

UNIFEM

**UNIFEM Global**

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Meta-Evaluation 2009**

# Table of Contents

## Executive Summary

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>14</b>
1.1	Methodology	14
1.2	Structure of the Report	16
<b>2</b>	<b>Quality Assessment of 2009 Evaluations</b>	<b>17</b>
2.1	Scoring of Corporate Evaluations	17
2.2	Analysis of Evaluation Quality	19
2.3	Areas for Improvement	22
2.4	Recommendations	28
<b>3</b>	<b>Evaluation Conclusions on Programme Strategies</b>	<b>31</b>
3.1	Capacity Development	31
3.2	Replication and “Up-scaling”	33
3.3	Partnership Building	34
3.4	Regional Approaches	38
3.5	Gender Equality and Human Rights-Based Approach	39
3.6	Knowledge Generation	43
<b>4</b>	<b>Evaluation Conclusions on Management &amp; Efficiency</b>	<b>46</b>
4.1	Strategic Management	46
4.2	Planning & Implementation Management	47
4.3	Project Design	50
4.4	M&E	51
4.5	Institutional Learning	53
4.6	Human Resources Management	53
4.7	Financial Resources & Administrative Efficiency	55
4.8	UN Reform and Coordination	57
<b>5</b>	<b>Achieving Results</b>	<b>59</b>
5.1	Relevance	59
5.2	Effectiveness and Achievements	62
5.3	Sustainability	65
<b>6</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>70</b>

**Annexes**

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

Annex 2: Quality Assessment & Scoring Framework

Annex 3: Analysis of 2009 completed evaluations in APAS, AFRICA, LAC, and CEE/ CIS

Annex 4: List of Documents Consulted

Annex 5: Profile of the Meta-Evaluator

## List of Abbreviations

BiH	Bosnia-Herzegovina
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CEE-CIS	Central & East Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States region
CSO	Civil society organisation
EVAW	Eliminating violence against women
GE	Gender equality
GEM	Gender Equality Mechanism
GRB	Gender responsive budgeting
HBW	Home based worker
IDRC	Development
LAC	Latin American and Caribbean region
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MYFF	Multi-Year Funding Framework
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
RO	Regional organisation
SMART	specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely
SP	UNIFEM Strategic Plan 2008-2013
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
WHR	Women's human rights
UNTF	UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women
VAW	Violence against women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund

**Abbreviations used to denote UNIFEM evaluation reports**

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| 1. AWP          | Arab Women Parliamentarian Project  |
| 2. Sabaya       | Sabaya Programme  |
| 3. EWMWA        | Regional Programme on Empowering Women Migrant Workers in Asia, Phase II  |
| 4. WLR-Ache     | Strengthening Women's Legal Rights in Ache, Indonesia   |
| 5. HBW          | Regional Programme for Home-based Workers in South Asia, Phase II   |
| 6. WHR Sudan    | Protecting Women's Human Rights & Gender Justice in Sudan   |
| 7. WEA-LAC      | Developing Capacities for the Gender Analysis of the Region's Economies and Conditions for Positioning the Women's Agenda in the New Stage of Trade Opening, Phase II |
| 8. WHR-FRY      | Accountability for Protection of Women's Human Rights   |
| 9. GE-Moldova   | Promoting Gender Equality in National Development Policies and Programmes in Moldova  |
| 10. RO-Global   | Evaluation of UNIFEM Partnerships with Regional Organisations Evaluation  |
| 11. UNTF-Global | Evaluation of UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women   |
| 12. GBR-Global  | Corporate Evaluation of the Programme Portfolio: UNIFEM's work on Gender-Responsive Budgeting   |

## Executive Summary

UNIFEM's Strategic Plan 2008-2013 and UNIFEM's corresponding Evaluation Policy and Strategy commits UNIFEM to conducting gender and human rights responsive evaluations of its work. It stipulates that UNIFEM shall enhance its learning through the generation of a critical mass of high-quality and credible evaluations that provide useful evidence on successful programming approaches for replication and scaling up, and on less successful approaches for learning and improvement. This meta-evaluation is expected to contribute to this effort by i) enhancing UNIFEM's evaluation effort, and ii) generating knowledge from the results of UNIFEM's programmes.

Based on i) the *2004-2008 Meta Evaluation*; ii) a quality assessment framework (Annex 2); and, iii) UNIFEM's preparatory assessments of its ten 2009 decentralised evaluations (Annex 3), this meta-evaluation assesses the 3 corporate evaluations from 2009 and analyses the overall quality of the 10 decentralised evaluations undertaken in 2009. It also analyses the results of 12 evaluations<sup>1</sup>; compares them with the results of the *2004-2008 Meta-Evaluation*; and views them in relation to relevant objectives and strategies of the Strategic Plan 2008-2013. This has included examining the findings, conclusions and potential lessons provided in the evaluations in relation to programme strategies, programme management and evaluation criteria. The evaluation has been undertaken solely through desk review. In line with the terms of reference, its scope is limited to *quality* and *results* and does not examine the *credibility* or *utility* of the evaluations.

### Quality of UNIFEM's Evaluations

The quality of the three corporate evaluations ranges from "very good" to "excellent". The evaluations are well-written, well-presented, thorough and analytical. All contain substantial data – not least in the relatively extensive field study work that underlie each report. The reports contain well-substantiated conclusions and shed light on several important ideas and areas.

Together, the decentralised evaluations scored less than the corporate evaluations (ranging from "excellent" to "weak"), but when combining the scores of the corporate and decentralised 2009 evaluations, the average total score comes to "good". This represents an improvement from the total score of the 2008 evaluations, which was "average". The percentage of evaluations scoring "good" or above has almost doubled in one year – even though the assessment system for the 2009 evaluations was more demanding of the evaluations.

The scores for findings, conclusions, analysis and recommendations have improved by around 10% between 2008 and 2009. While it is beyond the scope of this evaluation to determine the underlying factors contributing to the improvements noted above, a supposition is that the EU's strategy (completed at the end of 2008) to create tools, resources and systems to enhance UNIFEM's evaluation function and capacities began to already show results in 2009. A call for concern, however, is that despite the apparent enhanced evaluation capacity in the organisation, some sub-regions did not produce a single evaluation in either 2008 or 2009. In addition to

<sup>1</sup> The analysis of the results of the 2009 evaluation "Peace and Security in Colombia" was not included in the meta-evaluation since the report was only presented to the Evaluation Unit days before this report was finalised.

reasons of accountability, management and learning, increasing the quantity of evaluations is important so that there is enough data for analyses in a meta-evaluations to underpin decisions regarding UNIFEM's strategic direction.

#### *Aggregate Scores of 2009 Evaluations<sup>2</sup>*

<b>Evaluation Title</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Point Score</b>	<b>Score</b>
1. Arab Women Parliamentarian Project	Asia-Pacific	97	Excellent
2. Sabaya Programme	Asia-Pacific	76	Good
3. Regional Programme on Empowering Women Migrant Workers in Asia, Phase II	Asia-Pacific	76	Good
4. Strengthening Women's Legal Rights in Aceh, Indonesia	Asia-Pacific	74	Average
5. Regional Programme for Home-based Workers in South Asia, Phase II	Asia-Pacific	77	Good
6. Protecting Women's Human Rights & Gender Justice in Sudan	Africa	61	Weak
7. Developing Capacities for the Gender Analysis of the Region's Economies and Conditions for Positioning the Women's Agenda in the New Stage of Trade Opening, Phase II	LAC	73	Average
8. Peace and Security in Columbia	LAC	61	Weak
9. Accountability for Protection of Women's Human Rights (FYR)	CEE-CIS	78	Good
10. Promoting Gender Equality in National Development Policies and Programmes in Moldova	CEE-CIS	66	Average
11. Evaluation of UNIFEM Partnerships with Regional Organisations Evaluation	Global	95	Very good
12. Evaluation of UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women	Global	97	Excellent
13. Corporate Evaluation of the Programme Portfolio: UNIFEM's work on Gender-Responsive Budgeting	Global	93	Very good

While important progress has been made with regard to the quality of UNIFEM's evaluations and the Evaluation Unit has been prolific in producing tools, guidance and systems for UNIFEM's evaluation effort there are nevertheless areas where **quality can be further enhanced**:

UNIFEM's evaluations generally need to assess the **evaluation criteria** more comprehensively:

- In relation to relevance, policy perspectives, stakeholder perspectives and the perspective of national priorities were lacking in half the evaluations. Further, the relevance of the design of the programmes was seldom systematically assessed, if assessed at all.
- Evaluations did not always clearly distinguish between conclusions based on attribution and contribution analysis. Further, with a few exceptions, evaluators did not assess how programmes are making progress in attaining specific outcomes outlined in the Strategic Plan.
- In relation to efficiency, a couple of evaluations did not analyse the management/operational systems and structures.

<sup>2</sup> A meta-evaluation of 2004-2007 and 2008 evaluations was also completed in 2009, but is not subject to scoring.



Given i) that UNIFEM's goals tend to require long-term social, attitudinal and behavioural changes; and, ii) the nature of the conditions of UNIFEM's work; UNIFEM would benefit from **defining sustainability from a more dynamic perspective** so that its evaluations address sustainability by assessing a range of indicators and/or prerequisites for sustainability. These could include the extent to which the support has i) enabled partners to secure funding from other sources; ii) been based on the expressed needs and priorities of local stakeholders; iii) helped to institutionalise a commitment to gender equality in public institutions; iv) been based on existing international agreements and instruments for gender equality; v) included with both government and with civil society, and has it facilitated connections between the two levels; and, vi) involved (male and female) change agents, created networks and fostered linkages between different sectors, initiatives and partners.

Although gender equality is the central concept in UNIFEM's effort, few evaluations provide a solid, systematic and critical **assessment of UNIFEM's gender equality approach** in the programmes – in terms of both methods and results. Similarly, given that several of the programmes evaluated contained the words “rights-based” in their objectives or project framework, it is discouraging that not more of the evaluations assessed the extent to which this was achieved in processes and more substantively through results. Given the level of integration of the human rights based approach in UNIFEM's Strategic Plan (2008-2013), these issues should be more substantively addressed in evaluations.

The meta-evaluation 2004-2008 showed that consultative processes with key stakeholders throughout the evaluation markedly improves evaluation quality – particularly when they are involved in verification and validation. UNIFEM could **improve the level of stakeholder participation** in the evaluation process. The Evaluation Unit has recently developed some excellent tools to assist with this process, including *Guidance Note 6 Establishing Management Structures and Reference Groups*, *Stakeholder Analysis with GE/HR Concerns* and *Stakeholder Checklist*. A simple list of key stages in the evaluation process when different stakeholders could potentially have a role would complement these tools.

None of the 2009 evaluations applied a full-fledged participatory process in which primary stakeholders played a central role throughout the evaluation. Given the centrality of the rights-based approach to UNIFEM's work, the organisation should in future consider pursuing the implementation of country or community level **participatory evaluations**, from which it could draw methodological lessons. These lessons could feed into future participatory evaluations but could also contribute to methodological approaches that could enhance the “regular” evaluations.

The evaluations seldom mention the **ethical safeguards** applied. While the Evaluation Unit has made progress in ensuring that ethics and conduct are included in the terms of reference, more guidance to evaluators and task managers is needed to ensure that safeguards are systematically understood in practical terms, applied during the evaluation process and described in the evaluation report.

While **presentation and language** used in the evaluations has vastly improved, there is still scope for progress. This includes a greater use of boxes and graphs, consistent use of terminology and proficient translations using UNIFEM's terminology.

While the skills and knowledge of external evaluator(s) that undertake most evaluations for UNIFEM are central in ensuring quality, **the terms of reference and task management of evaluations are key means by which UNIFEM can affect evaluation quality**. Below are recommended actions to raise the quality further, most of which consist of fine-tuning the terms of references and enhancing the tools and procedures already developed by the Evaluation Unit:

- UNIFEM should ensure that evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability), as a rule, are applied more comprehensively by its evaluations. It should also more consistently approach evaluation of impact when conditions are present.
- UNIFEM should ensure that the effectiveness of UNIFEM strategies outlined in the Strategic Plan 2008-2013 are assessed within the context of its programme evaluations.
- UNIFEM should consider developing simple tools to practically guide evaluators and evaluation managers in relation to stakeholder participation and ethical conduct.
- UNIFEM should consider undertaking one fully participatory evaluation a year with the active involvement and guidance of the Evaluation Unit.
- UNIFEM should make a concerted effort to increase the volume of evaluations and in particular make good on its commitment to produce at least one evaluation per sub-region a year.

As UNIFEM develops its evaluations effort in the years to come, it could begin to stipulate a greater range of data gathering techniques – including more innovative approaches – which would enhance the quality further. When UNIFEM achieves a results-based management system with a fully functioning monitoring and evaluation system, the assessment of impact of certain interventions should eventually be considered. This would require the use of participatory and innovative evaluation approaches– which in turn would typically require additional resources for the evaluations.

### **Achieving Results**

The 2009 evaluations rated UNIFEM's **effectiveness as ranging between fair to high**. Output goals were generally achieved and a majority of interventions achieved some significant outcomes as well. Of the programmes evaluated, three-quarters contributed to some form of policy-level or legislative results. The majority of the programmes also seem to have worked to strengthen duty-bearers in respecting, protecting and fulfilling their duties, and the support helped institutionalise commitment to gender equality in various public institutions. UNIFEM also supported rights-holders in their ability to participate and claim their rights; including giving voice to rural Palestinian women, migrant Asian women and home-based workers in South Asia. In over half of the programmes evaluated, UNIFEM contributed to improving cooperation between government and civil society actors and/or help establish spaces for dialogue. In a couple of countries, UNIFEM supported academic institutions in strengthening their educational capacities in specific gender equality subjects. The generation of knowledge products was successful in some cases – but not all– and dissemination tended to be very weak.

The **relevance** of UNIFEM's work was **deemed high in most cases**, although relevance in relation to the needs and priorities of governments, targeted groups, partner organisations and UNIFEM's policy framework were not always analysed by the evaluations. The support was also timely and opportune. The evaluations argued that relevance could be enhanced by making use of participatory, rights-based and conflict analyses.

**Sustainability in terms of mere continuation or duration of results is weak.** All evaluations deemed that continued financial and technical support would be needed to achieve permanent change. The lack of exit strategies was criticised by several evaluations. Nevertheless, numerous evaluations reported that **modest ground had been gained in ways that contribute to sustained effects**. This included evidence of commitment to women's human rights in key partner institutions; institutionalisation through legislative and/or policy change; generation of knowledge; the establishment of networks; strengthened gender equality-related educational capacities of academic institutions; and, partners enabled to access funding from donor agencies to continue, complement and/or scale up gender equality initiatives.

### **Evaluation Conclusions on Programme Strategies**

In comparison with the 2004-2008 evaluations, the higher quality of 2009 evaluations often helped produced more apt analyses and identified challenges more succinctly. In most cases though, the programmatic strengths and weaknesses identified in the 2004-2008 meta-evaluation also prevailed in the 2009 evaluations. The results of the 2009 evaluations imply that a significant effort is required by UNIFEM to ensure that by 2013 its programmes are on track to meet its commitments as outlined in its Strategic Plan.

As with the preceding meta-evaluation, **capacity development was recognised as a key strength** of UNIFEM. Feedback gathered by most of the evaluations revealed that capacity-building was generally highly regarded and popular. In some evaluations, the proficiency of the staff was highlighted and training of trainers was considered an effective contribution. A general conclusion that could be gleaned from several of the evaluations was that effectiveness and the results achieved could be contributed to **consistent and considerable capacity building efforts**.

While long-term capacity development is strongly linked to sustainability, short-term **capacity building efforts are not conducive to sustainability**. UNIFEM's approach towards relatively short-term and activity-focused interventions with limited follow-up strategies and resources as evidenced by the Regional Organization's evaluation could negatively affect the long-term sustainability of the results obtained. A second area of concern was that there was a **need for an overall strategic perspective on capacity building** based on a theory of change. There was insufficient coordination of the approach to capacity building. This led to an unclear understanding among stakeholders of the linkages between the different interventions. A third area of concern was **the need for more systematic monitoring and lessons learning** from the capacity building effort. Monitoring data could provide evidence of the effectiveness of different capacity building approaches. UNIFEM's recently completed Capacity Development strategy is expected to remedy the above concerns.

In a couple of evaluations it was noted that UNIFEM was already leading a scale-up process among partners/donors, while another evaluation noted that UNIFEM needed to convene partners

before an effective expansion of the programme was possible. However, in terms of developing models for future scaling up as per the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan, the 2009 evaluations suggest that **more effort was needed to generate viable models** and/or systematic plans were required for the scaling up process.

There is ample evidence that **UNIFEM is highly appreciated as a partner**. Its technical knowledge and experience; its status as a neutral convener; its ability to proactively network among a range of stakeholders; its active role among development actors and its demand-driven approach are praised by partners. The evaluations implied that UNIFEM **added value to the overall development effort**. UNIFEM used skill and diplomacy in policy dialogue, which reduced resistance and gained support that enabled a sustained platform of dialogue.

While three evaluations found that UNIFEM was proficient in identifying strategic partners to engage with, three other evaluations saw a **greater scope for a more strategic approach to partnerships**. There was no evidence in the evaluations that UNIFEM was, as aimed for in the Strategic Plan, “being more rigorous in tracking its support to partnerships that contribute to success.” UNIFEM needs to define the rationale and expected benefits (e.g. added value and potential synergies) of its partnerships and establish a way to track and report on the relevance. A helpful approach in this effort could be to define partners as boundary or strategic partners – in line with the terminology used in outcome mapping.

Five of the 2009 evaluations covered regional or sub-regional programmes. All pointed to that there is **scope in enhancing the regional dimension** of UNIFEM’s work. At worst, these programmes applied a multi-country as opposed to regional approach. The linkages between the regional and national components were not sufficiently strong and knowledge sharing did not take place to the extent foreseen.

Given the nature of UNIFEM’s programmes, gender equality and women’s rights are obviously central to their respective aims, approaches and content. While most of the evaluations refer to gender equality approaches and results, only two evaluations undertook systematic and critical analyses of UNIFEM’s approach to promoting gender equality and questioned the soundness of UNIFEM’s perspectives. Two evaluations assessed the need **to strengthen the gender equality dimension further** – both in terms of methods and programme content.

For more than half of the programmes evaluated, the concept “rights-based” was a central theme in the programme framework or equivalent. However, none seemed to apply a full-fledged rights-based approach in which the principles of equality and non-discrimination; participation and inclusion; and rule of law and accountability were consistently and systematically applied in analysis, design and implementation. Nevertheless, more than half of the projects/programmes included some aspects of human rights perspectives. The three evaluations that assessed the programme’s rights-based perspectives concluded that while steps forward were definitely being made, and in some cases important and innovative approaches were applied, much **more was needed to ensure that a gender equality and human rights perspective permeated** all aspects of the programme

Compared to the finding of the 2004-2008 evaluations, the 2009 evaluations may include **slightly more positive evidence regarding the generation of knowledge**. A couple of programmes were successful in producing and disseminating an extensive amount of knowledge products, while a third of the evaluations had not lived up to their objectives in this area. The remaining evaluations

had produced high-quality publications but were ineffective in disseminating these. The need for better dissemination was regarded as critical – especially if UNIFEM is to fulfil its Strategic Plan ambition of ensuring that “key stakeholders are able to easily access information on progress toward, and the “how to” of achieving, gender equality in countries worldwide”.

### **Evaluation Conclusions on Management and Efficiency**

The evaluations from 2009 have highlighted management strengths and challenges that are almost identical to those raised in the 2004-2008 evaluations. A strength repeated again and again was UNIFEM's **ability to manage pragmatically and flexibly**. This allowed UNIFEM to capitalise on opportunities as they arise; be responsive to partner concerns; take into consideration change in social and political circumstances; and, respond to evolving situations within partner organisations/institutions. UNIFEM further shows strength in problem-solving. However, the evaluations point to weaknesses related to other aspects of management: strategic guidance; project design; planning and results-based management; monitoring and evaluation, institutional learning; human resource and financial resource management.

Explicit **conceptual clarity and strategic vision were often missing** in the programmes evaluated in 2009. Several evaluations find this to be a significant impediment to programme effectiveness, relevance and sustainability. Sometimes confusion resulted from concepts not being fully developed and agreed upon at the programme level, but more often than not, the lack of conceptual clarity emanated from a lack of strategic guidance in relation to concepts and approaches from the corporate level. Drawing on the experience from the country level, there is a need, at the corporate level, to:

- Develop and agree upon the concepts of capacity and capacity development (individual, institutional and societal), and the corresponding period change;
- Develop and explicitly define the rationale, objectives and expected benefits of partnerships; and establish a corporate approach to managing partner relations;
- Arrive at a corporate consensus of what gender responsive budgeting consists of combined with a corresponding theory of change;
- More sharply clarify the implications of a rights-based and empowerment approach.

At the programme level there is a need to agree upon and make explicit the theory of change, the longer term purpose of the programme and key concepts that may be used within the programme context (such as “incubator”, “innovation”, etc.)

Almost half of the programmes were considered by the evaluators as having **overly ambitious goals or scope**, given the resources, timeframe and capacity available. Otherwise, the assessment of the **design of the programmes** is mixed. Taken together, there appears to be a need to invest greater efforts in studies and analyses prior to designing programmes – such as gender equality and rights-based analyses, community mapping exercises and participatory analyses.

Virtually all the evaluations found significant weaknesses in planning, monitoring and control systems. There were inconsistencies in the management tools used, a lack of planning documents and usually no system in place to monitor progress. In five cases, project cycle management was affected by the **insufficient capacity of partner organisations**. Despite significant training, the capacity of the women's organisations that UNIFEM partnered with tended to be low and partners were not always able to deliver as expected. It was believed that this could be mitigated by setting

realistic timelines to address reporting requirements, providing partners with more details on project approval procedures and a greater investment in interpretation resources.

Virtually every evaluation was critical of UNIFEM's **monitoring and evaluation effort** and assessed it as sub-optimal. The critique focused on three areas: poor planning and no functioning monitoring system in place; insufficient human resources in relation to the M&E tasks at hand; and/or weak capacities among implementation partners.

The results were mixed when it came to **strategic coherence** and **synergies** between components and projects. This was particularly true for the regional programmes. Often there was insufficient coherence between the programme components, while the efforts of UNIFEM's regional structures were insufficient to achieve cohesion among the processes in the countries involved. The lack of strategic guidance from the regional level did not so much affect the quantity of the activities, but their quality, reducing their synergic potential. Intra-regional communication could be improved and there was considerable scope for greater use of video conferences to ensure a dynamic system of permanent communication.

More than half of the programmes were producing innovative approaches, generating valuable experiences and good practices. Two-thirds of the evaluations, however, saw a **need to enhance institutional learning**. Systems to document, disseminate and/or exchange information were often absent or weak. Clear strategies to institutionalise documentation and dissemination of learning and results were required – including processes to reach results and to ensure a systematic exchange of lessons learnt. Some of the evaluations deemed that insufficient staffing resources were a cause for the poor performance in this area.

Generally, the evaluations assessed UNIFEM **staff as being skilled, professional, knowledgeable** and particularly good at partner relations. The small size of many offices belied the results they were able to achieve. Nevertheless, in a couple of instances, the evaluators identified **gaps in expertise**, including knowledge in gender responsive budgeting and results-based management skills. **Staffing size, gaps, turnovers and structures** were, however, a much greater concern.

It is relatively easy for an evaluation to conclude that greater human resources will improve programme performance. Nonetheless, given that most of the 2009 evaluation saw insufficient staffing and staffing structures as serious impediments to effective and efficient management, **this weakness is a call for alarm**. Staffing shortcomings were seen as hampering linkage between project components – impacting on learning and undermining M&E. The need for national coordinators in countries where regional programmes were implemented was underlined. Repeated turnovers and extended vacancies weakened programme oversight and strategic guidance, caused delays and disruption in adapting strategies and weakened an already stretched organisation. In some cases the interaction between the national, regional and HQ structures was suboptimal which led to some inefficiency and frustration.

Three programmes were **able to leverage additional resources**. Effective advocacy efforts resulted in partnerships with other donors who were able to fund adjacent projects and programmes. However, a nearly half of the evaluations commented on the **mismatch of the objectives** and outputs and the **level of funding allocated to the programmes** and this affected efficiency.

While the 2004-2008 meta-evaluation uncovered significant critique related to inefficiencies in financial administration – including delayed disbursements, uneven and weak financial monitoring – two of the 2009 evaluations assessed **financial management** to be generally efficient and of those that did not, UNIFEM's systems/structures were only blamed in two cases. ATLAS was found to be a hindrance to efficiency in the 2004-2008 Meta-Evaluation, but ATLAS was not raised in negative terms in the 2009 evaluations. This could suggest that UNIFEM might be making good to its commitment in the Strategic Plan to improve ATLAS and other administrative systems to “support linking of results with financial flows”. Indeed, according to EU, ATLAS was updated at the end of 2008 and a series of training sessions were undertaken within the organisation during 2009.

While the reports offer only limited information in relation to **UN reform and co-ordination**, the data that is provided suggested that UNIFEM was often proactive in engaging with UN sister agencies in the area of gender equality and was generally enjoying good relations. Thus, at least in relation to the programmes evaluated, UNIFEM may in at least some cases be making progress in playing the role it staked out in the Strategic Plan as acting as a key driver of gender equality in the context of UN reform.

# 1 Introduction

UNIFEM's Strategic Plan 2008-2013 and its corresponding Evaluation Policy and Strategy commits UNIFEM to conducting gender equality and human rights responsive evaluations of its work. It stipulates that UNIFEM shall enhance its learning through the generation of a critical mass of high-quality and credible evaluations that provide useful evidence on successful programming approaches for replication and scaling up, and on less successful approaches for learning and improvement.

In 2009, as part of its effort to improve evaluations and strengthen the learning from them, UNIFEM's Evaluation Unit identified the need to analyse the evaluations conducted between 2004 and 2007 (MYFF period) and 2008 (first year of the Strategic Plan). The aim of the study was to aggregate and systematise the information generated from these evaluations and transform it into accessible knowledge for future evaluations and programming. The study addressed two different questions: i) what is the quality, credibility and utility of UNIFEM's evaluations and how can the organisation improve its evaluation effort; and, ii) what are the results – findings, conclusions and recommendations – presented in the evaluation reports?

