nexus (or Triple Nexus) will require a whole of systems approach and shifts in ways of working for personnel engaged in these three sectors.**

Implementing a gender equality transformative humanitarian development and peace nexus (or Triple Nexus) will require a “whole of systems approach” that focuses on building resilience, sustainable development, conflict mitigation and peacebuilding. It requires a shift in ways of working to more joined-up planning and joint analysis between players in all three sectors. The Jordan Country Office has developed interventions underpinned by the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. However, some contextual considerations acted as an impediment to full implementation of this model. As this is a relatively new area of work, significant attention is required to generate lessons and evidence. With UN Women joining the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, a corporate approach to documenting the lessons and good practices will support its efforts at the committee to strengthen gender transformative triple nexus work.



Photo ©UN Women

# 5

## CONCLUSIONS

## AND

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides overall conclusions and corresponding recommendations. The recommendations have been drafted following a consultative approach with the Evaluation Reference Group. Presentation of the preliminary findings and the way forward took place in a workshop with the Country Office management team to inform the recommendations presented below. Each recommendation is tied to corresponding findings and conclusions and includes actions for consideration by the Country Office. The level of priority and responsibility for the action are indicated with each recommendation.

**Conclusion 1: The Country Office’s 2018–2022 Strategic Note was relevant and responsive to national, international and United Nations priorities for gender equality and the empowerment of women. Given the resource constraints, the Country Office managed to support the development pillars of its work by situating them within nexus programming. The Country Office achieved some tangible results through its existing programming. As the humanitarian financing envelope for Jordan shrinks, the Country Office needs to communicate more explicitly its vision, strategy and contribution towards the development pillars of work in its next Strategic Note.**

The Country Office’s 2018–2022 Strategic Note was relevant and responsive to national, international and United Nations priorities for gender equality and the empowerment of women. The strategy and intentional approach of nesting development issues within nexus programming to mobilize resources was innovative and smart given the predominance of humanitarian financing and limited resources availability for long-term development in Jordan.

There were some tangible gains through the Women’s Economic Empowerment and Women’s Political

Participation thematic pillars; work on gender data and statistics; gender-responsive budgeting and institutional capacity development. There is momentum, buy-in and support for JONAP and the Country Office’s work in this regard has delivered some tangible gender equality results, particularly in the security sector. A clear approach to effectively handle any potential backlash would further strengthen these efforts.

The Country Office had a vision and design for implementing a gender-responsive humanitarian-development programme through the OASIS model. The OASIS programme targeted the most vulnerable women, including women with disabilities, and was successful in providing them with dignity, confidence and some level of financial freedom. However, the design of the OASIS model and its underpinning theory of change, particularly related to cash-for-work interventions supporting longer term economic development, needed to be revisited. The protection component of the model could also be strengthened with systematic application of the social-ecological model.

As the humanitarian financing envelope for Jordan shrinks, the Country Office needs to communicate more explicitly its vision, strategy and contribution to the development pillars of work in its next Strategic Note.

(Findings 1, 2, 5-8, 11-13)

<b>Recommendation 1:</b>	
<b>The Country Office should ensure that the development pillars of its portfolio (Women’s Economic Empowerment, Women’s Political Participation and Ending Violence Against Women) have a clear strategy and receive dedicated focus and resources in the next Strategic Note.</b>	
<b>Responsible Office</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Country Office</li> <li>• Regional Office</li> </ul>
<b>High Priority</b>	
<b>Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revise the Country Office’s theory of change to ensure that critical work in Women’s Economic Empowerment, Women’s Political Participation and Ending Violence Against Women form part of its intervention logic, building on some of the key successes and lessons learned. Ensure that these pillars have a clear strategy, and receive dedicated focus, funding and staffing in the next Strategic Note.</li> </ol>



## Recommendation 2:

The Country Office should revisit the underlying theory of change for its humanitarian development nexus programming. It should strengthen the programme's monitoring function and accountability mechanisms towards the target beneficiaries.