In 2010, the Evaluation Unit decided to follow up on the previous year's meta-evaluation by conducting a meta-assessment of the 13 evaluations (three corporate and ten decentralised) finalised in 2009. UNIFEM's monitoring and evaluation specialists stationed in the sub-regional offices elaborated on the methodology used in 2009 and assessed the quality of the ten decentralised evaluations according to 17 different parameters. The current report complements this effort by assessing and scoring the quality of the three corporate evaluations and analysing the results of 12<sup>3</sup> evaluations completed in 2009. This has included reviewing the findings, conclusions, ideas and potential lessons provided in the evaluations in relation to programme strategies, management and evaluation criteria.

The findings and conclusions of this meta-evaluation will feed into the 2009 Annual Report of the Evaluation Unit and can be used to inform programme design and management of evaluation processes.

## 1.1 Methodology

The meta-evaluation was undertaken solely through the review of evaluation reports. In line with the terms of reference, its scope is limited to *quality* and *results* as provided by the evaluation reports. It does not assess the processes associated with evaluation and – unlike the previous year's meta-evaluation – it does not examine the *credibility* or *utility* of the evaluations. It consisted of the following activities:

- UNIFEM developed a scoring and assessment framework (included in Annex 2) to determine evaluation quality. The framework was based on the one used for the 2004-

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<sup>3</sup> The analysis of the results of the evaluation “Peace and Security in Colombia” were not included in this meta-evaluation since the report was only presented to the Evaluation Unit days before this meta-evaluation was finalised.



2008 meta-evaluation. It also drew on the UNIFEM's Guidance Note on Evaluation Quality Criteria to define the parameters.<sup>4</sup>

- The 10 decentralised evaluations were assessed and scored by UNIFEM regional evaluation officers and subsequently reviewed by this consultant. Meanwhile the 3 corporate evaluations were assessed and scored by this consultant alone. All reports were assessed in relation to 16 different parameters and scoring each parameter on a scale of 1 to 5 (the scores related to methodology, findings, conclusions, analysis and recommendations were doubled to ensure greater weight for these areas). The total scores for each evaluation and all evaluations together were aggregated. The quality of lessons learnt, (a 17<sup>th</sup> parameter), was assessed among those evaluations that presented these. However, since not all evaluations produce lessons, the score for lessons learnt were not aggregated with the other scores.
- The results of the quality assessment were compared to those the evaluations from 2008 and strengths, challenges and areas for improvement were identified.
- The *results* of 12 evaluation reports<sup>5</sup> from 2009 were reviewed. The findings, conclusions, ideas and potential lessons were analysed in relation to programme strategies, management strategies, evaluation criteria (effectiveness, relevance, efficiency and sustainability) and the goals and approaches outlined in the Strategic Plan 2008-2013.<sup>6</sup> Comparisons with the evaluations from 2004 to 2008 were made.

The meta-evaluation methodology faced a few of limitations and challenges. The analysis is one-dimensional to the extent that, apart from a few limited discussions with the Evaluation Unit, it is solely based on the reports. The data underpinning this evaluation originates from the evaluation reports themselves and their respective annexes and it has not been triangulated. Thus, the findings of the meta-evaluation are only valid to the extent that the UNIFEM evaluations present valid findings, conclusions and recommendations. In some cases, therefore, the meta-evaluation lacks information because of limited data in some of the evaluation reports. Examples include how effective rights-based strategies have been; whether the programmes<sup>7</sup> have had an impact or

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<sup>4</sup> Since the Guidance Note is itself based on the quality assessment framework devised for the 2004-2008 meta evaluation (which in turn are based on UNEG standards), the parameters used for the two meta-evaluations are nearly identical. However, the new scoring framework is based on a scale of 1 to 5, whereas the framework used for the 2004-2008 meta-evaluation used a scale of 1 to 3 for some parameters and 1 to 5 in others. It is important to note that the scoring framework used in 2004-2008 was applied slightly more leniently than the one used for the 2009 evaluations. This is because UNIFEM did not have the combination of evaluation officers, policy, strategy, trained staff and evaluation tools until 2009. The range of quality of the evaluations conducted between 2004 and 2008 was great and the number of very poor evaluations was numerous. In fact, several reports did not even meet the basic criteria of an evaluation.

<sup>5</sup> The analysis of the results of the evaluation "Peace and Security in Colombia" was excluded. See footnote 1.

<sup>6</sup> Some of the programmes evaluated in 2009 were formulated during the MYFF period. However, they have been evaluated in relation to the SP goals and approaches.

<sup>7</sup> For the sake of expediency, this evaluation uses the term 'programme' loosely. While most of the evaluations cover bona fide programmes, some of the evaluations cover projects. Meanwhile, the Evaluation of Partnerships with Regional Organisations assesses a *partnership* or relationship between UNIFEM and different (regional) organisations while the UNTF evaluation concerns a *funding mechanism*.

how efficient the management arrangements were. It has been beyond the scope of this evaluation to apply complementary data-gathering approaches to secure this data.

Second, because the meta-evaluation has focused only on the evaluation reports themselves, it has not assessed the processes of each evaluation more than what is mentioned in the reports. It is thereby possible that some evaluation processes were sub-optimal, but that eventually a decent final report was produced. However, this evaluation only regards the final report in its assessment. Third, assessment of the credibility and utility of the findings, conclusions and recommendations has not been undertaken.

Fourth, the terms of reference for the 2009 evaluations have sometimes differed in focus. The evaluations have not therefore always assessed comparable aspects of the programmes /projects. Likewise, the nature of the projects evaluated is in some respects specific to the context in which they are implemented.

Given i) the limitations discussed above; ii) the fact that the 2009 evaluations represent only some of the geographic sub-regions; iii) the 2009 evaluations are almost all related to only 2 of UNIFEM's 4 programmatic areas (women's economic security and rights and gender justice in democratic governance); and iv) the 13 programmes represent only a fraction of UNIFEM's programmes; caution need to be applied to generalisations about UNIFEM based on these evaluations. Nevertheless, this report will provide indications of where UNIFEM has been successful and where further efforts are needed to ensure that its goals are reached.

## **1.2 Structure of the Report**

The following chapter presents findings related to the scoring and quality of the three corporate evaluation reports. It also discusses the overall quality of the 2009 evaluations and recommends action for UNIFEM to consider in the effort to improve evaluation quality. Chapter 3 examines the conclusions of the 2009 evaluations in relation to programme strategies, Chapter 4 addresses conclusions related to management and operational efficiencies while Chapter 5 analyses results in relation to relevance, effectiveness and sustainability. Chapter 6 provides conclusions emanating from the previous 3 chapters.

There are five annexes to the report. They include the Terms of Reference for the Meta-Evaluation; the Quality Assessment & Scoring Framework; the Meta Assessment of UNIFEM's decentralised evaluations; the list of documents consulted and a profile of the consultant.

## 2 Quality Assessment of 2009 Evaluations

In early 2010, UNIFEM's Regional Evaluation Specialist based in the sub-regions scored and assessed the ten decentralised evaluations undertaken during 2009. The basic scoring framework developed for the 2004-2008 meta-evaluation was updated and enhanced. The grading system was changed to a scale from 0 to 5. To ensure that key parameters (findings, analysis, conclusions and recommendations) were given prominence, the score for them was doubled when the aggregate score was totalled. These parameters include methodology, findings, analysis, conclusions and recommendations. The assessment framework is included in Annex 2.

### 2.1 Scoring of Corporate Evaluations

The three corporate evaluations conducted in 2009 were the Evaluation of UNIFEM Partnerships with Regional Organisations; Evaluation of UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women and Corporate Evaluation of the Programme Portfolio: UNIFEM's work on Gender-Responsive Budgeting. They have been scored according to the following categories:

*Table 1: Scoring of Corporate Evaluations*

Quality Parameter	UNTF	Regional Organisations	GRB
1. Basic key information (out of 5)	5	5	5
2. Executive summary (out of 5)	5	4	4
3. Purpose of the evaluation (out of 5)	2	4	5
4. Evaluation objectives and scope (out of 5)	5	5	5
5. Evaluation methodology (out of 10)	10	10	8
6. Context of subject (out of 5)	4	5	5
7. Description of the subject (out of 5)	5	5	5
8. Findings (out of 10)	10	8	10
9. Analysis (out of 10)	10	10	8
10. Conclusions (out of 10)	10	10	9
11. Recommendations (out of 10)	10	8	8
12. Annexes (out of 5)	5	5	5
13. Key UNIFEM's programming approaches and strategies (out of 5)	5	5	5
14. Stakeholder participation (out of 5)	3	3	3
15. Ethical safeguards (out of 5)	3	3	3
16. Clear communication (out of 5)	5	5	5
17. Lessons Learnt – not included in aggregation ( out of 5)	-	(4)	(4)
<b>SUM (out of 105)</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>93</b>

All three evaluations scored above 86 points, which corresponds to an overall rating of “very good” (RO-Global and GRB-Global) and “excellent” (UNTF-Global). The evaluations are well-written, well-presented, thorough and analytical. All contain substantial data – not least in the relatively extensive field study work that underlie each report. The reports contain well-substantiated conclusions and shed light on several important ideas and areas.

- All evaluations scored top points in relation to providing basic key information; explaining the objectives and scope of the evaluation; describing the subject to be evaluated; providing findings; including complete annexes; addressing key UNIFEM programming strategies; and communicating clearly.
- The evaluations scored “good” or above in relation to the quality of their executive summary; the evaluation methodology; context of the subject; analysis; conclusions and recommendations.
- In relation to stakeholder participation and ethical safeguards all three scored “average”.
- Two of the evaluations produced lessons learnt, which scored “good”.

#### **Box 1: Summary of the Corporate Evaluations**

The **UNTF-Global** evaluation assessed the overall implementation and effectiveness of its 2005-2008 strategy and identified strengths and weaknesses that had implications for its future managerial, programmatic and funding directions. Field studies were undertaken in 8 countries and the data uncovered is provided in a separate volume of over 300 pages. The analysis, findings and conclusions are of high quality. The report makes good use of graphs and tables and presents a number of methodological tools that were used in the assessment. Stakeholder participation was average-to-good. While the methodology included measures to involve stakeholders at several instances during the process, stakeholders were not as forthcoming as hoped, in particular other UN agencies. The evaluation report is of high quality.

The **GRB-Global** evaluation was a cluster evaluation and consisted of three stages. The first stage constituted rapid assessment and mapping of UNIFEM’s GRB work. The second stage produced four studies of UNIFEM’s Global GRB programme from four countries. The findings of the studies were subsequently synthesised in the stage 2 report. The third report assessed UNIFEM’s overall approach GRB programming; summarised results & lesson learnt; and proposed typologies and M&E systems. The meta-evaluation assessment is based on the stage 2 and 3 reports. The latter report is insightful and well-structured. The lessons learnt, proposed typology and suggested M&E approach add value. Meanwhile, the stage 2 report is slightly rougher and is not as clear in its analysis or conclusions. Overall, this evaluation is a solid effort.

The thematic **RO-Global** evaluation provides an analysis of UNIFEM’s relationship with 28 regional inter-governmental organisations from 2004 to 2009 and reveals opportunities, challenges and lessons for improving these partnerships. The report presents a thorough description of the context of the evaluation and suggests a useful approach to analysing the nature of UNIFEM’s partnerships based on the objectives UNIFEM is trying to achieve. Given the very disparate nature of the regions and their respective organisations, more findings particular to each type of regional organisation with corresponding recommendations and more analysis of regional variations would have made the report even stronger.

## 2.2 Analysis of Evaluation Quality

The decentralised evaluations scored less than the corporate evaluations: 1 scored “excellent” (10%), 4 scored “good” (40%), 3 scored “average” (30%) and 2 scored “weak” (20%). When combining the scores of the corporate and decentralised evaluations, the result is that 2 evaluations were assessed as “excellent”, 2 as “very good”, 4 as “good”, 3 as “average” and 2 as “weak”; with an average score of “good”. Eight evaluations produced lessons learnt. The average score for this parameter was “average”. The score for lessons learnt has not been included in the aggregate evaluations scores, since not all evaluations necessarily result in lessons.

*Table 2: Aggregate Scores of 2009 Evaluations*

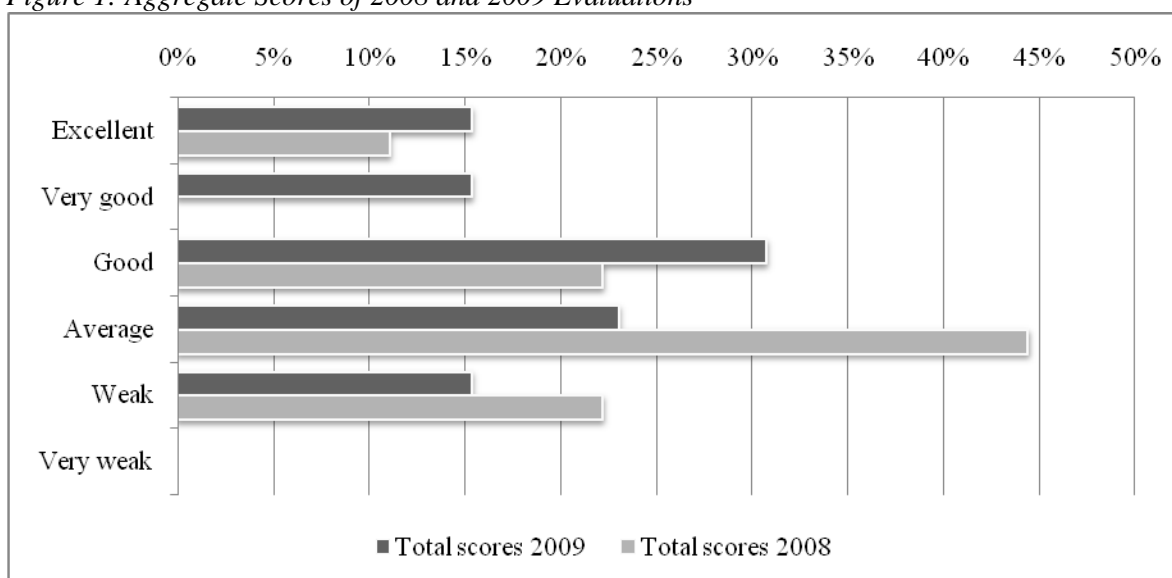
<b>Evaluation Title</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Point Score</b>	<b>Score</b>
1. Arab Women Parliamentarian Project	Asia-Pacific	97	Excellent
2. Sabaya Programme	Asia-Pacific	76	Good
3. Regional Programme on Empowering Women Migrant Workers in Asia, Phase II	Asia-Pacific	76	Good
4. Strengthening Women’s Legal Rights in Aceh, Indonesia	Asia-Pacific	74	Average
5. Regional Programme for Home-based Workers in South Asia, Phase II	Asia-Pacific	77	Good
6. Protecting Women’s Human Rights & Gender Justice in Sudan	Africa	61	Weak
7. Developing Capacities for the Gender Analysis of the Region’s Economies and Conditions for Positioning the Women’s Agenda in the New Stage of Trade Opening, Phase II	LAC	73	Average
8. Peace and Security in Columbia	LAC	61	Weak
9. Accountability for Protection of Women’s Human Rights (FYR)	CEE-CIS	78	Good
10. Promoting Gender Equality in National Development Policies and Programmes in Moldova	CEE-CIS	66	Average
11. Evaluation of UNIFEM Partnerships with Regional Organisations Evaluation	Global	95	Very good
12. Evaluation of UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women	Global	97	Excellent
13. Corporate Evaluation of the Programme Portfolio: UNIFEM’s work on Gender-Responsive Budgeting	Global	93	Very good

In comparison, in 2008 the scores were 1 “excellent”, 2 “good”, 4 “average” and 2 “weak” – with an average score of “average” (see Figure 1). The percentage of evaluations scoring “good” or above has almost doubled in one year even though, as discussed in the methodology section above, the assessment system for the 2009 evaluations was more demanding of the evaluations.

This constitutes an important improvement in such a short period of time. Some of the changes include the following:

- Many of the evaluations undertaken between 2004 and 2008 lacked some very basic elements such as executive summaries, table of contents and annexes. In 2009, improvement in these areas was marked: in most case evaluations scored full points.
- A sizeable number of the 2008 evaluations contained very few lines outlining the methodology, if any at all, while almost two-thirds of the evaluations from 2009 managed to provide decent description of the methodology applied.
- Only one evaluation in 2008 provided an adequate description of the context and fully explained the programme being evaluated. In 2009, two-thirds of the evaluations provided a description of the context that was above average. Likewise, the quality of programme account was above average among half of the 2009 evaluations.
- The data presented in the 2008 evaluations was sometimes sparse and analysis generally tended to be somewhat shallow – failing to uncover underlying causes and opportunities to build on. The scores for findings, conclusions, analysis and recommendations have improved by around 10% between 2008 and 2009.

Figure 1: Aggregate Scores of 2008 and 2009 Evaluations



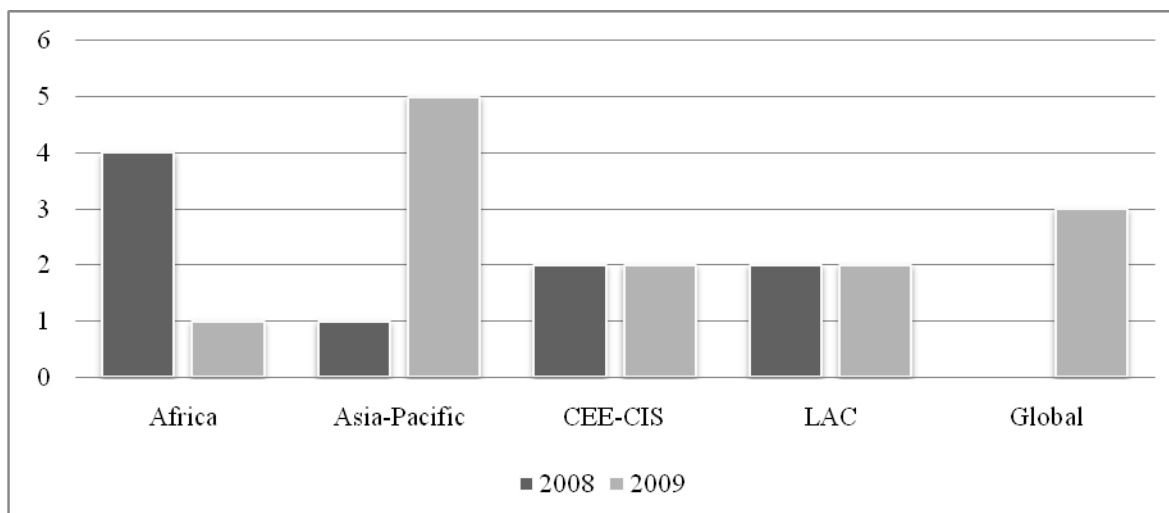
While it is beyond the scope of this evaluation to determine the underlying factors contributing to the improvements noted above, a supposition is that the EU's strategy (completed at the end of 2008) to create tools, resources and systems to enhance UNIFEM's evaluation function and capacities began to already show results in 2009. In this period UNIFEM's evaluation staff grew to 6 people in headquarters and 3 monitoring and evaluation specialists positioned in regional offices. Training of 115 UNIFEM staff members and 26 staff members of partner organisations was undertaken. Ten guidance notes and ten tools were prepared and made available. The Unit revamped the evaluation section on the intranet, which seems to have become one of the more dynamic pages within the site.

The Evaluation Unit was not able to verify whether the positive developments in evaluation quality can be attributed to the systems put in place to improve UNIFEM's evaluation effort, although it also assumes there is a correlation. Other factors that it claims may be contributing to improving UNIFEM's evaluations include that with support from the Directorate, the culture of evaluation has become stronger within the organisation. The actual process of developing the evaluation policy was also thought to have spurred staff to contemplate and plan for evaluations. Further, there is greater understanding for the importance of evaluations and more willingness among staff members regarding the need for sufficient allocations within a programme budget to fund quality evaluations.

The Evaluation Unit also noted a correlation between evaluations that scored high and evaluations that they provided direct technical support to. There has been an increased demand from field offices requesting support from the Evaluation Unit, in particular during the evaluation preparation phase (drafting of the terms of reference and identification of suitable consultants). Decentralised evaluations such as AWP received significant support from the Evaluation Unit and scored high on quality. Similarly, evaluations that were directly managed by the Evaluation Unit also scored high.

Except that there were three global evaluations in 2009, the geographic spread of the 2009 evaluations is comparable to 2008: each region has produced at least one evaluation. Last year Africa produced four; this year it produced one. Meanwhile, there was only one evaluation from the Asia-Pacific region in 2008, while in 2009 there were five. This suggests an evening out over the years, at least at the regional level. It is a cause for concern, though, that some sub-regions have not undertaken a single evaluation in the past two years. This includes, for instance the Caribbean, West African, Southern African and Central African sub-regions. Two of these sub-regions have not produced any evaluations since 2004. According to the evaluation strategy, each sub-region should produce a minimum of one evaluation per year. The fact that the number of decentralised evaluations has not increased is a shortcoming for UNIFEM's learning processes, accountability and overall results-based management. Further, by limiting the evidence base, the small number of evaluations reduces the ability of this meta-evaluation to draw the most pertinent conclusions possible.

*Figure 2: Geographic Spread of UNIFEM Evaluations in 2008 and 2009*



## 2.3 Areas for Improvement

It is important to note that the framework used to assess the quality of the UNIFEM evaluations takes into account of what can reasonably be expected given UNIFEM's capacity, commitment and general level of resources. While it conforms to UNEG standards, it is not absolute. If additional indicators were included, more would obviously be required to attain top level scores. This is particularly true of the methodology parameter. The four evaluations that scored top marks in this area devised solid methodologies that lived up to the UNEG standards and they therefore received excellent scores. However, as UNIFEM develops its evaluations effort, it could begin to stipulate a greater range of data gathering techniques – including more innovative approaches – which would enhance the quality further. When UNIFEM achieves a results-based management system with a fully functioning monitoring and evaluation system (see section 4.4), the assessment of impact of certain interventions should eventually be considered. This would require more systematic and creative data gathering approaches – which in turn would typically require additional resources for the evaluations.

Within the current scope of the assessment framework, there are nevertheless several areas where the evaluation effort can improve further so that, in line with the Strategic Plan, internal and partner capacity is “enhanced to undertake gender-responsive, results-based, rights-based evaluations that generate knowledge on gender equality and women's empowerment”.

The Evaluation Unit itself maintains that further improvement could be gained at the sub-regional level by undertaking training for staff, employing more M&E officers and preparing evaluation plans at this level. It further maintains that specialised training focussing on evaluation in conflict-affected situations would be an important benefit. The Evaluation Unit is also aware that further improvements could also be made if evaluation officers were involved at the formulation phase of each project/programme to comment on M&E measures and the evaluability of the logical framework. Furthermore, the Evaluation Unit could guide sub-regional offices in the undertaking of self-assessments of its monitoring and evaluation effort – which is sub-optimal (see section 4.4) – to identify practical ways of enhancing its results-based management.

Reflecting upon the quality of the 2009 evaluations, this meta-evaluation has identified areas which, if addressed, will enhance the quality of UNIFEM's evaluations further. Most can be addressed by fine-tuning future terms of references, dealing with them in evaluation training workshops and elaborating on UNIFEM's evaluation tools<sup>8</sup>. These are discussed below. While the skills and knowledge of external evaluator(s) that undertake most evaluations for UNIFEM are central in ensuring quality, the terms of reference and task management of evaluations are key means by which UNIFEM can affect evaluation quality. Thus the sections below are directed at the actors within UNIFEM that draft ToRs and manage evaluations at country, sub-regional-regional and HQ levels.

However, at the same time as polishing its evaluations, UNIFEM has to make a concerted effort to increase its overall volume of evaluations to i) accomplish its evaluations plans; ii) credibly underpin its results-based management effort and, iii) buttress learning within the organisation and among its partners. In addition to reasons of accountability, management and learning, increasing the quantity of evaluations is important so that there is enough data for analyses in meta-

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<sup>8</sup> The Evaluation Unit's guidance note on drafting terms of references covers some of the questions discussed in the following section, but there is scope to articulate expand upon them further.



evaluations to underpin decisions regarding UNIFEM's strategic direction. Currently, UNIFEM's managers can draw only on evaluation results from a small number of programmes– which neither represents all sub-regions nor thematic areas that UNIFEM works in.

### 2.3.1 Relevance

The evaluations could be better at analysing relevance more comprehensively. A few of the evaluations interpreted relevance as limited to “timely” and “opportune” in given the context. Others did not take a comprehensive approach to relevance so that it was analysed from different perspectives – e.g. policy perspectives, stakeholder perspectives and the perspective of national priorities. Further, the relevance of the design of the programmes was seldom systematically assessed, if assessed at all.

Some of the questions that might be relevant to consider when drafting the terms of reference include the following: Is the programme relevant to the needs and priorities of the target stakeholders/rights-holders? Is the programme in tune with to the needs and priorities of the partner organisation(s), counterpart institutions/duty-bearers at the national (regional) level? Is the programme relevant to the PRSP? Does the programme conform to the policy priorities of UNIFEM (e.g. its strategic plan, regional and sub-regional strategies)? Does it conform to the MDG's? How is the programme relevant to the overall UN priorities in the country(ies)? Is the programme consistent and complementary with activities supported by other donor organisations? Is the programme's budget allocated in a relevant way?

Assessing relevance will often require an analysis of the design of a programme. The evaluations could have undertaken much more in this area too. Questions that could be asked in the terms of reference include: Is the programme designed to be a technically adequate solution to the development problem at hand? Is the project framework designed in a “logical” way with SMART indicators? Is the programme design guided by international conventions, principles and protocols (e.g. CEDAW, UDHR)? What analysis underpins the design? Is it based on adequate gender equality analyses? Rights-based analyses? Conflict analyses?

### 2.3.2 Effectiveness

When assessing results, future evaluations of UNIFEM's programmes need to clearly distinguish between conclusions based on attribution analysis (assessing the proportion of observed change that can really be attributed to the evaluated intervention – which typically involves building a counterfactual scenario) and contribution analysis (demonstrating whether or not the evaluated intervention is one of the causes of observed change – which relies upon chains of logical arguments that are verified through systematic confirmatory analysis). There also needs to be a sense of proportionality between the relative contributions of different stakeholders. The introduction of the terms “boundary partner” and “strategic partner” into UNIFEM's evaluation vocabulary could also be helpful (see box in section 3.4).

Second, the assessment of effectiveness could better contribute to fulfilling UNIFEM's obligations as laid out in the Strategic Plan 2008-2013 if the terms of references required evaluators to analyse how programmes are making progress in attaining specific outcomes outlined in the Plan.

### 2.3.3 Efficiency

A couple of the evaluations did not look at the management and communication structures related to the programme. In some cases this may not be relevant, but usually there will be findings in this area that are important for improving efficiency. It is important that the terms of reference include questions that require the evaluation team to analyse the management/operational systems and structures.

Second, the evaluations that did comment on operational and management issues, could in some instances have explored causes to the staffing problems and attempt to find solutions.

Third, while most evaluations discussed the monitoring effort within the programme/project being assessed; only one discussed the implications of the programme's mid-term review – even though several of the programmes evaluated had undertaken a review at mid-term. ToRs should include specific questions regarding mid-term reviews. For instance, was the scope of the mid-term review relevant? To what extent was the programme adjusted to address issues raised by the mid/term review?

### 2.3.4 Sustainability

UNIFEM's goals tend to require long-term social, attitudinal and behavioural changes that take more time than what can typically be accomplished during one programme period of two-three years. Given this and the nature of the conditions of UNIFEM's work, it is not surprising that sustainability from the perspective of mere continuation of the benefits after the support have been terminated is rarely attained (see section 5.3). It would therefore be useful to ensure that the evaluations address sustainability from a more dynamic perspective, to include a range of indicators and/or prerequisites for sustainability. Here are some possible questions that could be included in terms of references to guide future evaluations:

- *Enabling partners*: did UNIFEM's support enable partners to secure resources from other sources?
- *Ownership*: is UNIFEM's work based on the expressed needs and priorities of local stakeholders and has it focused on building local ownership for achievements? (Assumption: National ownership and demand-driven programming increases the likelihood that stakeholders have an interest to defend and expand achievements).
- *Institutionalisation*: has UNIFEM support helped to institutionalise a commitment to gender equality in public institutions? (Assumption: establishing gender equality as an integral part of an organisation's structure and strategies enhances the likelihood that gender issues will continue to be addressed even if individuals leave the organisation.)
- *Rights-Based Approach*: Has UNIFEM based its work on existing international agreements and instruments for gender equality? Has it strengthened the capacity of a broad number of stakeholders (civil society and government) to use these instruments as advocacy tools? (Assumption: a rights-based approach will help establish a stable point of reference for advocates that will remain accessible regardless of changes in the context).
- *Accountability*: has UNIFEM worked with both government and with civil society, and has it facilitated connections between the two levels? (Assumption: By working with both duty-

bearers and with rights-holders, UNIFEM has worked towards establishing public expectations of, and demand for transparent and accountable governance.)

- *Networking*: has UNIFEM supported (male and female) change agents, created networks and fostered linkages between different sectors, initiatives and partners? (Assumption: While some individuals may change their roles and positions over time, most are likely to continue to engage as advocates for gender equality and women's rights and can multiply their efforts networks and linkages.)

To ensure that sustainability is addressed in a more comprehensive and dynamic way, UNIFEM should consider establishing a corporate definition for sustainability. Given the strong link between capacity development and sustainability, measuring sustainability would also be facilitated if UNIFEM manages to clearly define its aims, strategies and theory of change with regard to capacity development. This is discussed further in sections 3.1 and 4.1.

### **2.3.5 Lessons Learnt, Good Practice & Promising Approaches**

While several of the terms of references request that lessons learnt, good practices and/or promising approaches are identified by the evaluations, the 2009 reports did not always produce an abundance of these. In some cases “lessons learnt” was conceptually misunderstood. For instance, in two cases it was interpreted as pertaining to how specific actions within a programme were changed when, for instance, barriers were encountered, as opposed to being lessons that contributed to general knowledge. Meanwhile, when cases of good practice were showcased, they were often not thoroughly explained so that an uninitiated reader could fully grasp the “what, why, when, who and how”.

It may not always be possible (or necessarily desirable) for evaluators to prepare a thorough account of good practices or promising approaches. However, most evaluations will at least be in an excellent position to scout and triangulate approaches and practices that seem promising and should therefore identify them in the report as candidates for potential learning opportunities. Therefore, at a minimum, ToR should require this of evaluators. Programme staff could later determine whether the approaches or practices warrant being examined further, systematically documented and entered into UNIFEM's systems for knowledge management.

### **2.3.6 Rights-based and gender equality perspectives**

Gender equality is at the core of UNIFEM's mission and a rights-based approach is central to achieving this. The evaluations were weak in analysing how gender equality and rights-based perspectives had been integrated into the programme. To be able to track progress in line with the aims and approaches stipulated by the Strategic Plan, it is crucial that the terms of references for evaluations require teams to analyse these perspectives within the programme contexts.

Although gender equality is the central concept in UNIFEM's effort, few evaluations provide a solid, systematic and critical assessment of UNIFEM's gender equality approach in the programmes – in terms of both methods and results. In most cases, evaluations did not examine whether or not gender analyses had been undertaken or used as part of the project preparation process – let alone assessed the quality of these analyses. It is possible that some evaluations devoted less attention to this aspect because their findings were positive. However, in this area even affirmative critique (as provided in the WEA-LAC evaluation) should be sought.

Similarly, given that several of the programmes evaluated contained the words “rights-based” in their objectives or project framework, it is discouraging that not more of the evaluations assessed the extent to which this was achieved given the level of integration of the human rights based approach in UNIFEM’s Strategic Plan – in terms of process and more substantively in terms of results. One evaluation, EWMWA, made a respectable effort to bring in a rights-perspective and also pointed out the challenges faced and compromises made by the programme in this regard. The corporate evaluations were also moderately successful at applying a rights perspective.<sup>9</sup> The others, however, made minimal if any explicit reference to the rights-based approach. For instance, one evaluation stated in its methodology section that it applied a rights-based evaluation approach throughout the evaluation but failed to use any rights-based language in the report.

The extent to which principles such as equality & non-discrimination; participation and inclusion; accountability; the rule of law and universality permeate the programme needs to be systematically and more substantively assessed in line with the provisions/directions provided for in the UNIFEM Strategic Plan. Also, the evaluations need to examine how the needs of both rights-holders and duty-bearers are being addressed. Furthermore, the evaluation should determine to what extent the gender equality and rights-perspectives are *explicit and well-articulated*.

The much anticipated UNEG handbook and guidelines, which are being systematically piloted during the course of 2010, are likely to support improvement in this area. Some questions that evaluations should address include: does the intervention’s theory of change include attention to gender equality and human rights? Were the gender equality and human rights analyses undertaken/used during the design of the intervention adequate? Were the budget and other inputs sufficient to address the inclusion of disadvantaged or marginalized groups? Were women and men in various stakeholder categories consulted on the objectives and design of the programme? Was there provision for collecting baseline and monitoring information to distinguish among stakeholder groups? Was monitoring information shared with stakeholders (duty-bearers, rights-holders, women, men). Was monitoring data disaggregated according to relevant criteria?

UNIFEM’s new guidance note on quality criteria for evaluation reports does not include a parameter for rights-based and gender equality perspectives. The rationale has been that human rights and gender equality should permeate all the other parameters. There is sense to this. However, given the significant improvement required in this area, a specific parameter focusing on GE & HR should be reintroduced into the guidance note, while still integrating rights-based and gender equality perspectives in the other parameters.

### **2.3.7 UN Reform and Coordination**

A clear strategy of the Strategic Plan 2008-2013 is that UNIFEM engage actively in UN reform and co-ordination mechanisms; strengthen partnerships with UN organisations; and, act as the key driver of gender equality within the UN. The 2009 evaluations covered this area very lightly – if at all. UNIFEM would be able to better gauge the successes and challenges of implementing this strategy if terms of references required that evaluations analysed and provided findings in relation to UN reform and coordination.

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<sup>9</sup> The fact that two of the corporate evaluations piloted the draft *UNEG Guide to Evaluation from a Human Rights and Gender Equality Perspective* may have contributed to a greater focus on gender equality and human rights perspectives.

### 2.3.8 Participation & Consultation

The meta-evaluation 2004-2008 showed that consultative processes with key stakeholders throughout the evaluation markedly improves evaluation quality – particularly when they are involved in verification and validation. Participation of stakeholders will also improve credibility (insight in the process can make results more believable) and usability (stakeholders can influence the process so that the relevant questions are asked and the right actions can be subsequently taken). The assessment of the 2009 evaluations shows that UNIFEM could improve the level of stakeholder participation in the evaluation process. The Evaluation Unit has recently developed some excellent tools to assist with this process, including Guidance Note 6 *Establishing Management Structures and Reference Groups, Stakeholder Analysis with GE/HR Concerns* and *Stakeholder Checklist*. What could be added is a simple list of key stages in the evaluation process when different stakeholders could potentially have a role. These could include, but not be limited, to the following:

- Drafting of the terms of reference
- Selection of the evaluation team
- Inception phase (key stakeholders are interviewed to ensure their expectations and key concerns are understood by the team)
- Commenting on the inception report and/or participation in inception workshop
- Suggestions/endorsing of the selection of case studies
- Commenting on products of the evaluation process (survey reports, workshop reports, case study reports, etc.)
- Commenting on the draft report
- Participating in validation and verification workshop(s)
- Participating in dissemination and use of evaluation results

Among the 2009 evaluations none applied a full-fledged participatory process in which primary stakeholders played a central role throughout the evaluation – including the drafting of ToR, data collection and assessment. Such an evaluation takes more time, can be more costly and in some cases practically impossible to pull off. However, in 2006 the evaluation of the Women’s Rights to Land in Kyrgyzstan undertook a comprehensive participatory evaluation (involving target populations throughout) at low cost and produced a set of highly interesting results. It offers a number of lessons regarding how a participatory evaluation can be conducted. Given the centrality of the rights-based approach to UNIFEM’s work, the organisation should in future consider pursuing the implementation of at least one country-level participatory evaluation a year from which it could draw methodological lessons. These lessons could feed into future participatory evaluations but could also contribute methodological approaches that could enhance the “regular” evaluations.

### 2.3.9 Ethical safeguards

The evaluations seldom mention the ethical safeguards applied. The Evaluation Unit has made progress in ensuring that ethics and conduct are included in the terms of reference. However, it would perhaps be useful to provide more guidance to evaluators and task managers to ensure that safeguards are systematically understood in practical terms, applied during the evaluation process and described in the evaluation report.

### 2.3.10 Communication

While presentation and language used in the evaluations has vastly improved, there is still scope for progress. First, a greater use of boxes and graphs would be an advantage in many cases. Second, there is in some cases a need for consistent use of UNIFEM terminology. In particular, the term “gender” was used in an imprecise way, sometimes as a substitute for the word “women”. In most cases, it should have been substituted by the phrase “gender equality”, a specific goal of UNIFEM’s, which ‘gender’ is not. Third, it is critical that translations of reports are conducted professionally by translators who are proficient in using UNIFEM’s terminology. The communicative quality of one report was undermined by awkward translation into English, resulting in that several seemingly important positions made by the evaluation cannot be fully understood. According to the EU, there is no corporate system of ensuring quality translation of evaluation reports or other publications.

## 2.4 Recommendations

Important progress has been made with regard to the quality of UNIFEM’s evaluations and the Evaluation Unit has been prolific in producing tools, guidance and systems for UNIFEM’s evaluation effort. There are areas where quality can be further enhanced. Below are recommended actions to raise the quality further, most of which consist of fine-tuning the tools and procedures already developed by the Evaluation Unit:

1. **UNIFEM should ensure that evaluation criteria, as a rule, are applied more comprehensively by its evaluations so that:**
  - **Relevance** is assessed in relation to the needs, policies and priorities of all key stakeholders (rights-holders and duty-bearers – including UNIFEM itself). Relevance of the design of the programme and its budget allocations are examined;
  - When **effectiveness** is assessed, attribution and contribution are clearly distinguished between and there is a sense of proportionality between the relative contributions of different stakeholders;
  - Assessing **efficiency** involves analysing the management/operational systems and structures – including exploring possible causes to identify solutions;
  - **Sustainability** is assessed from a more dynamic perspective and includes –but is not necessarily limited to – analysing the extent to which ownership, institutionalisation, rights-based perspective, accountability and networking have been achieved; and whether UNIFEM’s work has enabled partners to source other funding. UNIFEM should furthermore consider corporately defining sustainability in a way that takes this perspective into account.

This requires that the terms of references for evaluations fleshes out evaluation questions for each evaluation criteria. To assist the drafting of ToRs, the Evaluation Unit should expand the *Guidance Note 7 Developing Term of Reference* to provide more discussion and sample questions for each evaluation criteria. The Evaluation Unit may also wish to include, as needed, more discussion on the evaluation criteria in its training sessions.

**2. UNIFEM should ensure that to the extent they are relevant, the effectiveness of programme strategies outlined in the Strategic Plan 2008-2013 are assessed within the context of its programme evaluations. This includes assessing:**

- The quality of capacity development methodologies and measurements;
- The quality of, and extent to which strategies for scaling up and replication have been prepared and implemented;
- The quality of, and extent to which UNIFEM and its programmes actively engage and contribute to UN reform and co-ordination mechanisms;
- The quality of gender equality perspectives and extent to which they permeate the work;
- The quality of, and extent to which rights-based perspectives permeate UNIFEM's activities and strategies;

This requires that the terms of references for evaluations cover these strategic approaches. The draft UNEG Handbook and Guidelines on Gender Equality and Human Rights that are currently being piloted can guide the formulation of the terms of references. Since they would also be highly useful for evaluators – many of whom are less experienced in GE and HR evaluation approaches – these tools should, to the extent possible, be made available to all UNIFEM evaluation teams.

**3. UNIFEM should consider developing simple tools to practically guide evaluators and evaluation managers in relation to stakeholder participation and ethical conduct.**

UNIFEM could complement its existing stakeholder tools by producing a simple checklist of key stages of the evaluation process during which there are opportunities for stakeholders to participate in a meaningful way. Obviously, each evaluation has its own characteristics and it may not always be appropriate to include all/some/any stakeholders at any particular stage. The checklist would, however, make decisions *not* to involve stakeholders a conscious one, as opposed to an oversight. It would also help determine a realistic timeline for the evaluation, since participation typically involves a longer evaluation process. Furthermore, a generic ToR for evaluation reference groups – which could be modified as demanded by the context – would be useful.

**4. UNIFEM should consider undertaking one fully participatory evaluation a year with the active involvement and guidance of the Evaluation Unit.**

Participation is central to a rights-based approach. To be true to its commitment to rights-based evaluations (and its commitment to the rights-based approach in general), UNIFEM is to some extent obliged to make headway in developing truly participatory approaches with systematic and meaningful involvement of beneficiary groups. UNIFEM has now developed a significant level of basic evaluation capacity that would allow it to delve into this more innovative approach. A country-level evaluation (such as an evaluation of a

community-based programme) would typically be most the suitable candidate for a participatory evaluation. The evaluation should include an assessment at the end of the process in which UNIFEM, stakeholders and the evaluation team analyse and document the strengths, challenges and good/bad practices.

**5. UNIFEM should make a concerted effort to increase the volume of evaluations and make good on its commitment to produce at least one evaluation per sub-region a year.**

Qualitative decline due to quantitative increase of evaluations would of course not be an acceptable trade-off. Evaluations from sub-regions that have produced few or no evaluations in recent years should be particularly encouraged to evaluate its work. A representative thematic spread in evaluations should also be sought. Since UNIFEM's evaluation strategy specifically promotes the undertaking of self-evaluations, sub-regional offices could, with backstopping from the Evaluation Unit, also conduct self-evaluations of key programmatic and/or management strategies that constitute a significant challenge. Given UNIFEM's significant shortcomings in relation to monitoring and evaluation, it would appear that M&E efforts would be a worthy self-evaluation subject.



### 3 Evaluation Conclusions on Programme Strategies

This chapter analyses the findings, conclusions, ideas and potential lessons provided by the corporate and decentralised evaluations undertaken in 2009 in relation to programme strategies. While the evaluations may have discussed several programme strategies specific to the programme and area of work, this section covers programme strategies that have been addressed by a sizeable number of evaluations and which are given emphasis in the Strategic Plan 2008-2013. Thus, programme strategies covered include capacity development; partnership building; regional approaches; replication and scaling up; gender equality and human rights perspectives; and knowledge generation.

#### 3.1 Capacity Development

The Strategic Plan regards capacity development as a core competency of UNIFEM. The Plan furthermore states that an aim for this period is to systematise “specific UNIFEM experiences in capacity development into explicit and accessible sets of approaches”. Furthermore, The Secretary General’s 2007 *Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities of the United Nations Development System*: raises the need within the UN to create “specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound results, frameworks and strategies oriented at capacity development” and ensure sustainability of capacity development activities.

As with the preceding meta-evaluation, **capacity development was recognised as a key strength** of UNIFEM. Feedback gathered by at least half of the evaluations (for instance, Sabaya, WLR-Aceh, WEA-LAC, WHR-Sudan and GE-Moldova) revealed that capacity-building was generally highly regarded and popular. In some cases (GE-Moldova, WLR-Aceh and AWP) the proficiency of the staff was highlighted and training of trainers was considered an effective contribution (In the case of Aceh, the in-country resource pool of qualified trainers was doubled). The WEA-LAC evaluation mentioned that participants were carefully selected based on their potential multiplier effect within their institution. The GRB-Global evaluation identified innovative approaches to capacity building. AWP found that training material was adapted to local contexts and that engaging male and female trainers on gender equality had a positive effect.

#### Promising approaches to sustainable capacity development

Several evaluations found that universities and academic institutions can serve as important partners in capacity development efforts by embedding gender equality subjects in academic programmes and then multiplying knowledge. Efforts to support academic institutions were favourably assessed by the evaluations of GE-Moldova, WEA-LAC and GRB-Global.

Similarly, the evaluation WHR-FRY held that integrating a training module on labour law and gender equality into obligatory education for judges and prosecutors in BiH, was a great success. Not only did it ensure sustainability, it ensured that those deciding in labour disputes would have received specific training on women’s labour rights, which is expected to ultimately contribute to achieving unanimity in judicial practice, currently non-existent.

A general conclusion that could be gleaned from nine of the evaluations was that effectiveness and the results achieved could be contributed to **consistent and considerable capacity building efforts** (GRB-Global, GE-Moldova, WLR-Aceh, RO-Global, UNTF, Sabaya, WEA-LAC, WHR-Sudan and HBW).

The global evaluations raised three areas of concern in relation to capacity development. First, all the corporate evaluations pointed out that while long-term capacity development enhanced sustainability, short-term **capacity building efforts tended not to be sustainable**. The RO-

Global evaluation underlined that institutional change and capacity building of gender mainstreaming takes a very long time: “When the support of external advisors ends, the likelihood of the results being sustained and institutionalised depends on both internal leadership and ownership, as well as on the systems and structures (including incentives) that have been created over time.” However, within UNIFEM long-term partnerships with ROs, the evaluation noted that UNIFEM’s tendency towards relatively short-term and activity-focused interventions (even in partnerships that spanned over a decade) with limited follow-up strategies and resources could negatively affect the long-term sustainability of the results obtained.

**Promising practice for institutionalisation**

Institutionalisation of methodologies and practices promoted by training cannot be guaranteed by the training of individuals. However, to improve the odds, individuals trained by WEA-LAC in some cases signed a formal agreement of commitment – countersigned by the director of the respective organisation – stating that they would share the knowledge they acquire and serve as multiplier agents.

The UNTF evaluation also linked capacity development and sustainability by concluding that capacity development for grantees was critical for sustainability and for long-term effectiveness on VAW. The limited resources of the grantees often entailed that capacity building could not continue after the funding period.

Likewise, the evaluators of GRB-Global saw capacity building as a route to sustainability. It highlighted a need for a visible medium-term commitment from UNIFEM. It also suggested an approach aimed at institutionalising the provision of GRB capacity building. It further proposed that UNIFEM consider adopting a global quality assurance role for capacity building within the area of gender responsive budgeting, both in terms of resources/materials development and courses. It could “draw in regional or international resources, to provide technical inputs to training implemented by other actors, encouraging coordination and systematic prioritisation of training and promoting realistic but effective approaches to monitoring and evaluation”.

A second area of concern was that there was a **need for an overall strategic perspective on capacity building**<sup>10</sup> based on a theory of change.<sup>11</sup> The GRB-Global evaluation assessed that there was insufficient coordination of the approach to capacity building. This led to an unclear understanding among stakeholders of the linkages between the different interventions. The RO-Global evaluation echoed this position. It held that support to capacity development should go beyond discrete activities and be based on comprehensive concepts of individual and institutional capacity and capacity development. The evaluation further noted that the absence of corporately agreed upon concepts of *capacity* and *capacity development* (individual and institutional) may be a factor that limits UNIFEM’s ability to work towards and track the sustainable results of its partnerships with ROs.

<sup>10</sup> UNIFEM completed a capacity building strategy at the end of 2009, after the 2009 evaluations were submitted.

<sup>11</sup> This ties into the frequent lack of an overall strategic vision which is further discussed in section 4.1.

Third, the corporate evaluators saw **the need for more systematic monitoring and lessons learning** from the capacity building effort. The GRB-Global evaluation pointed out that monitoring data provides evidence of the effectiveness of different capacity building approaches. Given the anecdotal evidence of the impact of innovative capacity-building approaches, it suggested that more comprehensive efforts should be made to collect data on impact and analyse and disseminate lessons learnt. This included the need to follow-up with beneficiaries to assess the effectiveness and utilisation of skills to provide further support when required. The RO-Global evaluation discussed the types of indicators UNIFEM should use to monitor institutional change and commitment to GE and WHR. Some examples of possible indicators included changes in financial commitments from the institution's core resources, changes in staffing numbers and development and utilization of internal policies.

### 3.2 Replication and “Up-scaling”<sup>12</sup>

In the Strategic Plan, UNIFEM commits itself to supporting community-level initiatives that generate models for advancing women's human rights and eliminating gender inequalities. It also states that UNIFEM will “create an environment conducive to replication and ‘upscaling’.” The success in these areas is mixed in the five evaluations that discuss up-scaling.

The Sabaya Programme – which consisted of establishing community centres in 18 locations in the West Bank and Gaza to promote women's participation in decision-making within their communities and provide a hub for networking and educational/vocational activities – was premised on scaling up to encompass the whole West Bank and Gaza. The evaluation of the programme recommended that a more structured, results-based management plan for the centres be in place before scaling up. In addition, a country level action plan was needed that detailed goals, objectives, activities, timelines, outputs and outcomes – with clear delineation of roles and responsibilities of all actors involved. Since the Sabaya Centres lacked capacity to secure funding from donors, the evaluation saw a role for UNIFEM in promoting the centres as platforms for development to other international agencies. UNIFEM could also build a coalition of agencies that could make active use of the centres.

The EWMWA Programme aimed to develop pilot interventions to strengthen the provision of pre-departure training for migrant workers and improve recruitment practices and reintegration processes. The evaluation found that most of the effort actually focused on the first area and projects in the other two areas were few. The EWMWA programme was especially successful in strengthening organisations and networks of women migrant workers and their families to claim their entitlements in countries of origin. According to the evaluation findings, some of these community-based approaches are being up-scaled and replicated with support from other donors. However, the evaluation deemed that although some of the other approaches experimented with had the potential to be replicated and eventually result in effective interventions, the ad-hoc

#### **Promising Approach to Building Sustained Capacity from GRB Evaluation**

A key success of the GRB programme was the engagement with advocates for gender equality – principally national women's machineries, gender focal points and civil society women's organisations to build sustained capacity. In Ecuador, the national women's machinery was well established and influential. In Ecuador, Morocco and Senegal, gender advocates were embedded in planning and finance functions (Gender Units in finance ministries in Morocco and Ecuador and gender focal staff in sector planning and finance department in Senegal). In Mozambique, change was achieved through sector-level gender focal staff who mobilised the most senior decision-makers. Whilst all these institutional routes led to results, the most effective appeared to be where gender and planning/finance remits were combined institutionally.

<sup>12</sup> This programmatic approach was not assessed in the 2004-2008 m

character of most of the pilots, the limited time of implementation, and spreading of scarce funding across too many pilot models reduced the effectiveness of the approach. In particular, more could have been done to promote economic empowerment by developing pilot models that created economic opportunities for returning migrant women.

The HBW programme included experimenting on the “how to” of improving the lives and livelihoods of women HBWs through strategic piloting so that tangible experience could inform mainstream strategies. The evaluation held that more concrete measures were required in future to adequately produce viable pilot approaches to social protection and promoting fair trade practices. Within the context of WLR-ACEH this seems to have taken place. The evaluation maintained that partners were convinced of the value of the socialisation and training processes UNIFEM had initiated. The evaluation held that partners realised how successful UNIFEM’s initiatives were in furthering women’s rights and they recognised the potential damages that can incur when people are not aware of the laws and women’s rights. Therefore, there was considerable interest among partners in scaling up UNIFEM’s effort by creating a master plan where all organisations’ roles were specified in meeting the political, social and economic needs of women in prioritised manner for short, medium and long-term impacts.

Meanwhile, the prospects of scaling up the statistics work within the context of the GE-Moldova programme were less evident. While UNIFEM foresaw continued close cooperation with the National Bureau of Statistics and line ministries under the auspices of the UNDP-UNIFEM–UNFPA Joint Statistics Project, the evaluation concluded that it was difficult to develop a plan for significant donor-funded up-scaling of the sex-disaggregated statistics aspects in the absence of a clear view of how such competencies would be institutionalised by the government.

### 3.3 Partnership Building

The Strategic Plan seeks “higher benchmarking” in terms of partnerships and regards strategic partnerships and leadership commitment as key to success. It states that “UNIFEM needs to deepen its support and leverage stronger partnerships where it has identified opportunities.” It also commits UNIFEM to “being more rigorous in tracking its support to partnerships that contribute to success.” An aim for the period of 2008 to 2013 is to enhance the capacity and influence of gender equality experts, advocates and their organisations and networks to ensure strong gender equality dimensions in national laws, policies and strategies – including in peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction processes. Below are the findings and conclusions of the 2009 evaluations with regard to partnerships. They cover i) how UNIFEM is perceived by partners; ii) the extent to which it applies a strategic approach to partnerships; and, iii) partnership opportunities that may have been missed.