**Responsible Office** • Country Office

### High Priority

### Actions

1. Review the programme theory of change and intervention logic to reflect the transition to the humanitarian, development (and peace) nexus, focusing on long-term sustainable change.
2. As direct implementation of OASIS is an administratively heavy endeavour, UN Women to consider transitioning programme implementation to partners or service providers. UN Women to focus instead on providing strong implementation oversight, technical support and quality assurance, strengthening coordination with other UN entities and playing a more strategic role to facilitate gender and social transformative changes such as by ensuring women's voice and representation on issues related to the right to work for refugee women, conflict prevention and peace building.
3. Ensure that the programme transition is conducted in a manner that is accountable to beneficiaries and is sensitive to the fragile context causing minimal disruption.
4. Specific attention to be paid to the following components of cash-for-work:
  - Work systematically to break occupational gender segregation.
  - Ensure that the goods and services produced provide a social good and fulfil market needs, making a contribution to the real economy.
  - Link cash-for-work activities to producing or delivering shared social goods, i.e. producing goods for government (school uniforms, blankets, baby kits, healthy school meals) or running social services such as legal aid clinics. In camp settings, activities should be linked to internal camp service delivery and humanitarian procurement chains (WFP buying healthy meals from UN Women cash-for-work beneficiaries).
5. Ensure the programme monitoring framework and system includes and systematically measures outcome and impact-level results. Separate the monitoring function from programme management to ensure data independence. Allocate adequate financial and human resources for monitoring.
6. Strengthen the Ending Violence Against Women and protection component of the programme, focusing on social norms change and by adopting a socio-ecological model working with men, boys, families and institutions.
7. Review existing complaints and grievance redressal procedures to align them with established good practices. Revise the complaints hotline process to increase transparency, gender sensitivity and accountability as per standard good practices.
8. Develop a knowledge and evidence strategy for OASIS to systematically capture lessons and for course correction, including thematic lessons on gender transformative humanitarian development nexus interventions.

**Conclusion 2: The Country Office was recognized as an expert in gender equality in Jordan for its technical experience, contextual understanding, coordination work, strategic partnerships and ability to generate meaningful evidence and knowledge. There is opportunity for the Country Office to strengthen its partnership with donors, private sectors and CSOs to amplify a common and collective advocacy voice on women’s rights and gender transformation in Jordan. Systems and processes to capture the impact of Country Office programming need strengthening.**

The Country Office was recognized as a key player in the field of gender equality in Jordan. It has established a wide range of meaningful partnerships to strengthen the gender equality and women’s empowerment agenda in the country. Its partnership with government partners and specifically its contribution to strengthening the national women’s machinery, JNCW is widely recognized. The Country Office has worked well with the UNCT (and the UN Humanitarian Country Team) to ensure the UNCT’s collective accountability on gender equality and women’s empowerment through its coordination mandate. It has contributed to some meaningful work to strengthen gender in the humanitarian agenda. There is potential to strengthen the systematic approach to knowledge

harvesting and dissemination to development and humanitarian partners in the area of gender-responsive humanitarian development nexus work through a dedicated knowledge and learning strategy/plan. Given that UN Women is now a member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, it is imperative to build on past lessons to have a clear strategy regarding the value addition of UN Women in this area. The Country Office has been one of the proactive UN entities for joint programming and two Joint Programmes are currently in the pipeline. There is room to strengthen the Country Office’s technical support to other UNCT members for gender mainstreaming in their programming and to streamline partnerships with other UNCT members around gender data and statistics to ensure that UNCT action in Jordan is presented in a cohesive manner.

The evidence generated by the Country Office was regarded as meaningful and relevant. However, donors reported they would like to see greater effort by the Country Office to work with them as allies for collaborative advocacy work. There was also a recurring concern regarding the quality of reports as they did not capture impact on beneficiaries. Both civil society and the private sector felt that the Country Office could do more to ensure there was a clear, shared vision for their partnerships to amplify a common and collective advocacy voice on women’s rights and gender transformation in Jordan.