#### *(i) UNIFEM: an Active and Appreciated Partner*

There is ample evidence that **UNIFEM is highly appreciated as a partner**. Partners praised its technical knowledge and experience; its status as a neutral convener; its ability to proactively network among a range of stakeholders; and, its demand-driven approach. The evaluations implied that UNIFEM **added value to the overall development effort**. Below are some of the findings to this effect:

- In Aceh, UNIFEM added value to the development process by effectively networking among national stakeholders such as the governments at provincial and district levels, law enforcement agencies, organised civil society, youth, academia and the media.

- The RO-Global evaluation held that UNIFEM maintained close connections and good working relations with civil society organisations at national and regional levels. Furthermore, its status as a neutral UN agency allowed it to establish and facilitate networking among a broad range of diverse players who otherwise would not get together.
- WEA-LAC evaluation also pointed out that UNIFEM was highly effective in creating spaces for dialogue among sectors of the government, civil society, the academic community, private sector and the international corporation agencies. It contributed to creating the synergies necessary to advance the goal of women's economic autonomy. Despite the programme's short lifespan, it established intellectual leadership resulting in several public and private entities approaching it in search of support to incorporate gender equality perspectives into diverse initiatives.
- In Moldova UNIFEM played a proactive role among the development actors, building trust and winning respect and commitment from many key stakeholders. For example, UNIFEM played an active role in the revision of MDG 3 and with its partners it mobilised the donor community to advocate gender responsiveness in the National Development Plan, eventually leading to the formulation of key recommendations from the Donor's Group on Gender. Furthermore, the evaluation reported that donor organisations held very positive views of UNIFEM's programme. The programme approach was characterised by inclusiveness and real partnership, where UNIFEM acted as a support and catalyst to the government and other actors while also leading the way.
 

**Promising approach to dynamic partnering**  
 Within the context of WEA-LAC programme, UNIFEM implemented an innovative system of collegiate management between the government, the civil society, the academic community and the private sector in the different countries. It involved establishing both steering committees – that governed the programme at the country level – and several thematic committees. These structures became effective tools to efficiently mobilise the range of social and economic actors around the common purpose of reducing gender inequalities in the economic sector and advancing toward women's economic autonomy in the region.
- The RO-Global evaluation noted UNIFEM's demand-driven approach. UNIFEM staff members asked for, listened to and took into account the needs and priorities of its partners, rather than imposing pre-made plans or approaches. The partner feedback presented in the Sabaya evaluation stated that UNIFEM was “more than a donor”. It showed faith and interest in its partners and devoted significant time to dialogue.
- In a number of ways, UNIFEM and the UN Trust Fund deepened and widened involvement of partners in the area of violence against women. For instance, it diversified the types of organisations eligible for grants to include governments, NGO-government partnerships, and UN Country Teams (in partnership with governments and CSOs). In addition, by establishing appraisal committees at the sub-regional level, consultation and cooperation among partners working with VAW was furthered.

Four evaluations also pointed to **UNIFEM's proficiency in dealing with resistance** to gender equality and women's rights issues. In Sudan UNIFEM used skill and diplomacy in policy dialogue, which reduced resistance and gained support that enabled a sustained platform of dialogue. In Aceh, UNIFEM used tact and skill in delivering gender equality messages. It worked successfully with male networks, religious leaders and Sharia judges by making strategic use of

the convergence and compatibility of Islam, CEDAW and customary law to address misinterpretations and overcome scepticism. In the context of the Sabaya programme, when men showed resistance, UNIFEM reportedly dealt with it effectively. In the AWP programme, UNIFEM aptly used routes such as figuring out specific fields of interests of parliamentarians and using parliamentary hearings to raise awareness on gender equality. Here UNIFEM found that personal contacts with MPs were more effective than communicating to them as a group.

*(ii) Strategic Approach to Partnerships?*

The evaluations showed some divergence regarding the extent to which UNIFEM engaged in strategic partnerships. The evaluations of WHR-FRY, WLR-Aceh and WHR-Sudan found evidence of the strategic partnering. For instance, the WLR-Aceh held that UNIFEM selected partners on the basis of their strategic positioning to influence change. The choice of partners was considered appropriate and reflected a broad array of intervention types and target groups. Of particular importance was the attention given to women ex-combatants and the focus on increasing the government's capacity through support for the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Agency. Likewise, WHR-Sudan evaluation held that UNIFEM chose the correct partnerships for the project to succeed. The approach undertaken was assessed as highly strategic. It enabled the mainstreaming of gender equality within the UN country presence, the government and local NGOs. In effect, according to the evaluation findings, UNIFEM was able to leverage women's voice and participation in the peace process.

The RO-Global and GRB-Global evaluations implied that UNIFEM engaged in certain partnerships that were strategic to the programme's success. In the case of RO-Global, the evaluation found that moving to a multi-tiered approach for partnership (beyond focus on gender units) could provide opportunities and enhance sustainability. Similarly, the GRB-Global evaluation held that partnerships with national women's machineries, other gender equality advocates, planning and finance functions and sector ministries were all essential component of the strategies which contributed to achieving results.

However, the evaluations of AWP and GRB-Global saw a great need for more strategic approaches to partnerships. The AWP evaluation team did not find that the cooperation with partners was based on "a strategic approach that aimed to achieve synergy and value-added as well as being cost-effective". The GRB-Global evaluators suggested that further work be undertaken to understand how partnership strategies are used to collect data on their effectiveness:

UNIFEM should map the range of government, civil society in donor partnerships that the programme requires and then proceed systematically to develop those partnerships, assessing the most strategic relationships and sequencing the development according to opportunities and resources.

**Promising Approach to Strategic Partnering in Aceh**

In Aceh, UNIFEM was strategic in its collaboration with stakeholders in advocacy work. Its partnerships with government, Sharia law court and judges; law enforcement and legislators were strategic to support the integration of women's needs in policies and policy-making processes. Working with youth groups and media networks generated good social dialogue on gender equality in the media and among the youth. Partnering with men and male-dominated networks and institutions helped to spread awareness. Collaborating with religious leaders was important since they have a prominent role in Acehnese life and can use their influence to disseminate principles of equality and non-discrimination. Other partners included academia, religious education institutions and women ex-combatants.

In a similar vein, the RO-Global evaluation found that UNIFEM as an organisation had engaged only in limited formal reflection and data collection on the nature and results of its partnerships with regional organisations. UNIFEM did not explicitly define the rationale and expected benefits of its partnerships with regional organisations or establish a way to track and report on the relevance of those partnerships. While these partnerships were theoretically intended to be a means for achieving long-term results at national level, the management approaches that were applied focused on short-term results linked to specific activities with a regional partner. A potential lesson presented in this evaluation was that the absence of an overall partnership framework – which identifies clear specific objectives and expected mutual benefits of the partnership and relates these to the respective partners’ own objectives and strategies – can lead to sparse and not always strategic activities. It also leaves the relationship vulnerable to leadership and/or context changes.

RO-Global evaluation contributed ideas to help further a more strategic approach to partnerships at UNIFEM by applying IDRC’s Outcome Mapping terminology (see box below). The evaluation found that UNIFEM currently uses the term ‘partnership’ for a variety of different relationships with stakeholders. However, UNIFEM could be seen as relating to most regional organisations as a *boundary partner* (approximately 75% of the reviewed partnerships). Other regional organisations (e.g. with some of the UN Regional Economic Commissions) constituted a *strategic partner*. The two types of partnerships were not mutually exclusive and some partnerships have elements of both.

**Box 2: Classification of Partners from IDRC’s Outcome Mapping**

- *Boundary partners* are those individuals, groups, or organisations with which a programme interacts directly and with whom it can anticipate some opportunities for influence (i.e. the partnership is deliberately and directly aiming to initiate and/or support positive changes in the boundary partner’s behaviours, relationships, activities, or practices).
- *Strategic partners* are actors that a programme works with but which it does not want to (or is not able to) directly influence or change. The programme may want/need an alliance with strategic partners to achieve particular objectives, but it is not trying to change the behaviour or practices of these partners (examples could be donors or UN agencies).

*(iii) Partnership Opportunities*

Although most of the evaluations claimed that UNIFEM’s partnerships extended to a wide range of stakeholders, the AWP programme reported missed opportunities in this area. Had the programme made an effort to link Arab female and male parliamentarians, as well as linked the AWP project with other regional networks promoting and supporting women’s political empowerment, it could have built and strengthened a regional forum that in turn could have functioned as a vibrant framework that promoted gender equality in the Arab region’s political arena.

The GRB-Global evaluation also pointed to missed opportunities. Programmes had different degrees of success in engaging with civil society advocates for gender equality and more effort could have been made to engage with parliamentarians. Other key partnerships were not properly explored in some countries so that opportunities were missed to engage with donors, and with public sector and public finance management

**Promising Approach to Strategic Partnering in Moldova**

To address the issue of gender biases, UNIFEM sought to involve the Moldovan media from the outset. With the national association of print media (API – *Asociația Presei Independente*), UNIFEM undertook a “press cuttings” activity to provide irrefutable evidence of gender bias within Moldova’s print media. Journalists participated in workshops where they were shown examples of gender biases in print media reporting in Moldova. This helped raise awareness and establish a consensus of what the current situation was and what problems needed addressing. In effect, the media organisations became committed partners.

reform within the wider aid effectiveness agenda. This limited the programme's ability to be fully aware of and influence on public financial management reform processes.

### 3.4 Regional Approaches

The Strategic Plan does not specifically address the concept of regional or sub-regional approaches. This evaluation could not identify whether UNIFEM has formulated a position supporting its inclination for regional or sub-regional programmes. Nevertheless, generally, a regional approach<sup>13</sup> to programming has the potential to add value to development processes in a number of ways, for instance by: i) coherently addressing issues that transgress national borders – such as migration; ii) broaching subjects that may be too sensitive to approach at the national level; and, iii) enhancing capacity-building efforts by accessing regional resources and bringing together actors from different countries to exchange experience and lessons.

Four of the 2009 evaluations covered sub-regional programmes and one constituted a regional programme. All point to that there is **scope to enhance the regional dimension** of UNIFEM's work. For instance, while the AWP evaluation noted that a few regional meetings were held during the project implementation period, the extent of the effectiveness achieved regionally was difficult to pinpoint. Moreover, the AWP programme ended without a functioning regional network in place, which was perceived to be a lost opportunity. The programme in effect operated as a “multi-country” rather than a regional project per se.

With the exception of academic networks and women's networks, the WEA-LAC evaluation assessed the linking of the regional and national components of the programme to be insufficient. The linkages between the regional and national components were neither visible nor perceived by most actors. Similarly, the GRB-Global evaluation noted a few examples of knowledge-sharing at the sub-regional level, but generally found little evidence of the success of the regional components of UNIFEM's work on gender responsive budgeting. Meanwhile, the EWMWA evaluation deemed that the programme strategies were not sufficiently adapted to regional circumstances:

The transnational linkages and synergies that the programme was able to create did not always reflect migration flows and circuits. Not all country teams were able to understand and respond to circumstances and opportunities for collaboration and synergy outside of their national context.

While the regional component was appreciated by project partners of the WHR-FRY programme, some participants of the regional events observed that in cases where participants came from heterogeneous groups with different levels of knowledge, stronger facilitation on the part of UNIFEM or third party representatives would have benefited the quality of discussions and conclusions reached.

#### Box 3: Reflections on Regional Partnerships from RO-Global Evaluation

The RO-Global evaluation had some interesting reflections and insights focusing on the regional dimensional:

- There is limited data available on factors needed to enable regional initiatives to have “trickle-down” effects at national level. Further reflection is needed on how to harmonise and create synergies between regional and national level partnerships.

<sup>13</sup>The term “regional approach” encompasses both regional and sub-regional approaches in this report.



- Collaboration at the regional level provides space for the exchange of ideas, lessons learnt, tools, and best practices that can enhance the knowledge and skills of gender equality advocates in each country for the purposes of advocacy and policy work at the national level. In addition, regional meetings, forums and publications that share information on progress towards GE targets provide the opportunity for exercising 'peer pressure' among member states.
- Working together towards a concrete regional goal such as the completion of a regional gender equality policy can forge alliances between different women advocates, create regional ownership of GE/WHR issues and help groups overcome minor differences to focus on their common goals.
- Working at the regional level cannot replace an organisation's work at the country level, but is an important complement to it. Likewise, UNIFEM's relationships with, for instance, the women's machinery at the country level is also a key determinant in its ability to fulfil an effective role at the regional level.

### 3.5 Gender Equality and Human Rights-Based Approach

The work of UNIFEM emanates from a guiding vision: gender equality and women's empowerment will be achieved when women are able to realise their human rights and human development. The Strategic Plan states that incorporating a human rights-based approach is a crucial aspect of UNIFEM support. At the heart of this approach is supporting groups that are politically and economically marginalised. Thus, programmes must take into account the diversities of women's interests, opportunities and challenges and the differences between groups of women should be reflected in advocacy and targeted programming. According to the Strategic Plan, UNIFEM will furthermore aim to ensure that the most marginalised and those whose voices are rarely heard are brought into the mainstream of national efforts to achieve gender equality.

Given the nature of UNIFEM's programmes, gender equality and women's rights are obviously central to their respective aims, approaches and content. UNIFEM's capacity development work, for instance, often involved providing training in gender analysis and gender mainstreaming (e.g. GE-Sudan, WLR-Aceh, WEA-LAC, RO-Global). While several of the evaluations refer to gender equality approaches and results, only a few evaluations (e.g. WEA-LAC and EWMWA) undertook a systematic and critical analysis of UNIFEM's approach to promoting gender equality within the programme/project (see section 2.3.6).

The solid effort of the WEA-LAC evaluation to analyse the gender equality approach and results of the programme concluded that the programme was successful in this area: the concept of gender and economics was clear and well-anchored in the political willingness of country and regional coordinators; specific economic policies were strengthened to complement major national and regional policies that favour women; organisational structures were created that reflected political priorities around gender and economics; gender analysis was applied systematically, including disaggregated gender data and statistics; pertinent studies were promoted, whose content was translated into political or institutional practices. However, the evaluation found a lack of a gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation strategy for the programme.

In some other cases there appears to be scope to strengthen the gender equality dimensions further – both in terms of approach and programme content. In relation to the former, the AWP evaluation noted that some data was not sex disaggregated. Furthermore, while some of the evaluations noted that the programmes were designed using gender analyses (GE-Sudan, WLR-Aceh), this was not the case for e.g. AWP. Meanwhile, the EWMWA evaluation found the need to sharpen the programme's gender analysis further since it had missed critical issues which weakened the ability of the programme to effectively empower women migrant workers.

The EWMWA evaluation also held that in countries that were migrant destinations, an opportunity was missed to engage local women more effectively both as women and as employers of women migrant workers in raising awareness of and challenging the inadequate gender equality and rights focus of official policies. Furthermore, it maintained that the programme never questioned the soundness of the gender equality perspective of overall governmental policies. For instance, not all legislation and policy promoted by the programme had a clear gender perspective based on the roles, expectations, needs, realities and relationships of women and men migrants and a vision of contributing to gender equality – but instead focused on enhancing protection of migrant contract workers generally. While such efforts were considered extremely important and necessary in a situation where migrants enjoy few rights, the evaluation found that they did not necessarily reflect UNIFEM's specific contribution to the debate on migration.

For more than half of the programmes evaluated, the term “rights-based” was a central theme in the programme framework or equivalent (WEA-LAC, EWMWA, HBW, Moldova, UNTF, WHR-Aceh, GRB-Global). However, none seemed to implement a full-fledged rights-based approach in which the principles of equality and non-discrimination; participation and inclusion; and rule of law and accountability were consistently, systematically and substantively applied in analysis, design and implementation and results achieved. Nevertheless, several projects/programmes included some aspects of human rights perspectives. The 2009 evaluations –with only a few exceptions – did not assess UNIFEM's effectiveness in applying a human rights-based perspectives and at most made fleeting references to such. This section will summarise the findings of those exceptions.

The evaluation of EWMWA makes a solid effort to assess the quality of UNIFEM's efforts to apply a rights-based perspective, which was a central tenet to the programme. The evaluation assesses the programme's efforts to maintain a rights-based perspective in its work with governments, civil society, migrant workers and other stakeholders from a rights-based perspective. It found that while the programme achieved some successes and results (notably with regard to participation of women migrants in the region and passing of legislation in Nepal) in applying a gender equality and human rights perspective, much more was needed in this regard. Conceptually, the evaluation held that the implications of a rights-based and empowerment approach required sharper clarification to differentiate it clearly from merely a protection-oriented (and somewhat paternalist) approach that advocates for protection of vulnerable women migrant workers. Operationally, by focusing on trying to ease some of the most urgent problems faced by migrant workers, the programme might in fact have, at worst, undermined the gender sensitive rights-

#### **Promising Approach to Promoting Women's Rights – Partnering with the Media**

In Nepal, EWMWA conducted a very successful campaign to re-orient public perceptions about women's migration issues – which had created a blurring between migration and trafficking – and to contextualise safe migration as a rights issue. A long-term partnership with Sancharika Samuha, an association of women journalists, was developed. Sancharika's media campaign focused on highlighting the differences between migration and trafficking, the “success stories” of migrant women's experiences, the contribution of women migrant workers to the socio-economic development of the country, the hurdles and risks faced by women wanting to migrate, as well as messages to increase women's awareness of safe migration. The campaign used television public service announcements and made extensive use of local FM radios.

Sancharika provided orientation and training to media workers on safe migration issues from a gender perspective. A partnership with the Society of Economic Journalists was established to jointly conduct evidence-based advocacy to address the financial concerns of women migrant workers.

All the stakeholders interviewed viewed the media campaign as fundamental in creating a receptive environment to addressing safe migration as a right and in breaking down barriers to policy dialogue and government action.

based development perspective of its approach by embracing the government policy direction. Because this is the evaluation that best assesses a programmatic approach from a rights perspective, Box 5 summarises this assessment in an attempt to provide some insight to how a rights perspective can be analysed.

The GRB-Global evaluation found several good examples of programmes that made links between CEDAW and gender budgeting initiatives in identifying key issues of importance to women and using these as a basis for achieving change in policy making and budgets. A more detailed examination of these examples could provide the basis for the development of a more rights-based approach. Overall, however, the evaluation still saw a need to make the links between women's rights and gender budgeting initiatives clearer in UNIFEM's work.

Likewise, the evaluation argued that fuller application of a rights-based approach to programming could have led to more clearly articulated approaches about the importance of civil society actors as channels for representing women's priorities and opinions to government decision-makers. This may have guided staff to persisting with support to CSOs, even when, for example, they did not fulfil all their contractual obligations as implementing partners or when capacity building efforts appeared to be producing little immediate result.

The GRB-Global evaluation was the only evaluation that assessed the extent to which gender equality and rights-based analysis had been undertaken in the design of the programme. It concluded that the human rights conventions and their reporting mechanisms, CEDAW in particular, had not been used for identifying women's priorities. Nor had power relations within government and/or between government and citizens – which enable or prevent women from claiming their rights – been analysed.

The UNTF evaluation piloted the draft *UNEG Guide to Evaluation from a Human Rights and Gender Equality Perspective* which is likely to have contributed to a fairly consistent rights perspective in the report. The evaluation addressed the assessment of GE & HR approaches by analysing the extent to which the projects addressed both rights-holder and duty-bearers; the achievements made at the policy level; the extent to which the projects promoted equality and were able to monitor from a GE& HR perspective. It found that support to the projects reviewed helped strengthen the capacities of both duty-bearers and/or rights-holders. One quarter of the projects contributed to changing or implementing legal or policy frameworks at country and local levels. Some projects contributed to innovations in eliminating violence against women – particularly in HIV/AIDS and violence against women programming. The majority of the reviewed projects integrated human rights and gender equality approaches and perspectives. The UN Trust Fund responded to the needs of women affected by or survivors of violence and contributed to increased awareness among citizens of the gravity of violence against women and girls. The evaluation concluded that additional advances could be made to address some of the principles of rights-based approaches by paying attention to inclusiveness (systematically including men, marginalised and vulnerable groups); applying participatory processes and using human rights and gender equality monitoring reports.

### Box 5: Analysis of Rights-based Perspectives: Summary from EWMWA Evaluation

The EWMWA programme was successful in promoting a rights-based approach in some areas. For instance, it paved the way for the ground-breaking Covenant of Ethical Conduct and Good Practices of Overseas Employment Service Providers, which committed recruitment and employment agencies to support human rights instruments. It was also especially successful in capacitating organisations and networks of women migrant workers and their families to claim their entitlements in countries of origin. In Nepal the programme had effectively contributed to the drafting of the gender sensitive rights-based 2007 Foreign Employment Act and the Regulations for its implementation. Success depended on that the Nepali government's and UNIFEM's priorities were aligned.

However, in other countries, aligning the programme to government frameworks **weakened the main thrust of the programme** to *empower* women migrant workers. The EWMWA Programme never questioned the soundness of the gender equality perspective of overall governmental policies in most countries, let alone expose gender-biased constructs in the official policy discourse. For instance, not all legislation and policy promoted had a clear gender perspective based on the roles, expectations, needs, realities and relationships of women and men migrants and a vision of contributing to gender equality. Instead, the programme focused on enhancing protection of migrant contract workers generally, leaving out irregular migrants, without questioning the implications for migrants' rights. By trying to ease some of the most urgent problems faced by migrant workers, the programme might in fact have, at worst, undermined the gender sensitive rights-based development perspective of its approach by embracing the government policy direction and the role of contract workers that it implied. Below is an example from Jordan:

In Jordan, the anchoring of the programme to the Jordanian government policy to promote women's economic empowerment has potential weaknesses from a gender perspective. In promoting the participation of Jordanian women in the labour market, the role of domestic migrant workers appears to be understood as enabling Jordanian women to have the time to pursue a paid occupation outside of the domestic sphere, thus avoiding challenging traditional household gender roles in the first place.

More generally, while a large share of activities targeted women migrant workers, they did not necessarily pay attention to their specific gender concerns, as if having a sex segregated focus was in itself sufficient.

In Cambodia, UNIFEM's partners were unable to explain what a gender approach meant beyond the inclusion of women migrant workers in their programmes, and the same was the case for the members of the community-based organisations in Indonesia. In both cases, male leadership was clearly dominant, even in organisations formally led by women.

With regard to involving relevant actors in civil society, the evaluation observed that **women's rights organisations were only marginally involved in EWMWA**. They could have played an active role in contributing to enhancing gender sensitive rights-based perspective of groups working on migration. They could also have placed safe migration issues in the broader context of gender equality and women's political and economic empowerment.

The programme was **effective in speaking for or on behalf of women migrant workers**. Particularly strategic was the focus **on ensuring the participation** of migrants groups from the Asian region at CEDAW Committee sessions, as well as supporting the approval in November 2008 of the General Recommendation on Women Migrant Workers. However, the evaluation assessed that more could be done to involve women migrant workers in formulating the programme strategy.

The evaluation saw a need to address the **risks** of involving and being associated with recruitment agencies (who are those perceived as the "villains" in migration) **from a rights-based perspective**. Unless the engagement of these actors was realised through clearly defined mechanisms for enforcement and monitoring, it had the potential risk of alienating or creating confusion among other stakeholders about the possibility that these agencies might use their participation as an opportunistic strategy to improve their image and status without a genuine intention to engage in a change process.

Conceptually, the evaluation deemed that the implications of a rights-based and empowerment approach **required sharper clarification** in order to differentiate it clearly from merely a protection-oriented approach. The programme was not always clear on this, at times perpetuating the image of women migrant workers as "victims" rather than "agents" who can make their own choices even in the most distressing circumstances. The evaluation held that more consultation were necessary to create a common understanding and a core set of shared values on issues of women's human rights and gender equality. Among project partners and even among some UNIFEM staff, there was considerable uncertainty about what it means to have a gender sensitive rights-based development approach to migration.

The remainder of the evaluation reports at best provide a few scattered references to human rights principles and perspectives. The HBW evaluation, for example, deemed that the programme had been highly effective in applying its stated strategy of enabling women HBWs to participate in and influence all stages of planning, development and implementation of concerned policies, programmes, budgets and processes. Meanwhile, the WHR-FRY made reference to the principle of equality and inclusion. It stated that a very positive approach of the programme was the inclusion of the organisations for the disabled and those dealing with ethnic minorities into the national constitutional conference. The subsequent participation of the representative of the association of the blind in the working group for the development of constitutional amendments was also commended. The active involvement of these actors contributed to amendments in the drafting process, ensuring that the wider rights issues of ethnic minorities and the disabled as vulnerable groups were considered and adequately represented within the constitutional reform processes.

### 3.6 Knowledge Generation

According to the Strategic Plan, “there is a dearth of knowledge worldwide on what is required to move from commitment to action with respect to gender equality.” Thus, UNIFEM aims to ensure that “key stakeholders are able to easily access information on progress toward, and the ‘how to’ of achieving, gender equality in countries worldwide”. This requires that UNIFEM generates knowledge through research and its programmes; present it in appropriate forms; and, make it accessible through relevant channels. Indeed, a majority of the programmes evaluated in 2009 planned for knowledge generation results. The more successful programmes in relation to generating relevant knowledge include the following:

- The WLR-Aceh evaluation was impressed by the large number of research efforts and publications produced by UNIFEM and partners, many of which it found to be creative in their approach. While the effects of these publications were too early to assess, the evaluation noted that UNIFEM has had to reprint almost all publications due to the high demand for them.
- The evaluation of GE-Moldova concluded that the studies of statistics that were undertaken were necessary and useful.
- The WHR-FRY evaluation found that the programme designed and conducted *ad hoc* pilot research on 22 companies, in an attempt to identify best practices in Montenegrin companies in relation to the protection of workers’ rights generally, and women’s workers’ rights particularly. As a very first attempt to actually document corporate social responsibility practices in Montenegro, this was assessed as a valuable and important result.

Two programmes showed satisfactory knowledge generation, but were unable to disseminate the products:

- The WEA-LAC programme was very effective in producing publications and other documents of rigorous research on gender and economics in the region. Women’s organisations and other civil society organisations regarded this effort highly. They found the programme to be an important provider of statistics that could further their effort. Unfortunately, there was no prioritisation of the publications and the programme did not demonstrate a capacity to

disseminate products effectively. The evaluation identified a need for more proactive and interactive means – discussion forums, events and training – in disseminating knowledge to build informed positions. It also saw a need for a website from which the knowledge products could be down-loaded by the stakeholders.

- UNTF projects supported by the UN Trust Fund contributed to knowledge of how to end violence against women and girls, but the Trust Fund was less successful in managing and disseminating this knowledge.

These programmes were less effective in the area of knowledge generation:

- While a groundbreaking study was undertaken in Nepal as part of the EWMWA programme, the evaluation assessed that the allocated financial and technical resources were insufficient for systematic knowledge production.
- The GRB-Global evaluation held that while all interventions generally produced some form of knowledge product, this was an area where least progress was recorded and where there was least evidence of success.
- The AWP evaluation experienced difficulties in tracking what studies had been commissioned by the project. Studies and reports produced by the regional project were mixed with country-level products or products prepared by partners in the contexts.
- The HBW evaluation found that the programme did not achieve many of its objectives relating to generating and disseminating knowledge on emerging issues.



## 4 Evaluation Conclusions on Management & Efficiency

This chapter analyses the findings, conclusions, ideas and potential lessons provided by the corporate and decentralised evaluations undertaken in 2009 in relation to the efficiency of management and operations.

For UNIFEM to achieve its goals, the Strategic Plan commits the organisation “to build on its existing presence, experience and commitments to strengthen its capacity to document in greater detail the inter-linkages between the different levels of outcomes to which it contributes. It will be more rigorous in tracking the longer-term impact of its support and the processes and partnerships that contribute to success.” It will prioritise a stable, strategic, cost-effective and relevant presence in sub-regions to support its catalytic programming and its ability to provide high-quality technical advice and quality assurance on gender equality in the United Nations. It also aims to entrench a culture and capacity for results-based management and to deepen its analysis of lessons learnt. In sum, UNIFEM is committed to efficient systems for results-based planning and management, institutional learning, monitoring & evaluation, human resource management and financial administration. This section covers findings and conclusions from the evaluations that relate to these areas.

### 4.1 Strategic Management

Explicit conceptual clarity and strategic vision were often found missing in the programmes evaluated during 2009. Several evaluations found this to be an important impediment to programme effectiveness, relevance and sustainability. Sometimes confusion resulted from concepts not being fully developed and agreed upon at the programme level, but more often than not, the lack of conceptual clarity emanated from insufficient strategic guidance from the corporate level in relation to concepts and approaches from the corporate level. Below are some examples:

The evaluations pointed to the need to establish clear agreed-upon corporate approaches, underlying theories of change and definitions for key concepts at corporate and programmatic levels:

- As discussed in section 4.1, the RO-Global and GRB-Global evaluations held that the absence of corporately agreed upon concepts of *capacity* and *capacity development* (individual, institutional and societal), limits UNIFEM’s ability to work towards and track the sustainable results in this area. The GRB-Global evaluation maintained that UNIFEM had not been successful in developing and communicating an overall approach to capacity building. The lack of monitoring and follow-up meant that different perspectives on the role of capacity building could not be reconciled using evidence.
- The RO-Global evaluation found that UNIFEM had not explicitly defined the rationale and **expected benefits of its partnerships**. It highlighted the importance of a corporate approach to managing relationships with regional organisations. UNIFEM needed to develop (at a minimum) a core set of agreed upon concepts and related terminology that accurately describe the characteristics of particular types of partnerships. As discussed in section 3.3, the GRB-Global evaluation also raised the need for an overall partnership framework that identifies



clear and specific objectives and expected mutual benefits of the partnership and relates these to the respective partners' own objectives and strategies.

- In the case of gender responsive budgeting, the fact that there was a lack of consensus within UNIFEM about **what gender responsive budgeting consists of** and how in practice it differs from general gender mainstreaming, resulted in there being different theories of change.
- The GRB-Global evaluation saw the need to build on UNIFEM's excellent conceptual work and field experience that has been developed in relation to a **rights-based approach to gender responsive budgeting**. This would involve collating examples of what works to develop practical guidance and developing a clear position on the respective roles of government and civil society in the identification of women's priorities, representation in decision-making fora and processes to ensure accountability.
- Similarly, the EWMWA evaluation deemed that the **implications of a rights-based and empowerment approach required sharper clarification** in order to differentiate it clearly from merely a protection-oriented, and somewhat paternalist approach, which advocates for protection of vulnerable women migrant workers. More consultations were necessary to create a common understanding and a core set of shared values on issues of women's human rights and gender equality. Among project partners and among some UNIFEM staff there was considerable uncertainty about what it meant to have a gender sensitive rights-based development approach to migration.
- The EWMWA programme did not develop a **theory of change** and causal assumptions were not made explicit. This contributed to confusion among staff about what types of specific changes the programme was actually aiming to achieve. The evaluation claimed that the main difficulty in using results-based management was the lack of a theory of change that would make causal assumptions explicit.
- The Sabaya evaluation found that there were **different views on what UNIFEM's longer-term interest** might be in the programme – (A test of innovative approaches? A pilot to be scaled up? A development platform to promote UNIFEM's mandate?) of women's empowerment – none of which were addressed in the existing programme logic. It concluded that there was a need for a clear statement of UNIFEM's strategic interest in the initiative.
- The UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women is defined as “a global mechanism and an incubator for *innovative* ideas”. However, as pointed out by the UNTF evaluation, **nowhere is the concept of innovation defined**.
- The original concepts underlying the AWP programme were shared by UNIFEM and its partners but were not explicitly spelt out in writing. This resulted in “**slippage**” and “**narrowing down**” of project concepts so that the term “incubator” used in the project document came to be replaced by efforts that were technically capacity building.

## 4.2 Planning & Implementation Management

When it comes to overall programme management, a strength repeated again and again was UNIFEM's ability to manage pragmatically and flexibly (WLR-Aceh, WHR-FRY, AWP, HWR-

Sudan, WEA-LAC, Sabaya). This allowed UNIFEM to capitalise on opportunities as they arose; be responsive to partner concerns; take into consideration change in social and political circumstances; and, respond to evolving situations within partner organisations/institutions. UNIFEM similarly showed strength in problem-solving.

**Strategic Plan and RBM:** In the period 2008 to 2013, UNIFEM aims to embed the culture and capacity for achieving and reporting on results and high rates of delivery” in its practices. Furthermore, “monitoring, reporting and evaluation will be guided by the goals and goal indicators; outcomes and outcome indicators; and selected outputs and output indicators in the development results framework and the managing for results framework.”

However, with regard to results-based planning and management, the evaluations held that there is room for improvement. Ten evaluations saw an urgent need for UNIFEM to further enhance its use of **results-based management as a flexible and meaningful management tool** within its projects and programmes. Many the programmes evaluated were experiencing difficulties with results-based management (AWP, EWMWA, WEA-LAC, GE-Sudan, GRB) and making limited use of planning and management tools.

Some of the programmes did not use their logical frameworks for different reasons. For instance, in some cases the staff lack sufficient capacity; in at least one case the logical framework had not been adjusted to changing project circumstances; and in some other programmes the framework did not include relevant indicators. For instance, all of the country studies of the GRB-Global evaluation provided evidence of weaknesses in the way that the programme was planned, managed and reported on, with a particular focus on the **non-use of the logical framework:**

There is very limited evidence that the global logical framework was effectively used at the country level; either to develop a shared understanding with stakeholders of the programme objectives, as a management tool to establish a baseline and milestones to assess progress in implementation or as a monitoring and evaluation framework for lesson learning and measuring impact. The limited use of the logical framework at the country level suggests that staff involved in implementation were not confident or experienced in using such management and monitoring and evaluation tools. While headquarters required reporting using this tool, there is little evidence to suggest that country level staff were supported in its use. Second, the quality of the indicators in the logical frameworks varies considerably.... In some cases the indicators are too specific so that regular reports contain frequent repetitions of activities having been achieved. In others the indicators contain broad, unqualified statements.

Three evaluations found other problems with results-based management:

- Not only was the logical framework for AWP not applied, there was no three-year regional work plan or associated budgets. Together this diminished project effectiveness at the national level since some national partners were not able to plan in advance. The evaluation could not get a sense of how UNIFEM kept track of the project activities in the countries, given the less than optimal filing system. Furthermore, the quality of the annual reports was uneven. Reports blurred the boundaries between the regional activities, country specific activities or activities covered by adjacent projects, making it difficult to discern results achieved by the programme.

- The evaluators of WEA-LAC found significant weaknesses in planning, monitoring and control systems. There were inconsistencies in the management tools used, a lack of planning documents and no system in place to monitor progress.
- HWR-Sudan programme did not use a results-based approach and the evaluators could not easily measure whether or not the planned outputs were undertaken and whether change has been achieved.

In five cases, project cycle management was affected by the **insufficient capacity of partner organisations**. For instance, despite significant training, the capacity of the women's organisations that UNIFEM partnered with in WHR-Sudan was low and partners were not always able to deliver tactical results. This slowed the progress of achieving objectives. Likewise, the WLR-Aceh evaluation found that there was a need to train more staff of partner organisations in results-based planning and management; report writing; project budgeting and reporting; and, gender mainstreaming. Some of the partners of the WLR-Aceh programme needed support before they could submit proposals and reports, which created delays in the approval of proposals and fund transfer. The evaluators believed that this could be mitigated by setting realistic timelines to address reporting requirements, providing partners with more details on project approval procedures and a greater investment in interpretation resources.

The WHR-FRY evaluation also observed that the strategic approaches of the national gender equality mechanisms were sometimes lacking. Therefore, in a couple of cases the evaluators recommended that the design of the project provide more support to building the capacity among implementation partners. In Moldova the evaluators cast doubts on the sufficiency of the capacity of the national counterpart. There seemed to be a lack of demarcation between ongoing work and that which related to the UNIFEM programme, and insufficient staff resources to deal with both. The UNTF evaluation assessed that grantees also showed limited capacity in monitoring, evaluation and reporting – requiring the Fund to devote significant effort to address this.

On the other hand, some of the other partners of the WHR-FRY programme appeared to have adequate capacity: they found UNIFEM's project proposal and reporting matrices and procedures clear and undemanding, and they appreciated the technical assistance in the form of results-based management training that was provided to them. Additionally, the majority of partners expressed satisfaction with the templates provided for narrative reporting, which enabled them to focus on effects of activities, rather than solely listing quantitative data.

The Strategic Plan states that “UNIFEM seeks to build on its existing presence, experience and commitments to strengthen its capacity to document in greater detail the inter-linkages between the different levels of outcomes to which it contributes.” However, the results were mixed when it came to **strategic coherence** and **synergies** between components and projects. This was particularly true for the regional programmes. The WEA-LAC evaluation concluded that there was insufficient coherence between the programme components and that the role of regional adviser was insufficient to achieve cohesion among the processes in the countries involved. The EWMWA evaluation concluded that the lack of strategic guidance from the regional level did not so much affect the quantity of the activities, but their quality, reducing their synergic potential. The AWP evaluation criticised the blurring of national and regional projects. Both the AWP and WEA-LAC evaluations held that communication among the countries was sporadic and that there

was considerable scope for greater use of video conferences to ensure a dynamic system of permanent communication.

The WHR-FRY evaluation recommended that UNIFEM invest in organising annual or biannual meetings of all partners engaged in project implementation in each country to enable exchange of information and possibly foster the development of innovative follow-up projects to be implemented by different partners. This would help the partners' understanding of how the project components interrelate in the pursuit of the same common project goals.

Given the portfolio of responsibilities and actions of the UNIFEM regional office centred in Central Asia, the GE-Moldova evaluation raised the risk of disconnect due to the significant geographical distance between Almaty and Chisinau. It suggested periodic in-country review workshops (e.g. one every quarter) for the team and equally regular strategic level discussions with key programme stakeholders (government ministries, donors, other programme partners etc.).

### 4.3 Project Design

The design of UNIFEM's programmes were criticised along two general lines: **goals were designed too ambitiously** and/or the design of the programmes were **not sufficiently based on analysis** to ensure the highest possible level of effectiveness and relevance.

The evaluations that found a mismatch between goals or scope and the available resources or capacity were WEA-LAC, EWMWA, AWP, GE-Sudan and GE-Moldova. The WEA- LAC evaluation stated that the programme "was too ambitious in terms of planned outputs and expected achievements given the realities on the ground". The evaluations of EWMWA and AWP reached similar conclusions. The latter also found that project objectives were not always tailored to the national context in the country specific. The GE-Moldova evaluation concluded that the timeframe to accomplish the objectives was unrealistic given the challenging nature of the effort required.

A third of the evaluations commented on the **preparations undertaken to design** the programme with mixed assessments. Taken together, there appears to be a need to invest greater efforts in undertaking studies and analyses prior to designing programmes:

- The evaluation of HBW was the most positive, claiming that the programme undertook an effective mapping exercise in the programme countries which helped create an understanding of the issues that needed to be addressed.
- The Sabaya evaluation found that 38% of women surveyed stated that they had participated in the needs assessment consultations that the UNIFEM held prior to establishing the centres. Nevertheless, some women suggested the need to improve the methodology and criteria in the selection of the centres. Issues to be taken into consideration included a detailed profiling of the community including the social networks, education and health status, economic situation, as well as meetings with different community members.
- The GE-Sudan evaluation noticed that in the places where the programme had undertaken community mapping exercises in the preparatory phase to identify NGO partners, the programme had

established effective partnerships. However, due to limited funds and time, this had not been undertaken everywhere. As a result, the programme had partnered with several NGOs that did not have sufficient capacity and the design of the programme did not provide enough support to building their capacities.

- Baseline studies for each country were initially undertaken in the context of the AWP, but did not provide comparable baseline data against which to measure progress in project implementation. The evaluation concluded that prior to designing a project document, the programme should have carried out a thorough needs assessment and mapping of where/how the proposed project could complement other similar activities with the aim of identifying a niche not yet being addressed by other agencies and stakeholders.
- The GRB-Global evaluation concluded that UNIFEM had not always ensured that the programme focus was relevant to the priority needs of women. The programmes did not sufficiently base their design on diverse sources of information for identifying poor women's priorities. All programmes used government sources of analysis, only some of which were based on participatory processes, such as PRSP drafting. Not all programmes used civil society channels or women in low-income sectors themselves as a source of data, analysis and opinion on women's priorities. This could have served to "triangulate" government information (which is often affected by constraints such as frequent staff changes or newly established institutions) and thus enhance the accuracy of the analysis.
- Furthermore, the GRB-Global evaluation held that the human rights conventions and their reporting mechanisms, CEDAW in particular, had not been used for identifying women's priorities and analysing within government and between government and citizens, the power relationships that enable or prevent women from claiming their rights. UNIFEM could have also attempted to better understand the way in which complex reform processes were likely to evolve in different sectors and identify potentially useful institutional entry points.
- WLR-Aceh noted that the design of the programme could have been improved if community assessments, partner self-assessments and a communication assessment (to identify motivators and barriers) had been conducted in the design phase.

#### 4.4 M&E

Virtually every evaluation assessed UNIFEM's monitoring and evaluation effort as sub-optimal.<sup>14</sup> The critique focused on three areas: poor planning and monitoring systems; insufficient human resources; and/or weak capacities among implementation partners. Often the monitoring and evaluation efforts suffered from a combination of these problems.

**The Strategic Plan and M&E:** The Strategic Plan states that UNIFEM intends to strengthen its monitoring capacities and ensure that "systems are in place to track how UNIFEM-supported advocacy strategies and technical expertise/advice contribute to changes in policies and practices on gender equality and the empowerment of women at national, regional and global levels".

The WEA-LAC evaluation found significant **weaknesses in planning and no functioning system in place** to monitor progress. The AWP evaluation came to similar conclusions.

<sup>14</sup> Only the GE-Moldova evaluation stated that monitoring efforts were satisfactory.

Monitoring of the project was confined to the required UN ATLAS reporting on expenditure by activity, but not matched by systematic monitoring of project activities and outputs, with implications of institutional memory. Furthermore, pertinent data were not always sex disaggregated.

For the EWMWA programme, monitoring was minimal. Of the monitoring that took place, there was insufficient consistency. Parameters continued to change with every change in management. Reports to donors were mostly based on descriptive self-assessment by the country teams. Only once was an output review undertaken that paid attention to programmatic dimensions, rather than tackle management issues. However, it did not lead to significant follow-up in the areas identified as needing improvement.

The RO-Global evaluation observed that monitoring of efforts undertaken with regional organisations remained focused on the activities or output level, whether the partnership was based on short-term or long-term agreements. The actual envisaged contribution of these results at best remained implicit. UNIFEM staff in various geographic locations – as well as some consulted RO representatives – expressed the wish for stronger corporate or at least regional guidance from UNIFEM with regard to initiating, implementing, and monitoring partnerships with ROs.

The lack of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms was mentioned as a consistent constraint throughout the GRB-Global evaluation. Country offices had not established mechanisms for collecting and monitoring data to enable them to assess progress as programme implementation proceeded. While UNIFEM HQ had developed a revised set of indicators, the country office staff did not have data for those indicators. However, the mid-term review mechanism appeared to have been one component of the M&E mechanism that did lead to concrete change in the focus of programme activities.

The UN Trust Fund Secretariat's systems for M&E were considered weak. This had significant implications for how the UN Trust Fund Secretariat managed knowledge – since M&E was the source of that knowledge.

Nearly half of the evaluations pointed to the **staffing structure and size** as a culprit in the faulty M&E processes. Although according to the EU, SROs had a better track record in 2009 in ensuring the completion of planned Trust Fund evaluations than planned UNIFEM evaluations, the UN Trust Fund evaluation highlighted the need to enhance M&E capacity in SROs and observed that the limited resources available at the sub-regional and country level made it difficult to conduct follow-up visits or monitor all projects. Supervision was particularly difficult in countries where UNIFEM does not have an office and in large countries where one office is unable to guarantee close monitoring of all grantees.

Likewise, the GE-Sudan evaluation found that the volume of work and the size of the country made the task of monitoring and evaluation very challenging. It recommended that UNIFEM hire a monitoring and evaluation specialist for better tracking of activities and results. Similarly, the low number of staff combined with the high number of partners and projects limited possibilities of a systematic monitoring of WHR-FRY.

The monitoring effort was in some cases further affected by the **weaknesses of UNIFEM's partners in M&E**. For instance, the UNTF evaluation held that some grantees lacked sufficient M&E capacities and the RO-Global evaluation noted inadequate tracking and monitoring systems among partners. The WLR-Aceh evaluation assessed that the project would have benefitted from having a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan to further strengthen partners' efforts to collect feedback on the longer-term results of their activities.

Similarly, monitoring plans and processes had been lacking at the centres supported by the Sabaya evaluation project. In view of the possible scaling up of the centres, the evaluation recommended that UNIFEM ensure that a rigorous monitoring system was in place. This way, observations at individual centres could be recorded systematically and aggregated to assess benefits of the Sabaya centres to the country as a whole. The evaluation maintained that in principle, the community itself should be involved in the development of indicators, based on the notion that if the community chooses the indicators that are most important to it, then the community is more likely to monitor its performance against those indicators.

## 4.5 Institutional Learning<sup>15</sup>

**The Strategic Plan and Institutional Learning:** The Strategic Plan affirms that UNIFEM will enhance its evaluation, learning and knowledge management capacity. Furthermore, it states that UNIFEM plans to deepen its analysis of lessons from UNIFEM and other programmes – including their cross-regional and cross-programme implications, and disseminating that analysis.

Almost all the 2009 evaluations assessed that the programmes were producing innovative approaches, generating valuable experiences and good practices. A majority of the evaluations, however, found that institutional learning systems to document, disseminate and/or exchange information were often absent or weak (GRB-Global, Sabaya, WEA-LAC, WHR-FRY, GE-Moldova, UNTF, RO-Global and EWMWA). The EWMWA evaluation stated:

Regional meetings did not satisfy the need for sharing of ideas and experience among country teams with time being perceived as always too short for in-depth analysis of the lessons learnt. When exchanges did take place, it was because the country teams took the initiative, viewing sharing of information is beneficial to their country efforts.

The evaluations saw a need for clear strategies to institutionalise documentation and dissemination of learning and results – including processes to reach results – to ensure a systematic exchange of lessons learnt. Some of the evaluations (e.g. WHR-FRY) referred to insufficient staffing resources as a cause for the poor performance in this area.

## 4.6 Human Resources Management

Generally, the evaluations assessed UNIFEM **staff as being skilled, knowledgeable** and particularly good at partner relations. The small size of many offices belied the results they were able to achieve. The national co-ordinators of the EWMWA programme were particularly praised for their technical knowledge, as were the consultants that the GRB-Global programme relied

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<sup>15</sup> Institutional learning overlaps with but differs from the programmatic area of knowledge generation discussed in section 3.6. The latter is a programmatic output. The former relates to knowledge management and systems for learning.

upon. The offices in Sudan, Aceh, Moldova, the offices associated with WHR-FRY and the UNTF Secretariat were also commended for their hard work and professionalism.

**Strategic Plan and Human Resource Management:** According to the Strategic Plan, UNIFEM aims to ensure that its “structure and presence enable it to respond to demands for gender equality support at country, regional and global levels and in the context of United Nations reform.” Furthermore, “it will prioritize a stable, strategic, cost-effective and relevant sub-regional presence to support catalytic programming, South-South exchange and high-quality technical advice and quality assurance on gender equality in the United Nations regional and sub-regional hubs.”

Nevertheless, within some of the programmes the evaluators identified **gaps in expertise**. For instance, the GRB-Global evaluation held that some staff did not have sufficient knowledge of gender responsive budgeting. In the GE-Sudan programme, the rapid growth of the projects led to knowledge gaps in the areas of democracy, governance, gender justice and research. The EWMWA evaluation deemed that results-based management skills were lacking among some field staff.

**Staffing size, staffing gaps and staffing structures** were, however, a greater concern. It is relatively easy for an evaluation to conclude that greater human resources will improve programme performance. Nonetheless, given that most of the 2009 evaluation saw insufficient staffing and staffing structures as serious impediments to effective management, this weakness is a call for alarm. Staffing shortcomings were seen as hampering linkage between project components (WHR-FRY, AWP), impacting on learning (WHR-FRY, GRB-Global, UNTF) and undermining M&E (UNTF, GRB-Global, GE-Sudan, EWMWA, AWP). In EWMWA, the repeated turnover of regional programme managers and extended vacancies of the position weakened programme oversight and strategic guidance. Programmes often suffered delays in adapting strategies and maximising their effectiveness. Staff changes and vacant posts debilitated an already stretched organisation.

**High staff turn-over** and staffing gaps were mentioned in the EWMWA and GRB-Global evaluations. Activities were disrupted and delayed as after every change, periods of learning and adjustment followed. The UNTF, AWP, WHR-FRY, GE-Moldova and WLR-Sudan evaluations observed shortage of staff and found that the tasks at hand were nowhere near proportionate to the human resources available. This caused over-burdening of staff and – in some cases – staff fatigue.

The regional evaluations raised the issue of the importance of **national level presence** to ensure successful programme implementation and results. The evaluation of the WHR-FRY project claimed that the project would have benefited from having established field officers and project implementation teams in all target countries for the duration of the entire project. The AWP programme showed greater effectiveness in countries where there was a national coordinator in place and the evaluation strongly recommended uniform use of national co-ordinators in all countries involved. They would support national partners and counterparts in assuming ownership of the project, as well as facilitate cooperation and networking with similar in-country interventions to ensure synergy and value added.



On the other hand, the EWMWA evaluation deemed that while the field presence that the programme enjoyed in the form of national co-ordinators was highly beneficial to the programme, the flat organisational structure at this level also made programme dependent on personal rather than institutional leadership.

The WEA-LAC programme, meanwhile, was able to establish a management structure that included solid representation at country level. A position in the gender equality mechanism of each country was financed to serve as a focal point for the programme and it proved to be an important factor for success. The setup served as a crucial bridge for the development of strategies and initiatives and laid the foundation for transmitting knowledge and the capacity building effort.

In some cases the **interaction between the national, regional and HQ structures** of UNIFEM was sub-optimal. In the case of the UNTF, roles and responsibilities between headquarters and sub-regional offices were not well defined, which led to some inefficiency and frustration. The EWMWA programme experienced significant tensions between regional programme management and country teams. In the AWP programme, the regional office engaged in micro-management, partly due to staff shortages, requiring regional staff to take on multiple functions. Overburdening of the regional project coordinator appeared to have further encouraged the senior management to micromanage the project. In WEA-LAC, the regional advisor's support role was assessed as insufficient to achieve cohesive processes and activities among the countries. The planning workshops or videoconferences, which were appreciated by the majority as a means of sharing knowledge with their counterparts in the other countries, were sporadic and did not fulfil the objective of having a responsive and permanent system.

## 4.7 Financial Resources & Administrative Efficiency

**Strategic Plan and Financial Resources & Administrative Efficiency:** The Strategic Plan states that UNIFEM aim to improve "ATLAS and other management, financial and human resources systems to support linking of results with finance flows". It also seeks to improve "stewardship of resources under UNIFEM management" and to enlarge and diversify its resource base "to meet the demand for UNIFEM catalytic and technical support and strategic grant-making".

Three programmes were **able to mobilise additional resources**. For instance, the donors of HBW stipulated that the funds were to be used exclusively for networking purposes. Due to effective advocacy efforts, partnerships were established with donors who were able to fund adjacent projects and programmes for empowering home-based workers at regional and national levels. Similarly, GE-Moldova proved efficient in terms of leveraging donor funding to secure significant inputs and investments so that donor and UNIFEM core funding were amplified.

The UNTF was particularly successful in leveraging funds. Between 2005 and 2008 funds increased dramatically (780%) due to the sustained efforts of the Fund itself and a combination of enabling factors – including the spotlight cast by the UN Secretary-General's campaign in this field. UNTF furthermore diversified its sources of funding and increased its number of donors.

However, nearly half of the evaluations commented on the mismatch between objectives and the insufficient **level of funding allocated to the programmes** (GE-Sudan, Moldova, AWP, HBW, WHR-FRY), which hampered efficiency. The WHR-FRY evaluation held that given the duration of the project, its complexity, regional nature and the relatively high level and number of expected outcomes, the project deserved a higher total amount of funding (average of \$ US 125,000 per

country per year). Meanwhile, the budget of WHR-Sudan did not support the rapid pace of expansion of the project.

On the other hand, the EWMWA evaluation criticised not the overall size of the budget but the allocation of funding among countries and projects, which it held could have been more strategic, transparent and reflective of a developmental approach to partnerships.