(Findings 3, 4, 10)

**Recommendation 3:**

The Country Office should strengthen its coordination and convening role with respect to its relationships with the UNCT, donors, civil society and private sector. The Country Office’s coordination work on gender and humanitarian action should be supported by a knowledge management strategy and plan.

Responsible Office • Country Office

Medium Priority

<b>Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with UNCT partners to: (a) strengthen technical support for gender mainstreaming in their programming; (b) work on joint programming; (c) develop synergies with other UN agencies with respect to gender data and statistics work with the Department of Statistics; and (d) systematically collect evidence and learning from humanitarian interventions to inform UNCT learning about gender transformative humanitarian development nexus.</li> <li>• Work with donors as allies for collaborative advocacy work on transformation in gender equality. Manage existing programme steering committees effectively to facilitate meaningful dialogue and to develop strategic actions to move this agenda forward.</li> <li>• Develop a shared vision and a road map with private sector partners in line with the Regional Strategy on Women’s Empowerment Principles (2021-2025) for the Arab States and the UN Women Private Sector Engagement Strategy for for collective action to achieve gender equality in the private sector.</li> <li>• Develop an institutionalized arrangement with the national government to provide oversight on progress made by private sector partners on WEP commitments.</li> <li>• Strengthen engagement with civil society through the Civil Society Platform for collective advocacy efforts, further increasing the attention given to women-led organizations outside of the capital.</li> </ul>
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<b>Recommendation 4: The Country Office should re-invigorate its approach to evidence management, programme monitoring, data quality, analysis and sharing to ensure there is meaningful information about programme impact, evidence uptake and use.</b>	
<b>Responsible Office</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Country Office</li> <li>• Regional Office</li> </ul>
<b>High Priority</b>	
<b>Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that indicators and reporting provide outcome-level data in case of direct implementation as well as implementation through partners. Ensure that programmes have dedicated human expertise and financial resources to collect, analyse and share the data.</li> <li>• Institutionalize a data quality assurance and verification system.</li> <li>• Ensure that social norms change indicators are incorporated in the forthcoming Strategic Note results monitoring framework and data is systematically collected against it.</li> <li>• Develop a knowledge management and learning strategy and collect data on knowledge uptake and use.</li> <li>• Systematically share lessons internally across the portfolio as well as with external stakeholders such as UNCT and CSOs.</li> </ul>

**Conclusion 3: The Country Office’s staffing structure could be improved to ensure it is “fit for purpose”, particularly for the direct implementation of the OASIS programme. At the time of the evaluation, the working environment was not conducive to the Country Office’s optimal functioning. Regional management oversight needed to be more proactive and regular for countries such as Jordan with large programming and associated risks. UN Women’s institutional approach to support leadership transition in such contexts needs to be tailor-made to minimize disruption.**

The Country Office’s staffing structure could have been more “fit for purpose”, particularly for the direct implementation of the OASIS programme. Given the risks inherent in direct humanitarian implementation programming, certain functions were under-resourced or under-valued (e.g. monitoring and evaluation, grievance mechanisms and safeguards).

At the time of the evaluation, the working environment was not conducive to the optimal functioning of the office. There was limited two-way communication between supervisors and supervisees, and strained communication between management and personnel. The evaluation noted some potential concerns about the lack of adherence to the Code of Conduct expected of UN

Personnel. The Country Office also witnessed high staffing turnover and ad interim replacements were made.

Although useful, some of the standard management oversight and support from the Regional Office, such as through quality assurance missions, could have been better prioritized for the Country Office as a proactive measure. The standard corporate response to manage a leadership transition through short-term deputations did

not prove adequate in the given context where the Country Office had internal issues. The result of this was demotivated personnel; lack of timely response to address behavioural or code of conduct issues; deteriorating external relationships; and programme performance and a risk of reputational damage.