Two evaluations commented positively on administrative efficiency. The WHR-FRY evaluation was generally positive: financial management was judged as being efficient, despite obstacles and challenges resulting from low staff resources. The funds were for the most part spent in a timely manner to deliver the outputs. The partners reported no delays in receiving funds, except those regarding the economic component. The majority of UN Trust Fund projects implemented from 2005-2008 were completed within the allocated budget and within a reasonable time frame. The UN Trust Fund's management and administrative costs increased in absolute terms but not in proportion to the significant increase in contributions and grants in the period 2005-2008. The evaluation foresaw that this will affect the UN Trust Fund's ability to achieve its objectives, particularly in knowledge management.

A few programmes experienced some problems related to **administrative efficiency**. The causes were identified as donor-related and due to joint management (1 programme); UNIFEM's bureaucratic structure (2 programmes) and weak partner capacities (3 programmes):

- While the WEA-LAC found that the systems established allowed for efficient procedures, some administrative delays were reported which were attributed to the system of receiving funds from the donor. The fact that WEA-LAC is implemented jointly with UNDP also caused administrative difficulties and inefficiencies.
- Stakeholders of GRB-Global held that UNIFEM's corporate financial decision-making systems negatively impacted on the programme – in particular in relation to slowing decision-making. Delays in authorising programme activities reduced the programme's effectiveness. Centralised financial cycles in part impacted upon the timing and continuance of consultancies and limited the effectiveness of interaction between the programme and its implementing partners.
- Within the context of the EWMWA programme, disbursements for country activities were disrupted by managerial problems at the regional level.
- The HBW evaluation could not assess the efficiency aspect, since the HomeNets could not share the details of utilisation of financial resources. In the present set up, the major gap was the absence of a Management Information System (MIS) at the national HomeNets level. This acted as a constraint in keeping records and monitoring of fund usage.
- The lack of capacity among some partners of the WLR-Aceh programme created delays in the approval of proposals and fund transfer.
- The evaluators of the GE-Sudan evaluation found that the implementing partners often did not have the capacity to administrate efficiently.

## 4.8 UN Reform and Coordination

The evaluations did not generally address issues of UN reform and co-ordination at any length. Nevertheless, the image that emerges from three reports is that UNIFEM usually made a solid effort to inter-relate and co-operate with its sister agencies. In Sudan and Aceh UNIFEM engaged actively with other UN agencies and teamed up to mainstream gender equality in the development effort. Likewise, UNIFEM played a proactive role within the UN system in Moldova. It furthermore sought to exploit synergies with fellow UN Agencies and to focus to the extent possible on its comparative advantage.<sup>16</sup>

**Strategic Plan and UN Reform:** The Strategic Plan states that UNIFEM “will have an unambiguous role as a key driver of gender equality in the context and mechanisms of United Nations reform” and seeks to strengthen partnerships with United Nations organisations. An aim for this period is that “tools, policies and knowledge generated by UNIFEM and inter-agency coordination mechanisms enable UNCTs to provide coherent and holistic support to countries to advance gender equality”.

The UNTF evaluation reported that UNIFEM made an effort to foster co-ordination within the area of violence against women by supporting the establishment of a mechanism for consultation and cooperation at the sub-regional level (Programme Appraisal Committees). However, the level of involvement of UN agencies varied from sub-region to sub-region.

The EWMWA evaluation noted that the programme undertook co-ordination and created synergies with other relevant UN agencies. However, it deemed that there was still a need to pursue opportunities for policy dialogue and more effective implementation and expansion of promising initiatives, with the UN agencies both at national and regional levels. It furthermore held that expanding interaction among UN agencies at the global level would be beneficial to the programme and cause.

Meanwhile, the AWP evaluation found some measure of duplication of efforts with respect to focusing on Arab parliament, notably with regard to UNDP’s efforts, which would appear counter-productive to UN reform and co-ordination.

**Promising Practice: Joint UN Programming in Statistics**

UNIFEM sought to exploit synergies with fellow UN Agencies in Moldova and to focus to the extent possible on its comparative advantage. In the area of statistics UNIFEM was able to create significant synergies with the Joint Statistics Programme launched in collaboration with UNDP and UNFPA, which aimed at improving data collection, dissemination and use of statistical information with particular attention to national needs and overall conformity with international standards. In some respects UNIFEM ‘piggy-backed’ on this programme to help it achieve its objectives.

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<sup>16</sup> A representative of UN agency in Moldova strongly recommended that UNIFEM be allowed to build capacity to mainstream gender within the UN system, as most UN staff were considered insufficiently knowledgeable regarding what gender equality is and what gender mainstreaming involves.



## 5 Achieving Results

In the sections that follow, conclusions presented in the evaluations reports that relate to three evaluation criteria – relevance, effectiveness and sustainability– are summarised and discussed.<sup>17</sup>

### 5.1 Relevance

Relevance is the extent to which a development intervention conforms to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor. All the evaluations discussed this evaluation criterion in some way. However, several of the evaluations did not assess relevance comprehensively to include a broader assessment of the value and usefulness of the evaluated intervention in the perspectives of *all* key stakeholders and defining policies. Nevertheless, the evaluations presented **conclusions on relevance** and generally assessed relevance to be high:

- The WEA-LAC evaluation (which stood out by undertaking an extensive and particularly thoughtful analysis of relevance), found that the programme was relevant, with a great potential for generating change to correct gender-based inequalities in Central America. While the social agendas in these countries have been exposed to gender equality efforts, this was not the case with regard to economic agendas. The evaluation considered the programme innovative since it sought to reduce gender gaps by influencing public policy that was oriented towards economic development and promoting women's economic autonomy. The effort to influence policies to reduce the asymmetries in the distribution of benefits from economic production was a new field of work for UNIFEM. The programme was also seen as relevant in relation to the mandate, objectives and strategies of partner organisations and beneficiaries.
- WHR-FRY evaluation held that the focus on country-wide and regional cooperation among national and local NGOs and national institutions across sectors proved relevant for building the capacity of key gender equality advocates. Most of the interviewees stated that the project would not have been implemented were it not for UNIFEM's support.
- The WHR-Sudan evaluation maintained that the strategy and logical framework of the programme was consistent with needs of the most vulnerable women in the Sudan, those in IDP camps. The project complemented activities being undertaken by the government and donors.
- The EWMWA programme's goals were assessed as relevant to empowering women migrant workers as well as to promoting gender equality and safer migration at the national, regional and global levels. The EWMWA programme was considered consistent with UNIFEM mandate and was of strategic value to UNIFEM in advancing its overall programming as defined in the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan and to the MDGs. Relevance to PRSPs and national economic planning processes was, however, not optimal. Alignment with government objectives proved essential to move policy initiatives forward, but by being restricted to

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<sup>17</sup> The evaluation criterion of impact is not analysed because it was not assessed in the 2009 evaluations. One evaluation addressed impact (HBW II) but used the term in a way inconsistent with OECD-DAC's definition. Since efficiency was closely integrated in the analysis of management in most of the evaluations, it is discussed in chapter 4.

prevailing political powers, it diluted gender sensitive rights-based development and empowering approaches.

- The HBW programme was assessed as relevant in terms of 1) giving visibility to home-based workers as bona fide workers by sensitising policymakers, civil society groups, trade unions and the media to the problems of home-based workers; and 2) empowering home-based workers to fight for their rights to get the correct wage/remuneration, attain adequate work conditions and receive social security benefits as workers. A mapping exercise at the beginning of the programme contributed to ensuring relevance. However, the task of identifying genuine member-based organisations to join in the effort proved to be very challenging in India, limiting the geographic spread. In Nepal, limited time, cost constraints and the prevailing conflict limited geographical coverage.
- In Aceh, the relevance of UNIFEM's work to the local context was enhanced by the fact that UNIFEM drew on past experience of working with the linkages between CEDAW and Sharia Law (Malaysia, South Africa, Morocco). Furthermore, the project was relevant to the government's strategies and UNIFEM's regional strategies.
- Of the 400 women sampled in a survey for the Sabaya evaluation, 73 per cent held that the project was relevant to their needs. Based on the studies undertaken, the GE-Moldova evaluation maintained that key stakeholders considered that UNIFEM's work to strengthen institutional mechanisms through capacity building was both relevant and necessary.
- The GRB-Global evaluation concluded that UNIFEM was successful in positioning its GRB work in relation to overarching policy frameworks for poverty reduction and national development, national gender policies, and broader national policy planning and budgeting and monitoring frameworks. On the other hand, the programme did not reveal significant evidence that women's needs had been adequately analysed and taken into account (see section 4.3).
- The RO-Global evaluation found that UNIFEM was considered highly relevant by all consulted RO representatives. Since the evaluation assessed the relevance of a partnership, it also tried to examine the extent to which the partnership was likely to benefit UNIFEM in terms of fulfilling its mandate and/or working towards its own organisational priorities. However, it found that UNIFEM had not explicitly defined the rationale and expected benefits of its partnerships with ROs or established a way to track and report on the relevance of those partnerships.
- The UN Trust Fund 2005-2008 Strategy was well aligned with international, regional and national priorities of gender equality and violence against women and girls, and, based on the criteria developed for the evaluation, the UN Trust Fund was regarded as a relevant mechanism to promote the enforcement of laws and implementation of policies.

One third of the evaluations concluded that the support from UNIFEM was often **timely and opportune**: The WHR-FRY evaluation concluded that the support was very relevant and timely in the context of the specific political moment and reforms taking place. Had it not been for UNIFEM's timely intervention, the topic of engendering constitutions would not have been introduced to the reform process. The relevance of the AWP programme was enhanced by the

fact that the project coincided with elections in a number of countries. Similarly, the WLR-Aceh programme was implemented at the same time that relevant legislation (including on domestic violence and local by-laws) was being passed and could thereby contribute to these processes. The support to Sudan was also considered timely and appropriate in relation to the progress of the peace process.

Four evaluations flagged aspects that they assessed as **not being sufficiently relevant** – including activities, approaches or in the way the support was targeted. For instance, the HBW programme developed websites. While these may have been relevant in providing visibility to the case of home-based workers, the majority of home based workers are illiterate and have almost no access to information technology. Meanwhile, the GE-Sudan programme did not address women affected by HIV&AIDS, although this was understandable since there was insufficient data available on the impact of the epidemic in Sudan this during the design of the programme. With regard to the EWMWA programme, strategies were successfully adapted to local contexts, but not enough to regional circumstances. Transnational linkages and synergies that the programme was able to create did not always reflect migration flows and circuits.

The Sabaya and HBW evaluations concluded that the programmes did not address women's **expressed need to increase their incomes**. In the case of HBW, the donor insisted that the programme design focused exclusively on advocacy and networking purposes. As a result, not enough efforts were made by the national HomeNets to provide marketing avenues to be home-based workers, although it was a matter of serious concern home-based workers. Beneficiary populations targeted by the Sabaya programme also underlined the importance of income generating projects. As stated by one beneficiary, "We need income generating projects. We need to make money and be able to support our families." However, this was not adequately addressed by the project's centres. The EWMWA evaluation also concluded that more could have been done to promote women's economic empowerment by developing pilot models that create economic opportunities for returning migrant women.

Emerging from shortcomings identified in relation to relevance is a **need for more proficient analysis** during the design phase of programmes. This includes **participatory and rights-based analyses** to ensure inclusiveness and the targeting of the most vulnerable. It also includes better **conflict analysis**:

- WEA-LAC programme was not sufficiently relevant when it came to addressing the special needs of countries undergoing *peace-building* processes or for *addressing inter-cultural and multi-ethnic* problems (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua). It lacked explicit approaches to guide the programme in peace-building, post-conflict situations and migration, which the evaluation saw as is a major shortcoming, considering that most of the women addressed by the programme lived in countries with these conditions.
- The EWMWA programme recognised that while the focus on regular contract workers was strategic in that it facilitated dialogue with important government counterparts, it also resulted in less attention for migrant *rights* and for the much larger and more vulnerable flows of *irregular women migrant* workers.
- The WLR-Aceh evaluation maintained that undertaking community-based assessments would have enhanced knowledge regarding community needs and interests that could have been

integrated into the programme design. For example, the evaluation found that grasping women's rights proved difficult for participating women ex-combatants participants – many of whom were illiterate – until CEDAW, Security Council Resolution 1325 and gender equality were combined in a discussion on trauma healing.

- The WLR-Aceh evaluation also suggested that relevance could be enhanced by extending the programme to address *all* types of justice systems, including customary institutions and local mediators – which make many decisions regarding women's rights.
- The GRB-Global evaluation concluded that UNIFEM had failed to ensure that the programme focus was relevant to the priority needs of women, since the programmes did not sufficiently base its design on diverse sources of information for identifying poor women's priorities.
- While UN Trust Fund projects in fragile states were deemed relevant by the evaluation, their management was not sufficiently adapted to the difficult conditions in such countries to support effective implementation.

## 5.2 Effectiveness and Achievements

Effectiveness – the extent to which planned objectives have been achieved – is particularly difficult to attain when the goals are overly ambitious in relation to the resources available. Measuring effectiveness faces several challenges in the UNIFEM context. First, the transformational results that UNIFEM and its partners aim for typically take much more than a couple of years to achieve. Second, UNIFEM has an uneven record in applying resulted-based management approaches. With objectives not being systematically monitored and reporting on, evaluability is undermined. Nonetheless, all the 2009 evaluations assessed effectiveness. At an overall level, effectiveness has ranged from fair to high. Outputs goals were generally fulfilled and a majority of interventions achieved significant outcomes as well. The paragraphs that follow include both conclusions regarding effectiveness and well as notable achievements documented in the evaluations.

WEA-LAC found that the effectiveness of the programme was generally satisfactory – and highly satisfactory in the case of the objective related to creating spaces for dialogue. The evaluators commended the notable advances in research and training as well as in statistics. With regard to the objective of incorporating the women's economic agenda into national and regional economic agendas, progress was sub-optimal, partly due to overambitious goals – although institutional strengthening of governmental and non-governmental organisations at both the regional and national levels was achieved to a certain extent. Among the successes of the programme were the implementation of several mechanisms to influence policies; strengthening of women's organisations in their efforts to mobilise and negotiate in relation to women's economic autonomy; and, supporting academic institutions in strengthening their educational capacities.

WHR-FRY fully or partially achieved the expected outcomes in the target countries. For the outcomes it did not achieve, most reasons lay in identified risks of changing political circumstances beyond the control of the project (Kosovo); weak gender equality machinery; and, low institutional partner capacities. The programme contributed to engendered constitutions in Montenegro and Kosovo. In Montenegro, the revised and engendered Labour Law was a result of project activities. The capacities of civil society organisations to advocate on gender equality



standards and priorities were increased. There was also evidence of improved cooperation between governments and civil society on monitoring and implementation of labour policies and regulatory frameworks in B-H and Montenegro. Through project supported activities, the evaluation deemed that women in Serbia gained awareness of their economic rights options to assert these rights in privatisation processes in Serbia, while in Kosovo this had not been fully achieved.

The evaluation of GE-Moldova assessed the programme as successful in contributing to the development of a new national mechanism, the National Strategy on Gender Equality, which constituted the first ever umbrella strategy for Moldova in the area of gender equality and advancement of women's welfare. Moreover, the programme laid the basis for subsequent work such as reviewing the national labour code and highlighting its significant negative impacts on the advancement of gender equality in the labour market. Important progress was also achieved in advancing towards gender-sensitive statistics and the sensitisation of the print media to gender-based discrimination. The programme also helped to overhaul the Government Committee on Gender Equality and to create a transparent platform and process where CSOs could play an appropriate role in contributing to the advancement of gender equality within Moldovan society.

The GE-Sudan evaluation found that expected outcomes were for the most part fully achieved. The programme contributed extensively to reconstruction efforts taking into account the human rights protection and leadership of women and women's organisations. Collaboration with UN, AU, national and international NGOs resulted in the creation of platforms in the north, south and in Darfur for advocacy and policy dialogue among various partners on women's rights and justice. UNIFEM provided technical backstopping for many partners. UNIFEM also built the capacity of women parliamentarians to negotiate for gender equality, seek political positions in the government structures and work within parliaments for issues of justice and gender balance. The programme was assessed as having made important contributions to engendering the peace process, especially in Darfur.

The greatest contribution of the EWMWA programme was towards policy reform that would create an enabling environment for safer migration. The evaluation assessed that the multi-stakeholder engagement strategy was very effective in mobilising actors for policy advocacy and change, and compelling governments to enhance their commitment to safer migration. The programme facilitated the development of legislation, covenants, national programmes and government institutions that aim at improving conditions for migrant workers – and in particular women migrant workers. At the regional level, linkages were established across sectors and countries. The Covenant of Ethical Conduct and Good Practices of Overseas Employment Service Providers – involving both countries of origin and of employment – was a ground-breaking result, which committed recruitment and employment agencies to support human rights instruments and adopt good practices. The programme was especially successful in capacitating organizations and networks of women migrant workers and their families to claim their entitlements in countries of origin. Some of these community-based approaches were being up-scaled and replicated with support from other donors. EWMWA also succeeded in engaging with the media to bring the plight of migrant workers into the public domain. However, the awareness campaign was deemed too short to have a long-lasting impact.

HBW made solid progress in its goals of expanding the network of home-based workers, undertaking advocacy and policy dialogue, and building the capacity of home-based workers. A key achievement was that in collaboration with partners, the respective national HomeNets were able to pressure the national governments so that in India, Nepal and Pakistan the governments drafted national policies on home-based workers. In India, the government changed its system of gathering national statistics to ensure the visibility of home-based workers. Progress was particularly successful in Pakistan where as many as three bills were introduced in the National Assembly. There was also an improved response from governments and the private sector on social protection measures for home-based workers. Capacity-building of the network organisations was achieved at both the national and regional levels. Some skills development training for home-based workers was also undertaken, which inculcated a sense of identity among them. However, less was achieved with regards to the objectives of disseminating knowledge on emerging issues and innovative solutions and experimentation through strategic piloting.

The AWP evaluation found that stakeholders remained unclear regarding the extent to which the programme contributed to Arab women's political empowerment, keeping in mind the difficulty of measuring such contribution. While it is not possible to determine any degree of contribution, a number of women who participated in the project training won seats or were appointed by local councils. Measured in terms of media coverage, the programme was effective. The evaluation reviewed three bound volumes of media reports on the programme at regional and national level activities.

The WLR-Aceh evaluation reported that nearly all project outputs and outcomes were achieved or surpassed. It also found that there were many positive unexpected results. In line with the programme objectives, the support strengthened partnerships between the women's machinery and civil society organisations; revitalised the gender architecture through the strengthening of gender focal points; contributed to the initial stages of integrating gender equality principles into the boarding school curriculum; developed a gender equality expert team that mainstreamed gender equality into development policies, plans and programmes; assisted the formation of a men's forum on advancing women's rights in Aceh; and, supported the establishment of forum of gender sensitive journalists. The programme surpassed its goals by contributing to the reviewing and actual drafting of by-laws.

The Sabaya programme met its objective of activating or establishing Sabaya centres in 18 locations in the West Bank and Gaza. The project furthermore resulted in tangible outcomes of promoting women's participation in decision-making within their communities in most of the locations. Sabaya centres also provided rural women with services they would not have accessed, as well as a forum to come together. They also acted as hubs for networking and educational/vocational activities. The evaluation concluded that more work was needed to further develop the capacities of women in key areas such as leadership skills, strategic planning, communication skills, monitoring and evaluation systems, fund-raising, and advocacy.

GRB-Global programme focused on raising awareness of the importance of gender equality to budgetary processes; building capacity in gender analysis; developing gender equality indicators to measure progress; and, providing ongoing support that responded to the reality of policy and budget processes. It was able to achieve significant results, among which was the inclusion of gender equality in the budget call circular letters in all countries where the programme was implemented. Furthermore, gender sensitive indicators were developed and gender responsive

budget allocations were made in sectoral piloting work. While all interventions generally produced some form knowledge products, this was an area in which least progress was recorded.

The RO-Global evaluation maintained that there was considerable evidence that UNIFEM-RO partnerships resulted in positive short-term and some mid-term changes. These included changes in or development of regional policies or agreements on gender equality/women's human rights; changes that favour gender equality in the structures and/or practices of a regional organization; the creation of new knowledge and tools in the areas of GE and WHR. While these did not constitute changes at the national level in themselves, they contributed to strengthening the enabling environment for such changes. Further, there was some evidence of enhanced capacities within the within ROs and among RO member states and stakeholders. This was illustrated, for example, in strengthened advocacy processes in the respective regions, involving the RO itself and/or its immediate stakeholders. However, there was no reliable data available to provide objective evidence of this. The evaluation furthermore uncovered anecdotal evidence of enhanced capacity within UNIFEM.

The results of the UN Trust Fund were assessed by the evaluation as congruent with the UN Trust Fund 2005-2008 Strategy. Supported projects achieved numerous short-term results and some even contributed to macro-level changes, but there was less evidence of long-term results. In all projects reviewed, the capacities of duty-bearers and/or rights-holders were strengthened through UN Trust Fund grantee interventions. Some projects contributed to changing or implementing legal or policy frameworks at the country and local levels; some projects contributed to innovations in eliminating violence against women, particularly in HIV/AIDS and violence against women programming.

### **5.3 Sustainability**

Sustainability is the continuation or longevity of benefits from a development intervention after the cessation of development assistance. All of the 2009 evaluations addressed sustainability. In terms of the mere continuation or duration of results, sustainability is considered weak. However, sustainability can also be assessed in terms of the likelihood of the continuation of processes, principles, and approaches to gender equality and women's rights, and their adaptation to evolving contexts. Some of the evaluations shed some light on sustainability in terms of, for instance, commitment, networking, institutionalisation and/or the ability to attract other donors. In these terms, many of the projects/programmes have gained ground. However, in all cases, the evaluators deemed that continued financial and technical support would be required to achieve permanent change.

One of the most optimistic assessments of sustainability was the WEA-LAC evaluation. Overall, sustainability was assessed as favourable and could be further consolidated during Phase III. A survey of stakeholders conducted as part of the WEA-LAC evaluation found that all respondents considered it feasible that the results of the programme would be maintained after it was terminated. Based on these perceptions, the evaluation deduced that commitment existed to give continuity to the processes initiated and that sufficient credibility was gained to promote future actions. It furthermore concluded that:

(WEA-LAC) gives emphasis to the reinforcement of national capabilities and regional networking, which could trigger a change in the gender order with which regional negotiations operate and achieve, as a result, Central American integration in equal conditions for all.

Progress in two areas contributed to sustainability: (1) knowledge generation and dissemination created a platform allowing important diagnoses to be made for the designing and formulation of political action; and (2) institutional strengthening of governmental and non-governmental organisations at both the regional and national levels. Nevertheless, the evaluation maintained that many actions were still required to strengthen regulatory and political frameworks so that a gender-sensitive economic agenda could become sustainable. This included further institutionalising the programme within the national GEMs. Also agreements with institutions that could commit to monitor progress were needed, as well as comprehensive communication and sensitization strategies on gender and economics so that the issues could gradually position itself in the collective thinking.

The WLR-Aceh evaluation also found that there was considerable optimism in terms of the ability of individuals and institutions to pursue objectives for integration of gender equality. Nevertheless, the evaluation deemed that a cessation of UNIFEM support was likely to result in weakening of the relationships that had been developed with legislators and policy makers. A sustained effort would be needed for approaching legislators, working effectively in the public hearings and affecting deep rooted attitudes that work against women's rights. Likewise, there was a need to build capacity at the district level. The evaluation provided some suggestions to promote sustainability: UNIFEM could further build synergy among partners and women's networks; cultivate champions of the concepts of CEDAW among strategic actors such as judges and prosecutors; and, co-operate with other development actors interested in furthering UNIFEM's goals.

Meanwhile, The HBW evaluation held that the programme had an in-built sustainability by virtue of facilitating the process of creating and legally establishing networks at the country and regional levels. Sustainability was also enhanced by engaging member-based organisations and establishing partnerships with international agencies, donors and private sector organisations that could unite in strengthening the efforts to sensitise policymakers and the public about the concerns and needs of home-based workers.

On the other hand, there was limited evidence that UNIFEM's partnerships with regional organisations contributed to sustainable changes within or outside the respective regional organisation. While there was considerable optimism among consulted stakeholders that recent RO policy changes *could* positively influence change, there was no evidence allowing the evaluators to assess the extent to which this had happened. Some concerns emerged regarding the sustainability of results, particularly in terms of institutional capacities, since the sustainability of these types of achievements appeared to be out of UNIFEM's control. Further, UNIFEM's tendency towards relatively short-term and activity-focused interventions with limited follow-up strategies and resources may also negatively affect the long-term sustainability of the results obtained.

To ensure sustainability, the WHR-FRY evaluation claimed that more efforts would need to be invested in working with government institutions including, but not exclusively, GEMs – which lacked sufficient capacities, human and financial resources, strong political backing and a strategic approach. As long as gender equality remained low on the priority lists of governments in target countries, the evaluation deemed there was little chance for governments actually taking responsibility for fulfilling gender equality obligations under both domestic and international legislation and conventions. Therefore, UNIFEM should also exert its influence on higher levels

of government as well as national parliaments, in a concerted effort with other relevant international change agents to promote sustainability. Meanwhile, sustainability of results reached at the level of CSOs was assessed as relatively high, contingent on further targeted support and systematic sharing and dissemination of research and analyses and replication of good practices.

The GRB-Global evaluation saw effective capacity-building as a central tenet of sustainability. It was considered key to creating awareness, commitment and technical capacity. UNIFEM's efforts in gender responsive budgeting showed indications of progress in these areas, thus suggesting early signs of potential sustainability, but the evaluation deemed it was too early to judge. Moreover, the capacity building strategy applied by UNIFEM had limitations, particularly with regard to systematic monitoring, evaluation and extracting lessons learnt. All of the country studies undertaken as part of this evaluation highlighted the need for approaches and materials to be properly documented and for monitoring data to be collected and utilised to assess whether capacity building interventions were contributing to sustainability.

The UNTF evaluation observed that the sustainability of results depended on a variety of factors – local ownership, multi-faceted approach, legal and institutional frameworks, institutional stability, grantee capacity, project size. While UN Trust Fund projects contributed to building various capacities of grantee organisations, grantees were often not able to continue the activity after the funding ended, due to their limited resources. The UN Trust Fund was already addressing these needs. Since its 2008 Call for Proposals it was placing emphasis on demonstrating explicit capacity development and sustainability strategies; as well as synergies and coordination with existing initiatives to describe how achievements will be sustained once the grant ended. The 2009 Call process was even more explicit with regard to the importance and requirement of sustainability plans.