(Finding 10)

<b>Recommendation 5:</b> The Country Office, with the support of the Regional Office, should undertake measures to enhance a positive workplace environment and adherence to the highest standards of the code of conduct. UN Women corporate management oversight and leadership transition arrangements should aim to proactively identify and manage risks and disruption and support better positioning of Country Offices to provide support to host countries and their partners.	
<b>Responsible Office</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Country Office</li> <li>Regional Office</li> <li>Headquarters</li> </ul>
<b>High Priority</b>	
<b>Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize an independent functional analysis of what is needed to deliver the Country Office’s Strategic Note and related programmes, identifying needed functions and skillset, capacity, number of personnel for a fit-for-purpose structure. Roll out a long-term HR strategy aligned with available and future funding and project staffing requirements.</li> <li>Headquarters, the Regional Office and Country Office should take lessons from the short-term Detail Assignment experience to revise leadership transition arrangements that facilitate smooth transitions with minimal disruption.</li> <li>Large-sized Country Offices with direct implementation work should be prioritized for regular management oversight and quality assurance missions from the Regional Office.</li> <li>Engage in workplace restoration that supports leadership credibility, respect in the workplace, staff engagement, management oversight and support. Ensure standardization of standard operating procedures, aligning them with personnel Terms of Reference.</li> </ul>

**Conclusion 4: The Country Office’s work on leaving no one behind beyond its humanitarian programme to address the needs of the most vulnerable women (including those with intersectional vulnerabilities and disability) was limited and less systematic. Arrangements for accountability towards the affected population under its humanitarian portfolio were not fully effective and some of the Country Office’s arrangements needed review and reconsideration. The Country Office had adopted some innovative and diverse approaches towards achieving gender transformation and social norms change and would benefit from a coherent strategy and systematic evidence gathering to confirm what**

**is working and what is not to achieve gender social norms change.**

The Country Office’s humanitarian portfolio directly targeted refugee women in camps and vulnerable women in host communities (both refugee and Jordanian women in the host communities). The programme intentionally targeted and aimed to include the most vulnerable women such as women with disabilities, women heads of households and elderly women. It systematically collected (and reported on) sex, age and disability disaggregated data; however, there was limited analysis and use of the same for learning and programme improvement. The architecture for accountability towards the beneficiaries under the humanitarian portfolio was not adequate and

some of its arrangements needed review and reconsideration to meet standard good practices.

The Country Office applied some innovative and diverse approaches towards achieving gender equality transformation and social norms change. Its work is mostly geared towards gender transformative changes but some of its work needs to adopt a socio-ecological

approach to ensure an enabling environment for changes in social norms and gender transformation. Some of the Country Office’s interventions also ran the risk of reinforcing gender stereotypes. The Country Office would benefit from a coherent strategy and systematic evidence gathering arrangement to confirm what is working and what is not to achieve gender social norms change.

**Recommendation 6:** The Country Office should embed targeted leave no one behind outcomes in the next Strategic Note paying specific attention to disability inclusion across its portfolio. It should develop a cross-cutting social norms change strategy to positively transform gender stereotypes across the portfolio and strengthen adherence to established best practices towards accountability to the affected population.

**Responsible Office** • Country Office

**High Priority**

**Actions**

- Embed a planned intervention for targeted vulnerable groups in every programme paying special attention to including women with disability.
- Systematically collect data and evidence on leave no one behind interventions to learn about what is working well and what needs to be changed.
- Develop a cross-cutting social norms change strategy underpinned by the socio-ecological model and systematic engagement with men, boys, families, institutions and opinion makers across the portfolio of programmes/interventions.
- Develop guidelines to avoid and address any backlash on gender transformative interventions.
- Measures to strengthen accountability towards beneficiaries are covered under Recommendation 2.



# ANNEXES

Annexes are available in Volume II of the report.