The GE-Moldova evaluation claimed that the short term of the programme was a key impediment to sustainability, since it would not allow enough time for processes initiated by the programme to fully take root. Nevertheless, it deemed that the significant evolution in government understanding and commitment to gender equality created a key foundation for sustainability. Likewise, the programme was highly regarded by donor agencies and the prospects of expanding the effort by adding newly funded dimensions to it were deemed to be favourable. However, for sustained impact, Moldova would continue to need very significant capacity-building support and guidance at the national level, but also at the local level, if gender equality was to really take root in all aspects of Moldovan society. Second, significant support and capacity building would be required for civil society organisations. Third, key national stakeholders had come to look to UNIFEM as an important source of guidance and as an effective catalyst and facilitator for mobilising and channelling government and non-government stakeholders. The evaluation held that this support would continue to be needed beyond the end date of the current programme.

Achieving any degree of sustainability in promoting women's human rights in Sudan seemed highly challenging given the context. Not only is the country volatile and conflict-prone which counteracts sustainability, Sudan has not ratified key charters related to women's rights, such as CEDAW, the African Charter on Women's Rights, and the Beijing Declaration. The evaluation deemed that government ministries and civil society organisations still lacked the capacity to sustain the activities in the medium-term. Although gender equality had been mainstreamed in the ministries related to welfare and social services, other ministries needed to be addressed. In addition, to move gender equality beyond the policy-making level, much was required in terms of

training and gender responsive budgeting. The gender equality and development frameworks in which UNIFEM had participated still required significant work to evolve into legislation and enacted. Moreover, NGOs were highly reliant on support from UNIFEM and on donor funding.

The EWMWA evaluation assessed the sustainability of the programme's work in relation to the policy level, government, CSOs, partners and individual projects addressing migrants. It deemed that the legislative measures and bilateral agreements developed and institutionalised under the programme were EWMWA's most sustainable result. Newly established institutions in the government sector were likely to be maintained, but there was no guarantee that they would sustain the mission of the EWMWA Programme. The capacity of migrant organisations to remain actors in the discourse on safe migration and women's economic empowerment was fundamental to sustain the programme's impacts. There were encouraging signs that this was happening at national levels, but it was difficult to assess to what extent these organisations would be able to help sustain and expand what the programme had achieved at regional and global levels without regular funding support.

Sustainability was promoted by EWMWA's programmatic approach. Through its multi-stakeholder strategy and gender sensitive and rights-based development perspective on migration, the EWMWA programme had increased visibility of the "inter-sectorality" of safe migration with other development priorities. This inter-sectorality (reflected in the integration of female migration as an important aspect of national and regional strategies addressing mobility, gender-based violence, HIV/AIDS, and livelihoods) was deemed as promising in supporting sustainability of the programme's impacts.

The choice of national partners participating in the AWP Project was deemed conducive to promoting sustainability. In all the participating countries, the selected national partners had the leadership and the commitment to continue with activities conducive to contributing to women's political participation and empowerment.

On the other hand, the sustainability of individual projects supported by the EWMWA programme was regarded as threatened by the lack of an **explicit exit strategy** that "clearly identifies steps and milestones for how UNIFEM will withdraw, and especially for ensuring that the gender sensitive rights-based development perspective is maintained after UNIFEM's withdrawal." The evaluation held that diversification of funding should have been pursued well ahead of the end of the programme so as to ensure their continuation.

Two other evaluations (AWP and Sabaya) raised significant concern regarding the need for clear exit strategies defined from the start; describing sustainability elements both in terms of programme and finance; and, made known to all stakeholders. Partners of the AWP programme expressed that it would have been more strategic if they had had the opportunity to end the project with a workshop focusing on lessons learnt and good practices on which they could build. The Sabaya evaluation held that sustainability had not been thought of extensively and UNIFEM and not clearly defined what sustainability meant for the programme, nor was it included in the programme logic. The evaluators found no evidence of exit strategies with the partners and communities. There was a need for a comprehensive strategy detailing measures conducive to post-project sustainability.

Promising approaches to sustainability mentioned by three evaluations were efforts to **support academic institutions in strengthening their educational capacities** in specific gender equality subjects. In Moldova the programme supported the incorporation of gender responsive budgeting course in a Moldovan University which the evaluation held could help sensitise future generations of policy makers and members of civil society to the importance of GRB as a means to enforcing and safeguarding gender equality. Likewise, GRB-Global evaluation noted that GRB was being embedded in academic programme in some countries. For instance, in Ecuador, the creation of a ‘Gender and Economics’ diploma course and a ‘Gender and Fiscal Policy’ academic course were supported. The WEA-LAC programme also made significant progress by working with academic institutions and supported their integration of gender equality and economics. Meanwhile, the WLR-Aceh evaluation mentioned that more could have been undertaken to promote the incorporation of CEDAW into curricula of law schools, law enforcement training centres and women’s studies programmes.

## 6 Conclusions

### Results

All in all, the results suggest that within the programmes evaluated, UNIFEM is making some progress in relation to the outcomes envisaged by the Strategic Plan 2008-2013. Of the programmes evaluated, three-quarters contributed to some form of policy-level or legislative results. The majority of the programmes also seem to have worked to strengthening duty-bearers in respecting, protecting and fulfilling their duties, and the support helped institutionalise commitment to gender equality in various public institutions. UNIFEM also supported rights-holders in their ability to participate and claim their rights; including giving voice to rural Palestinian women, migrant Asian women and South Asian home-based workers. In over half of the programmes evaluated, UNIFEM contributed to improving cooperation between government and civil society actors and/or help establish spaces for dialogue. In a couple of countries, UNIFEM supported academic institutions in strengthening their educational capacities in specific gender equality subjects. The generation of knowledge products was successful in some cases – but not all –and dissemination tended to be weak.

The relevance of UNIFEM's work was deemed high in most cases, although relevance in relation to the needs and priorities of governments, beneficiary groups, partner organisations and UNIFEM's policy framework was not always analysed. The support was also timely and opportune. Some evaluations argued that relevance could be enhanced by making use of participatory, rights-based and conflict analyses.

Meanwhile, sustainability in terms of mere continuation or duration of results is weak. All evaluations deemed that continued financial and technical support would be needed to achieve permanent change. The lack of exit strategies was criticised by several evaluations. Nevertheless, numerous evaluations reported that modest ground had been gained in ways that contribute to sustained effects. This included evidence of commitment to GE&HR in key partner institutions; institutionalisation through legislative and/or policy change; generation of knowledge; the establishment of networks; strengthened gender equality-related educational capacities of academic institutions; and, partners were enabled to access funding from donor agencies to continue, complement and/or scale up gender equality initiatives.

### Programme Strategies

In comparison with the 2004-2008 evaluations, the higher quality of 2009 evaluations often produced more apt analyses and identified challenges more succinctly. In most cases though, the programmatic strengths and weaknesses identified in the 2004-2008 meta-evaluation also prevailed in the 2009 evaluations. The results of the 2009 evaluations imply that a significant effort is required by UNIFEM to ensure that by 2013 its programmes are on track to meet its commitments in relation to capacity development; partnerships; replication & scaling up; knowledge generation; and gender equality and human rights-based approaches as outlined in its Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan regards **capacity development** as a core competency of UNIFEM and experiences in capacity development are to be systematised into explicit and accessible sets of approaches. The 2009 evaluations indeed confirmed that capacity development is core to UNIFEM's results. However, like the 2004-2008 evaluations, the 2009 assessments highlighted the **need for a strategic approach to capacity development** and the need for more systematic



monitoring and lessons learning. Further, the corporate evaluations were concerned with the long-term sustainability of UNIFEM's capacity development initiatives since the organisation tended towards relatively short-term and activity-focused interventions with limited follow-up strategies and resources. UNIFEM's recently finalised Capacity Development Strategy is expected to improve UNIFEM's efforts in this area.

The Strategic Plan commits UNIFEM to undertaking pilot initiatives to promote gender equality changes at the community level with the aim of generating models for **scaling up**. The 2009 evaluations suggest that **more effort was needed to generate viable models** and/or systematic plans were required for the scaling up process. The Strategic Plan also defines the role for UNIFEM to convene strategic partners to create an environment conducive to **replication**. In a couple of evaluations it was noted that UNIFEM was already leading a scale-up process among partners/donors, while another evaluation noted that UNIFEM needed to convene partners before an effective expansion of the programme was possible.

While UNIFEM's **partnerships** were again assessed in highly positive terms in 2009, there was no evidence in the evaluations that UNIFEM was, as aimed for in the Strategic Plan, "being more rigorous in tracking its support to partnerships that contribute to success." In fact, a few evaluations maintained that UNIFEM had missed some partnership opportunities. Improvements could be made by introducing **a more strategic approach to partnerships**. First, mapping of (potential) partnerships could be undertaken, followed by defining the rationale, objectives, expected benefits and added value of each partnership. Second, partnerships could be systematically developed, assessing the most strategic relationships and sequencing the development according to opportunities and resources. Third, a system would be needed to track and report on the relevance of each partnership.

Like the evaluations conducted between 2004 and 2007, the 2009 evaluations suggest that UNIFEM is still experiencing challenges in applying coherent **regional approaches** that ensure inter-linkages between components, promotes synergies and capitalises on opportunities.

Given the nature of UNIFEM's programmes, **gender equality** and women's rights are obviously central to their respective aims, approaches and content – as aimed for in the Strategic Plan. However, in a few cases there appears to be scope to strengthen the gender equality dimensions even further – both in terms of approach and programme content. Gender equality analyses were not always used to design programmes, while in some other cases there was **a need to sharpen** the programme's gender analysis further to effectively empower women.

The term "rights-based" was a central theme in the programme framework or equivalent of most of the programmes. Unfortunately, only a few evaluations made a concerted effort to assess the extent to which **human rights perspectives** were consistently applied. While there was scattered evidence of some aspects of rights principles being applied, the reports that undertook analysis of rights-based approaches implied there was **considerable scope for improvement**.

Compared to the finding of the 2004-2008 evaluations, the 2009 evaluations may include slightly more positive evidence regarding the **generation of knowledge** – although the majority of programmes could benefit from improvements in this area. The **need for better dissemination** was regarded as critical for many programmes, especially if UNIFEM is to fulfil its Strategic Plan

ambition of ensuring that “key stakeholders are able to easily access information on progress toward, and the “how to” of achieving, gender equality in countries worldwide”.

### Management Strategies

The evaluations from 2009 have highlighted management problems (and a few management strengths) that are almost identical to those raised in the 2004-2008 evaluations. In contrast to 2008, however, there are one – possibly two – areas where the evaluations from 2009 indicate a possible modest improvement. First, while the reports offer only limited information in relation to UN reform and co-ordination, the data that is provided suggests that UNIFEM is often **proactive in engaging with UN sister agencies** in the area of gender equality and is generally enjoying good relations. Thus, at least in relation to the programmes evaluated, UNIFEM may be making progress in playing the role it has staked out as a key driver of gender equality in the context of UN reform.

Second, while the 2004-2008 meta-evaluation uncovered significant critique related to inefficiencies in financial administration – including delayed disbursements, uneven and weak financial monitoring – some of the 2009 evaluations **assessed financial management to be generally efficient** and of those that did not, external factors were mostly to blame. ATLAS was found to be a hindrance to efficiency in the 2004-2008 meta-evaluation, but ATLAS was not raised in negative terms in the 2009 evaluations. Thus, it would appear that UNIFEM is making good to its commitment in the Strategic Plan to improve ATLAS and other administrative systems to “support linking of results with financial flows”. Indeed, according to EU, ATLAS was updated at the end of 2008 and a series of training sessions were undertaken within the organisation during 2009.

Otherwise, management efficiency was hampered in a number of ways. **Among the areas where UNIFEM needs to improve its management performance are the following:**

- Goals and programme scope **need to be more realistic** given the resources and capacity available;
- Programmes/projects **need to base their designs on data analysis, research, baseline studies** and needs assessments to ensure that the needs, priorities and aspirations of women – in particular those who are marginalised – are addressed in the most appropriate manner possible;
- **Strategic perspectives need to be clearly defined** at both the corporate and field levels. Consensus and clarity is needed on underlying assumptions and the corresponding theories of change;
- **Synergies and strategic coherence need to be achieved** within programmes, particularly those of a regional/sub-regional nature;
- Systems to document, disseminate and/or exchange information **need to be adequately established to ensure institutional learning**.

The three most significant management problems raised by the evaluations relate to **results-based management, monitoring & evaluation** and **human resource management**. The assessments provided by the 2009 evaluations suggest that UNIFEM **has to step up its efforts substantially** to meet its Strategic Plan commitments, in particular to “embed the culture and capacity for achieving and reporting on results” and to establish systems and guidelines to track how UNIFEM efforts contribute to “changes in policies and practices on gender equality and the empowerment of women at national, regional and global levels” by 2013.

While the 2004-2008 evaluations saw **human resource constraints** as an issue hampering efficiency and effectiveness, the critique provided in the 2009 evaluations seems to be graver in nature. Although UNIFEM’s staff was generally considered highly competent and professional – and the level of results achieved is impressive given the limited human resources – the evaluations suggest that there is not enough staff to be truly effective and this is exasperated by staffing gaps and high-turnover. The weaknesses in institutional learning, synergies, planning and monitoring were in most cases seen as directly linked to an inadequate amount of staff and staff presence/structures. Thus, with regard to its Strategic Plan commitments, UNIFEM is providing high-quality technical advice, but it is not yet able to ensure a “stable, strategic, cost-effective and relevant sub-regional presence” to support its programming and meet demands. It appears that the finding in the 2007 MYFF evaluation that insufficient presence, insufficient funds and the danger of ‘spreading itself too thin’ in trying to meet the large existing demands still rings true.

# **Annex 1**

## **Terms of Reference**



**Meta-Assessment of 2009 UNIFEM Evaluation Reports**  
***TOR for Evaluation Specialist***

**Background and Justification:**

The UNIFEM Evaluation Policy and Strategy commit UNIFEM to conducting gender and human rights responsive evaluations of UNIFEM's work. In particular, the Evaluation Strategy calls for supporting the implementation of the SP through the generation of a critical mass of high quality credible evaluations that provide useful evidence on successful programming approaches for replication and scaling up, and on less successful approaches for learning and improvement.

A key target of the strategy in this regard is the development of quality assurance standards for evaluation reports that are applied in 80% of evaluations and the analysis of 80% of evaluation reports finalized. Likewise, a key activity outlined in the log frame for the strategy is the conduction of meta-analysis of evaluation results in order to share knowledge generated for feedback to programming and wider organizational processes.

In 2009, the Evaluation Unit developed quality criteria for evaluation reports and commissioned a meta-evaluation of UNIFEM evaluations from 2004-2007 and a meta-evaluation of UNIFEM evaluation reports finalized in 2008. This provides a baseline for assessing the quality of UNIFEM evaluations throughout the period of the UNIFEM Strategic Plan (2008-2013)

In 2010, the Evaluation Unit is also undertaking a meta-assessment of the **12** evaluations (3 corporate and 9 decentralized) commissioned and finalized in 2009. The information from the meta-assessment will be reported on in the 2009 EU Annual Report and the overall analysis of trends, lessons and areas for improvement from all evaluations will be used to inform programme design and management of evaluation processes in 2010. The scoring of reports will be done so as to provide comparability between with the 2008 meta-assessment and for subsequent years under the SP (2011-2013).

To support its work in this regard, the EU will recruit a senior evaluation consultant to build on the EU's initial scoring of the decentralized evaluation reports and preliminary analysis of overall trends, lessons and areas for improvement in UNIFEM programming and evaluation processes emerging from both corporate and decentralized evaluations.

**Activities and Deliverables:**

The consultant will review the following corporate and decentralized evaluations:

1. Corporate Evaluation of UNIFEM Gender Responsive Budgeting Programme
2. Corporate Evaluation of UNIFEM Partnerships with Regional Organizations
3. Corporate Evaluation of the UN Trust Fund in Support of Eliminating Violence Against Women
4. Final evaluation on Arab Women Parliamentarian Project (2005-2009)
5. Evaluation Report: "Sabaya Programme Evaluation"
6. Final Evaluation Report of Phase II Regional Programme on Empowering Women Migrant Workers in Asia (EWMWA)
7. Strengthening Women's Legal Rights in Aceh (Indonesia)
8. Final Evaluation of UNIFEM's Regional Programme for Home Based Workers in South Asia Phase II (2004-2007)
9. Protecting WHR & Gender Justice (Sudan)
10. Developing Capacities for Gender Analysis (AGEM)

11. Accountability for WHR (Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo)
12. Promoting GE in National Development Policies (Moldova)

Following are the key tasks and deliverables:

- Start-up, review of EU / other relevant documents, adjustment of methodology, review of 12 evaluations and relevant new UNIFEM policies/strategies
- Analysis & scoring; preparation of profiles for corporate evaluations
- Aggregation and analysis of data for global evaluations
- Analysis of results/lessons learnt for 12 evaluations, comparisons with 2004-08
- Analysis of quality of evaluation approaches, comparisons with 2004-08, development of recommendations
- Synthesis and drafting of report
- Incorporate suggested changes and finalize report with annexes

#### **Required Competencies and Skills:**

- At least a Master's degree related to any of the social sciences, preferably including gender, evaluation and social research
- At least 7 years of working experience in evaluation and/or social research and previous experience in designing and conducting meta-evaluations
- Experience and background in human rights-based approach to programming and gender equality/gender analysis
- Demonstration of strong analytical and communications skills
- Ability to work with the UNIFEM Evaluation Unit to produce high quality report delivered in a timely basis
- Experience working with the UN; knowledge of UNIFEM context a strong asset
- Familiarity with United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards
- Fluent in English and working knowledge of one other UN language an asset

#### **Timeframe and Payment:**

The consultant will conduct the work during February and March 2010. A payment of **US\$5,980** will be made on the completion of all tasks outlined and submission and approval of the final report.

#### **UNEG Ethical Code of Conduct:**

It is expected that the consultant will respect the ethical code of conduct of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). These are:

- **Independence:** Evaluators shall ensure that independence of judgment is maintained and the evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
- **Impartiality:** Evaluators shall operate in an impartial and unbiased manner and give a balanced presentation of strengths and weaknesses of the policy, program, project or organization unit being evaluated.

- **Conflict of Interest:** Evaluators are required to disclose in writing any past experience, which may give rise to a potential conflict of interest, and to deal honestly in resolving any conflict of interest which may arise.
- **Honesty and Integrity:** Evaluators shall show honesty and integrity in their own behavior, negotiating honestly the evaluation costs, tasks, limitations, scope of results likely to be obtained, while accurately presenting their procedures, data and findings and highlighting any limitations or uncertainties of interpretation within the evaluation.
- **Competence:** Evaluators shall accurately represent their level of skills and knowledge and work only within the limits of their professional training and abilities in evaluation, declining assignments for which they do not have the skills and experiences to complete successfully.
- **Accountability:** Evaluators are accountable for the completion the agreed evaluation deliverables within the timeframe and budget agreed, while operating in a cost effective manner.
- **Obligations to Participants:** Evaluators shall respect and protect the rights and welfare of human subjects and communities, in accordance with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights conventions. Evaluators shall respect differences in culture local customs, religious beliefs and practices, personal interaction, gender roles, disability, age and ethnicity, while using evaluation instruments appropriate to the cultural setting. Evaluators shall ensure prospective participants are treated as autonomous agents, free to choose whether to participate in the evaluation, while ensuring the relatively powerless are represented.
- **Confidentiality:** Evaluators shall respect people's right to provide information in confidence and make participants aware of the scope and the limits of confidentiality, while ensuring that sensitive information cannot be treated to its sources.
- **Avoidance of Harm:** Evaluators shall act to minimize risks and harms to, and burdens on, those participating in the evaluation, without compromising the integrity of the evaluation findings.
- **Accuracy, Completeness and Reliability:** Evaluators have an obligation to ensure that evaluation reports and presentations are accurate, complete and reliable. Evaluators shall explicitly justify judgments, findings and conclusions and show their underlying rationale, so that stakeholders are in a position to assess them.
- **Transparency:** Evaluators shall clearly communicate to stakeholders the purpose of the evaluation, the criteria applied and the intended use of findings. Evaluators shall ensure that stakeholders have a say in shaping the evaluation and shall ensure that all documentation is readily available to and understood by stakeholders.
- **Omissions and Wrongdoing:** Where evaluators find evidence of wrong-doing or unethical conduct, they are obliged to report it to the proper oversight authority.

## **Annex 2: Quality Assessment & Scoring Framework**



### UNIFEM Quality Criteria for reports

<b>ELEMENTS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE EVALUATION REPORT</b>	
<b>1. Basic key information</b>	<p>The title page and opening pages provide key basic information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Name of the evaluation subject (i.e. activity, project/programme, theme, policy etc.);</li> <li>2. Name and organization(s) of the evaluators;</li> <li>3. Locations (country, region, etc) of evaluation subject;</li> <li>4. Name of the organization(s) that commissioned the evaluation;</li> <li>5. The date;</li> <li>6. Table of content;</li> <li>7. List of acronyms.</li> </ol>
<b>2. Executive summary</b>	<p>A short stand-alone synopsis of the substantive elements of the evaluation report provides the uninitiated reader with a clear understanding of what was found and recommended and what has been learnt from the evaluation. It includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Brief description of the subject being evaluated;</li> <li>2. Context, present situation, and description of the subject;</li> <li>3. Purpose of evaluation;</li> <li>4. Objectives of evaluation;</li> <li>5. Intended audience;</li> <li>6. Short description of methodology, including rationale for choice of methodology, data sources used, data collection &amp; analysis methods used, and major limitations;</li> <li>7. Most important findings &amp; conclusions;</li> <li>8. Main recommendations.</li> </ol>
<b>3. Purpose of the evaluation</b>	<p>Purpose of the evaluation is described including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Why the evaluation is being done;</li> <li>2. How it will be used;</li> <li>3. What decisions will be taken after the evaluation is complete;</li> <li>4. The context of the evaluation is described to provide an understanding of the setting in which the evaluation took place.</li> <li>5. Explanation is provided on how the evaluation informs UNIFEM's work priorities outlined in Strategic Plan and Sub regional strategies, where possible, the connections are made to national gender equality commitments and human rights.</li> </ol>

<b>4. Evaluation objectives and scope</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The evaluation report provides a clear explanation of the objectives and scope of the evaluation</li> <li>2. The limits of the evaluation are acknowledged.</li> <li>3. The original evaluation questions are explained, as well as those that were added during the evaluation.</li> <li>4. An explanation of the evaluation criteria used is provided and the rationale for not using a particular criterion is explained.</li> <li>5. Any limitations in applying the evaluation criteria are explained.</li> <li>6. Specific criteria that reflect human rights and gender equality aspects are considered, for instance, empowerment, participation, social transformation.</li> <li>7. Performance standards or benchmarks used in the evaluation are described.</li> </ol>
<b>5. Evaluation Methodology</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Data sources;</li> <li>2. Description of data collection methods and analysis (including level of precision required for quantitative methods, value scales or coding used for qualitative analysis; level of participation and empowerment of stakeholders through evaluation process);</li> <li>3. Description of sampling (area and population to be represented, rationale for selection, mechanics of selection, numbers selected out of potential subjects, limitations to sample);</li> <li>4. Reference indicators and benchmarks, where relevant (previous indicators, national statistics, human rights treaties, gender statistics, etc.);</li> <li>5. Reflection on whether the evaluation approach, data collection and analysis methods are gender equality and human rights responsive and appropriate for analyzing gender equality and human rights issues identified in the scope;</li> <li>6. Evaluation team, including the involvement of individual team members;</li> <li>8. The evaluation plan;</li> <li>9. Key limitations.</li> </ol>
<b>6.Context of subject</b>	<p>An explanation of how context contributes to the utility and accuracy of the evaluation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social, political, demographic, and institutional factors</li> <li>2. Human rights and gender equality factors</li> </ol>
<b>7.Description of the subject</b>	<p>The subject being evaluated is clearly described. Information is also provided on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Purpose &amp; goals;</li> <li>2. Logic model and/or the expected results chain and intended impact;</li> <li>3. Implementation strategy and key assumptions;</li> <li>4. Importance, scope and scale of the subject being evaluated;</li> <li>5. The recipients / intended beneficiaries;</li> <li>6. Budget figures;</li> <li>7. Stakeholders - their roles &amp; contributions to the subject being evaluated (financial resources, in-kind contributions, technical assistance, participation, staff time, training, leadership, advocacy, lobbying, and any contributions from primary stakeholders, such as communities. An attempt is made to clarify what partners contributed to which outcome.)</li> <li>8. Description of women's rights that the programme attempts to support.</li> </ol>

<b>8. Findings</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inputs, outputs, and outcomes / impacts are measured to the extent possible (or an appropriate rationale given as to why not).</li> <li>2. Findings regarding inputs for the completion of activities or process achievements are distinguished clearly from outputs, outcomes and impact.</li> <li>3. Outcomes and impacts include any unintended effects, whether beneficial or harmful.</li> <li>4. Additionally, any multiplier or downstream effects of the subject being evaluated are included.</li> <li>5. To the extent possible, each of these are measured either quantitatively or qualitatively. In using such measurements, benchmarks are referred to.</li> <li>6. The report makes a logical distinction in the findings, showing the progression from implementation to results with an appropriate measurement and analysis of the results chain, or a rationale as to why an analysis of results was not provided.</li> <li>7. Findings cover all of the evaluation objectives, questions and use the data collected.</li> <li>8. Reported findings provide adequate information on gender equality and human rights aspects, including the views of groups subject to discrimination.</li> </ol>
<b>9. Analysis</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Results attributed to the subject being evaluated are related back to the contributions of different stakeholders. There is a sense of proportionality between the relative contributions of each, and the results observed. (If such an analysis is not included in the report, the reason why it was not done has been clearly indicated.)</li> <li>2. Reasons for accomplishments and difficulties of the subject being evaluated, especially constraining and enabling factors, are identified to the extent possible.</li> <li>3. An evaluation report goes beyond a mere description of implementation and outcomes and includes an analysis, based on the findings, of the underlying causes, constraints, strengths on which to build on, and opportunities.</li> <li>4. External factors contributing to the accomplishments and difficulties are identified and analyzed to the extent possible, including the social, political or environmental situation.</li> <li>5. An understanding of which external factors contributed to the success or failure of a subject being evaluated helps determine how such factors will affect the future of the subject being evaluated, or whether it could be replicated elsewhere.</li> <li>6. The report assesses if the design of the object was based on a sound gender analysis and human rights analysis and implementation for results was monitored through gender and human rights frameworks, as well as the actual results on gender equality and human rights.</li> </ol>
<b>10. Conclusions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The logic behind conclusions and the correlation to actual findings are clear.</li> <li>2. Simple conclusions that are already well known and obvious are not useful are avoided.</li> </ol>

	<p>3. Tentative conclusions regarding attribution of results, include detailing of what is known and what can plausibly be assumed in order to make the logic from findings to conclusions more transparent and credible.</p> <p>Conclusions are:</p> <p>4. Substantiated by findings consistent with data collected and methodology;</p> <p>5. Represent insights into identification and/or solutions of important problems or issues;</p> <p>6. Add value to the findings;</p> <p>7. Focus on issues of significance to the subject being evaluated, determined by the evaluation objectives and the key evaluation questions.</p>
<p><b>11. Recommendations</b></p>	<p>Recommendations are:</p> <p>1. Firmly based on evidence and analysis.</p> <p>2. Relevant (to subject, ToR &amp; objectives of the evaluation).</p> <p>3. Realistic, with priorities for action made clear.</p> <p>4. Formulated in a clear and concise manner.</p> <p>5. Prioritized to the extent possible and state responsibilities and the time frame for their implementation.</p> <p>6. Provide specific recommendations on how the project can improve gender equality and human rights performance.</p>
<p><b>12. Annexes</b></p>	<p>1. Terms of Reference for the evaluation.</p> <p>2. Additional methodology related documentation such as evaluation matrix, data collection instruments: questionnaires, interview guide(s), observation protocols, etc. as appropriate.</p> <p>3. Lists of institutions interviewed or consulted and sites visited. In order to ensure confidentiality, UNIFEM recommends not including the names of individual interviewed in the report but rather providing the names of institutions or organisations that they represent.</p> <p>4. List of supporting documents reviewed.</p> <p>5. Project or Programme results model or results framework.</p> <p>6. Summary tables of findings, such as tables displaying progress towards outputs, targets, goals relative to established indicators.</p> <p>7. Short biographies of the evaluators and justification of team composition.</p>
<p><b>13. Key UNIFEM's programming approaches &amp; strategies: innovation and catalytic role, partnerships and capacity building</b></p>	<p>Does the report assess key UNIFEM programmatic strategies in its findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned:</p> <p>1. Innovative and catalytic approaches;</p> <p>2. Working through Partnerships;</p> <p>3. Capacity building.</p>

<b>14. Stakeholder participation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The evaluation gives a complete description of stakeholders' participation in the evaluation process.</li> <li>2. Participation includes both primary and secondary stakeholders (key stakeholders) and rights holders and duty bearers and a rationale for why the different stakeholders were selected for participation.</li> <li>3. The methodology involves using participatory techniques that are clearly described.</li> <li>4. There is evidence of key stakeholders playing active and meaningful part throughout the entire evaluation process.</li> <li>5. Report provides evidence of evaluation results validation process, such as results validation workshops, convening of reference group, and commenting process on the report.</li> </ol>
<b>15. Ethical safeguards</b>	<p>The evaluation report includes a discussion of the extent to which the evaluation design included ethical safeguards where appropriate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Confidentiality forms completed;</li> <li>2. Report respects the anonymity of informants;</li> <li>3. Report protects dignity, rights and welfare of human subjects, including children, and respect for the values of the beneficiary communities.</li> <li>4. Evidence of compliance with codes for vulnerable groups if applicable</li> </ol>
<b>16. Clear communication</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clear, precise and professional language used.</li> <li>2. Correct terminology and grammar.</li> <li>3. Highly reader friendly.</li> <li>4. Useful graphs and tables are included.</li> </ol>

<b>17. Lessons learnt</b>	<p>(Not all evaluations generate lessons. Lessons (if they exist) will be assessed separately).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lessons drawn represent contributions to general knowledge.</li> <li>2. They are well supported by the findings and conclusions of the evaluation and are not a repetition of common knowledge.</li> <li>3. The analysis presents how lessons can be applied to different contexts and/or different sectors, and takes into account evidential limitations such as generalizing from single point observations.</li> </ol> <p>The report highlights more general lessons learnt regarding human rights and genders equality that are relevant beyond immediate scope of the project (if applicable).</p>
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**Evaluation Quality Scoring System – developed by UNIFEM Regional Evaluation Advisors:**

<b>2009 Sub-regional evaluation analysis</b>			
	<b>Parameters<sup>18</sup></b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Scoring (Points)</b>
<b>1</b>	Basic key information	7 indicators	<b>1-5</b>
<b>2</b>	Executive summary	8 indicators	<b>1-5</b>
<b>3</b>	Purpose of the evaluation	5 indicators	<b>1-5</b>
<b>4</b>	Evaluation objective and scope	7 indicators	<b>1-5</b>
<b>5</b>	Evaluation methodology	9 indicators	<b>1-5 (x 2)</b>
<b>6</b>	Context of subject	1 indicator (qualitative)	<b>1-5</b>
<b>7</b>	Description of the subject	8 indicators	<b>1-5</b>
<b>8</b>	Findings	8 indicators	<b>1-5 (x 2)</b>
<b>9</b>	Analysis	6 indicators	<b>1-5 (x 2)</b>
<b>10</b>	Conclusions	7 indicators	<b>1-5 (x 2)</b>
<b>11</b>	Recommendations	6 indicators	<b>1-5 (x 2)</b>
<b>12</b>	Annexes	7 indicators	<b>1-5</b>
<b>13</b>	Key UNIFEM's programming approaches & strategies: innovation and catalytic role, partnerships and capacity building	3 indicators	<b>1-5</b>
<b>14</b>	Stakeholder participation	4 indicators	<b>1-5</b>
<b>15</b>	Ethical safeguards	1 indicator (qualitative)	<b>1-5</b>
<b>16</b>	Clear communication	1 indicator (qualitative)	<b>1-5</b>
<b>17</b>	Lessons learnt	4 indicators	<b>1-5</b>

For the 2009 sub-regional evaluation analysis, every parameter was assessed using the 5-point scale as follows:

- Excellent – 81 to 100% of the criteria = 5 points;
- Good – 61 to 80% of the criteria = 4 points;
- Average – 41 to 60% of the criteria = 3 points;

<sup>18</sup> The parameters and indicators have been derived from the revised Guideline #8 on Quality Criteria for Evaluation Reports (Oct 2009, UNIFEM).

- Weak – 21 to 40% of the criteria = 2 points;
- Very weak – 1 to 20% = 4 points.

The parameters (6) Context of the subject; (15) Ethical safeguards and (16) Clear communication were scored in a qualitative way while maintaining the 5 point scale.

Example: If an evaluation meets 4 out of 9 indicators in parameter 5 “Evaluation methodology”, the score is  $4/9 = 44\%$ . This translates into “Good” or 3 points in the scoring system. This is then doubled to 6 points to give weight to this parameter. The score for each parameter are combined to determine the aggregate quality score.

The 6-point scale (one more point than for the scoring of the parameters) for aggregate quality scores based on the sum of 16 parameters is as follows:

excellent	96-105
very good	86-95
good	76-85
average	66-75
weak	56-65
very weak	55 and under

**Annex 3:**  
**The Meta Assessment of  
UNIFEM's Decentralised Evaluations**



2 Feb 2010

## Analysis of 2009 completed evaluations in APAS, AFRICA, LAC, and CEE/ CIS

### 1. Arab Women Parliamentarians (AWP) Project Final Evaluation

*Implementation period evaluated:* 2005-2009

*Thematic area:* Gender justice in democratic governance

*Region:* APAS, the Arab States (8 Arab countries: Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, and UAE)

*Evaluation Budget:* USD 54,999

*Programme Budget:* USD 2,948,544

*Goal/Activities:* AWP project focused on: (1) Establishment of Arab Women's Parliamentarian's Forum; (2) Gender sensitization for Arab Parliament; and (3) National incubators for prospective/future Arab women leaders.

**Key Evaluation Findings:** The AWP Project design is based on potentially mutually reinforcing inter-linkages conducive to promoting a holistic approach to women's political empowerment. Overall, the Project is deemed to have been relevant since it coincided with political will at the highest level to promote women's political participation and its objectives were relevant in terms of contributing to women's political empowerment in general, and in some cases, to the success of female parliamentary candidates in elections. While the project had a holistic approach, it was too ambitious in terms of planned outputs and expected achievements. Over time the regional dimension of the project appears to have become weaker, and came to be managed as a multi-country intervention rather than as a regional project *per se*. Slippage in concepts and terminology, the narrowing of the project focus to capacity-building, as well as the UNIFEM/ASRO organizational structure, human resources and technical constraints, lack of three-year regional workplan and budgets all had implications for regional sustainability and have diminished project effectiveness at the national level that have ultimately led to missed opportunities. While there is no exit strategy for the programme, a major issue affecting post-project sustainability in the eight AWP Project countries is the reality that national partners need to fundraise to support the implementation of their project activities.

This evaluation is a well-written and insightful report providing critical opinions on the project. The report is well-structured and is easy to read. Presentation is also good.

According to the 16 parameters used for assessing the evaluation reports, this report is rated as "Excellent" in the following parameters: (1) Basic key information; (2) Executive summary; (3) Evaluation objective and scope; (4) Methodology; (5) Context of subject; (6) Findings; (7) Analysis; (8) Recommendation; (9) Lessons learnt; (10) Annex; (11) Key UNIFEM's programming approaches and strategies; and (12) Clear communication.

Strength of this report is that it provides very insightful operational and management issues based on desk reviews and interviews with stakeholders in various countries. While the evaluation recognizes the high relevance of the project, it points out that operational and management issues have been affecting on efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the project. Also, the difficulty of "regional" project is mentioned in

the report, and the conceptual “slippage” of the project is repeated throughout the report. The analysis, findings and recommendations are certainly useful for reformulating the next phase of the project.

The methodologies used in the evaluation are: (1) desk review; (2) interviews; and (3) survey. However, due to the lack of effective administration of the questionnaire and the limited time frame of the evaluation, too few questionnaires were returned for any valid statistical analysis to be undertaken. Therefore, survey results were not used and it became one of the methodological limitations. The findings by desk review and interviews were analyzed using SWOT analysis.

Weakness of this report is that it lacks in describing “Purpose of the evaluation” (which is one of the 17 parameters). Although the “objective” of the evaluation is well described, the “purpose”, why the evaluation is being done, how to use and the evaluation, and the contextual setting of the evaluation, is missing. This is probably related to the weak contextual setting when planning the sub-regional evaluation plan. Stakeholders’ participation in the evaluation could have been improved. They were involved in the interviews, but involving them in the SWOT analysis could have enhanced their participation and ownership. Information on the evaluation team members should be included too.

**Quality score: 97 in total (out of 105 score) = EXCELLENT**

**Lessons learnt score: 5 (out of 5) = EXCELLENT**

## 2. Evaluation Report: "Sabaya Programme Evaluation"

*Implementation period evaluated:* 2004-2006

*Thematic area:* Gender justice in democratic governance

*Region:* APAS, the Arab States (15 communities in the West Bank and 3 communities in Gaza)

*Evaluation Budget:* USD 23,868 (USD 4,291 non-core funding, USD 19,577 core funding)

*Programme Budget:* USD 895,590

*Goal/Activities:* Sabaya Programme focused on: (1) Develop women's capacity to cope with the conflict; (2) Develop institutional capacity of service providers; (3) Raise awareness of women's needs and priorities; and (4) Strengthen women's leadership and advocacy skills.

**Key Evaluation Findings:** UNIFEM has achieved its targets for establishing 18 Sabaya Centers which resulted in the tangible outcome of promoting women's participation in decision-making within their communities in most of the locations. Sabaya Centers also provided a forum for rural women to come together, access services and raise their awareness of the importance of their role which reflected positively on raising the community awareness and acceptance of women's contribution to society through public participation. The content of programming and types of services appropriate to community needs demonstrate the real success of the Sabaya Centers, which have also been acting as hubs for educational/vocational activities and trainings for rural women in local communities. While the program logic (goal, objectives and activities) is well established, the main stakeholders of the program (women members of the centers and representatives of the village councils) did not seem to have a consistent understanding of the program logic. For the majority of Centers, the hosting organization provided a good home for the Centers, whereas in other locations, there were real challenges in effective operations and decision-making. The Centers' coordinators role seems to have an impact on the success of the operations within the Center and relations with the local village council and the community members; experience and conflict resolution skills all seem to have had an impact on the functions of the Centers, playing a big role in the success of the initiative. In longer term planning for the Sabaya Centers, consideration needs to be given to building up a "middle management" level for the Centers, in addition to the Centers' Coordinators. Sabaya Centers have limited monitoring and evaluation capacity and there was a lack of monitoring processes and plans in most of the Centers. While UNIFEM has not clearly defined what "sustainability" means for the Sabaya Programme, more work is needed to further develop the capacities of women in key areas such as leadership skills, strategic planning, communication skills, monitoring and evaluation systems, fund-raising, and advocacy. All of the Centers expressed their willingness to continue functioning; however with different mechanisms and they are in need of administrative and financial support.

This is an interesting evaluation conducted by a local evaluation team based in mostly West Bank and Gaza. Considering the nature of the Programme, community empowerment, and the situation of OPT, conducting the evaluation by the local evaluator must have been the best option. 10 evaluators and 10 field researcher worked together in the evaluation.

According to the 17 parameters used for assessing the evaluation reports, this report is rated as "Excellent" in the following parameters: (1) Basic key information; (2) Executive summary; (3) Methodology; (4) Key UNIFEM's programming approaches and strategies; and (12) Clear communication.

Rated as “Good” are: (1) Executive Summary; (2) Context of subject; and (3) Stakeholder participation. Other parameters are rated as “Average” and Annex is not provided.

Strengths of this report are: (1) Community based evaluation; and (2) Attempt to do quantitative analysis. As a result, it provides information such as participants’ perceptions towards the programme, what is working well and what to improve. Lessons learnt and recommendations reflect perception of the people.

However, the scores of the most parameters are “Average” because the objectives of the evaluation were not fully met despite the collection and analysis of the data. For instance, one of the objectives is “assess the impact of the programme on women, families and targeted communities”. However, it does not seem to be fully addressed in the report. The second objective “measure achievements towards program objectives and expected outcomes” was not fully addressed in the report either.

The provided final report does not have Annex. Therefore, it is difficult to identify what sort of questionnaire was used in the evaluation. But from the charts provided in the report, the questions were often over-simplified by asking “yes” and “no” and without disaggregation of data, for instance, between West Bank and Gaza. This may contrasted with the high rating of the methodology as mentioned above. However, the current parameter does not capture validity and reliability of data as criteria.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, when methodological and sampling are well described, the total rating tends to be high.

**Quality score: 76 in total (out of 105 score) =GOOD**

**Lessons learnt score: 3 (out of 5) = AVERAGE**

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<sup>19</sup> Page 20 states that stratified spatial cluster sample is 400 females. The error margin was maintained at  $\pm 4\%$ . The confidence interval is maintained at 95%. Therefore, it can be said that reliability is high, but validity whether the questions measure what it was intended to measure could be questionable.

### 3. Final evaluation report of phase II Regional Programme on Empowering Women Migrant Workers in Asia (EWMWA)

*Implementation period evaluated:* 2005-2009

*Thematic area:* Women's Economic Rights and Security

*Region:* APAS, Asia Pacific and the Arab States (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Nepal, Philippines, Hong Kong, Jordan and Thailand)

*Evaluation Budget:* USD 50,000<sup>20</sup>

*Programme Budget:* USD 4,010,895.54

*Goal/Activities:* EWMWA Programme Phase II focused on: (1) Promote gender equal and rights-based policies, legislation and programmes; (2) Promote sustained policy dialogues and develop models of good practice of collaboration; (3) Strengthen the capacities and promote the economic and social security of migrant workers; and (4) Facilitate migrants' rights to organize claim entitlements.

**Key Evaluation Findings:** The EWMWA Programme goal and intent remain relevant to empowering women migrant workers and its gender sensitive rights based agenda greatly strengthens the discourse on managing migration and protecting migrant workers, connecting it to related discourses (safe migration, HIV/AIDS, etc.) and is consistent with MDG 3, but could have been enhanced in terms of poverty reduction. The programme has contributed to increased capacity of key stakeholders to promote safe migration for women, including NGOs and civil society group and to some extent institutional capacity of organizations of women migrant workers. Programme strategies were successfully adapted to local contexts, but not enough to regional circumstances. The programme was found to be effective in 1) facilitating policy/social environments for women migrants at regional and national levels, 2) sustained policy dialogue on models of good practice and collaboration between countries of origin and of employment and 3) improved services and strengthened capacity of targeted stakeholders, especially migrant women to claim entitlements. However, the programme management faced repeated turnover and extended vacancies of positions that weakened programme oversight and strategic guidance. The policy development achievements of the programme represent important successes to institutionalize policy vision and responses to safe migration in a relatively sustainable manner, but it is difficult to assess to what extent the women's migrant organizations will be able to help sustain and expand what the programme has achieved at regional and global levels without regular funding support.

This evaluation was a challenging because the programme had diversified stakeholders in cross-regional setting. This evaluation was conducted by one evaluator who visited five programme countries in relatively short time framework (March to May 2009).

According to the 17 parameters used for assessing the evaluation reports, this report is rated as "Excellent" in the following parameters: (1) Basic key information; (2) Executive Summary; (3) Annex; and (4) Key UNIFEM's programming approaches and strategies.

<sup>20</sup> The figure was confirmed with the project officer in the SRO. In 2009 sub-regional evaluation plan, it is said that the budget for the evaluation is USD 120,000. 2009 Annual Evaluation Report took this figure. Therefore, there is a discrepancy between the above mentioned figure and that of 2009 sub-regional evaluation plan and 2009 Annual Evaluation Report. Expenditure is USD 39,956.

Rated as “Good” are: (1) Description of subject; and (2) Clear communication. Other parameters were rated as “Average”, apart from two “Weak” parameters in: (1) “Purpose of the evaluation; and (2) Evaluation methodology.

Strengths of the evaluation are that findings are very informative and it points out the strengths and the weaknesses of the programme. For instance, while the programme was successful in raising awareness of the migrant issue to policy level and networking, it points out that the regional linkage is relatively weak. This is the difficulty of the regional programmes, which can be seen in other cross- regional programmes such as AWP, and UNIFEM needs to take the point to concern. The evaluation also points out programme management and administrative issues which also similar to the finding of the AWP. They are valid points to formulating the next phase of the programme.

Yet, the most parameters were scored “Average”. This is mainly due to the methodological weaknesses. The methodologies undertaken for the final evaluation are: (1) desk review; and (2) rapid assessment. The evaluation report mentioned that “in view of time limitation, the evaluation took the form of a rapid assessment”. Rapid assessment is often conducted to comprehend the situation before actually implementing a project. Therefore, it can be said that rapid assessment solely may be insufficient as a rigorous methodology for 5 year final programme evaluation. Particularly, this programme aimed at policy level. The report leaves an impression that most informative findings seems to have relied on the evaluator’s expertise in migration rather than the actual data.

It was also necessary to conduct it by team to diversify the perspective and analysis. It is sometimes difficult to identify how the evaluator came to the findings and conclusions stated in the report.

**Quality score: 77 in total (out of 105 score) = GOOD**

**Lessons learnt score: 3 (out of 5) = AVERAGE**

#### **4. Strengthening Women's Legal Rights in Aceh, Indonesia**

*Implementation period evaluated:* 2007-2009

*Thematic area:* Gender justice in democratic governance

*Region:* APAS, Asia Pacific (Indonesia)

*Evaluation Budget:* USD 25,000

*Evaluation Budget:* USD 989,282.76

*Goal/Activities:* Strengthening Women's Legal Rights project in Aceh focused on: (1) Strengthen partnership/collaboration among stakeholders; (2) Increase capacity of key stakeholders; (3) Strengthen the capacities and promote the economic and social security of migrant workers; and (4) Facilitate migrants' rights to organize claim entitlements.

**Key Evaluation Findings:** Nearly all project output and outcome indicators were achieved or surpassed. UNIFEM consulted with partners and used national and regional recommendations to design the project and selected partners on the basis of their strategic positioning to influence change; it was widely agreed that the choices were appropriate and reflected a broad array of intervention types and target groups. The project was particularly relevant in the passage of the Law on Governing Aceh, subsequent legal reform and development of the qanuns and the Law on Domestic Violence. Partnerships and capacity of key stakeholders have been strengthened for mainstreaming gender perspectives into qanuns and UNIFEM was able to more than double the pool of trained resource persons on gender issues. Suggestions for streamlining management include setting realistic timelines to address reporting requirements, providing partners with more details on project approval procedures, and a greater investment in interpretation resources; some project staff were in need of additional skills training or coaching to help them address project challenges. The project would benefit from having a comprehensive M&E plan to further strengthen partners' efforts to collect feedback on the longer term results of their activities. The cessation of UNIFEM support may result in weakening of relationships that have been developed with legislators and policy makers and a sustained effort is needed for approaching legislators, working effectively in the public hearings, and affecting deep rooted attitudes which work against women's rights.

This evaluation is about women's legal rights in Aceh, Indonesia, where has been suffering from post-Tsunami disaster and from conflicts. The findings must be interesting for other disaster and conflict affected countries.

According to the 17 parameters used for assessing the evaluation reports, this report is rated as "Excellent" in the following parameters: (1) Basic key information; (2) Annex; and (3) Key UNIFEM's programming approaches and strategies.

Rated as "Good" are: (1) Purpose of the evaluation; (2) Evaluation objectives and scope; (3) Evaluation methodology; (4) Description of subject; and (5) Clear communication. Executive summary is rated as "Weak". The rest of the parameters are rated as "Average".

Strength of this evaluation is that it describes the project context and the objectives of the evaluation well. Therefore, it is easy to understand the situation of the project and what the evaluation tried to find. The project seems to be relevant and its effectiveness is high. The project thus seems to be successful. It also points out the problems of project management including human resources issues, which seems to be affecting efficiency of the project.

Weaknesses of the evaluation are that it is lacking in explaining why the evaluation was done and how to use the results. The evaluation is currently being used as a fund-raising tool, but this information should have been elaborated in the report. The methodology is well described in the report, therefore, the methodology parameter is rated as “Good”. However, it could have been more elaborated. For instance, a list of interviewed people is attached stating “staff of nine implementing partners”. But it is not clear to readers what the nine implementing partners are. Also, how actually interviewed was conducted (structure or semi-structured interview) and what sort of questions was raised in the interview are not clear. How the collected data based on the interview was analyzed is not clear either, therefore, it is difficult to see how the evaluator came to the conclusions.

Stakeholder involvement is certainly mentioned in the report, but it seems to be limited to sharing the ToR, a briefing, disseminating findings. The data collection methodology could have been more participatory.

**Quality score: 76 in total (out of 105 score) = GOOD**



## 5. Final evaluation of UNIFEM's Regional Programme for Home Based Workers in South Asia Phase II (2004-2007)

*Implementation period evaluated:* 2004-2007

*Thematic area:* Women's Economic Rights and Security

*Region:* APAS, South Asia (Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka)

*Evaluation Budget:* USD 50,000

*Programme Budget:* USD 417,055 (for 2005-2007)

*Goal/Activities:* Programme for Home Based Workers in South Asia Phase II focused on: (1) Advocacy and policy dialogue; (2) Building sustainable knowledge and action networks; (3) Capacity building; (4) Disseminating knowledge on emerging issues and innovative solutions; and (5) Experimentation on the how to of improving the lives and livelihoods.

**Key Evaluation Findings:** The report found that the focus of the programme was on the first three ( of four) strategies (advocacy and policy dialogue, building sustainable knowledge and action networks, and capacity building of women HBWs, their networks and relevant key actors) and emphasis was placed on participation in developing policy framework and advocacy for HBWs. The involvement and recognition of HomeNets was found to be greater in countries like India, Nepal and Pakistan and all HomeNets utilized funds primarily to identify and network with organizations or groups/unions working with HBWs and organize workshops, conferences and seminars to give visibility to the cause and create an atmosphere conducive for policy advocacy. Better advocacy efforts resulted in the willingness of the donors to fund projects and programmes for empowering HBWs at regional and national levels. Partnership with international agencies and the involvement of local organizations and member based organizations (MBOs) helped the programme to move ahead despite the challenges encountered and the numerical strength of HBWs that joined the network showed an upward trend in all the four countries. Given that the majority of HBWs are illiterate and have almost no access to information technology, the websites developed by HNSA and all HomeNets remain targeted more towards the policy makers and other stakeholders. In terms of progress in demonstrating pilot approaches to social protection or promoting fair trade practices more concrete measures are required in the future in all the four countries. The attention given to promoting fair trade practices was found to be limited and in the next phase, the programme designers would need to face the challenge of developing a code of conduct for fair trade practices and advocacy amongst the private employers and ensuring its acceptance and implementation.

This evaluation is to assess the post programme situation (2004-2007) of a cross-country programme in South Asia. The report is well structured and is easy to read using maps and pictures.

According to the 17 parameters used for assessing the evaluation reports, this report was rated as "Excellent" in the following parameters: (1) Basic key information; (2) Executive summary; (3) Annex; and (4) Key UNIFEM's programming approaches and strategies.

"Description of the subject" and "Clear communication" are rated as "Good". "Purpose of the evaluation" and "Evaluation methodology" are rated as "Weak". The rest of the parameters are rated as "Average".

Strengths of the evaluations are that it is a well structured report and the presentation is very well. It also provides detailed information of each country in terms of programme efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, impact and sustainability.

Yet, as weaknesses of the evaluation, it is not clear how the results of the post programme evaluation are going to be used after two years of the programme completion of the Phase II (2004-2007). Especially, the evaluation includes “impact” as evaluation criteria and, in order to measure “impact”, more methodological elaboration was needed. The report says “due to the time and const constraints, it was not feasible to undertake a quantitative evaluation with a robust sample”. However, “impact” evaluation depending solely on interviews is not recommended as a rigorous methodology. Discussions on this should have been done at the drafting phase of the ToR. The questions used in the interviews were listed in Annex. It would have been nice to know how the collected data in the interviews was analyzed to come to the conclusions.

Not only this evaluation, but many other evaluations have too general recommendations. Project Officers found it difficult to draft a Management Response based on the vague recommendations. They often say that “findings are more useful than recommendations”. In order to change this, consultative process of drafting recommendations should be taken into account. This is also related to how serious we are to conduct participatory evaluation.

**Quality score: 74 in total (out of 105 score) = AVERAGE**

## 6. Final Evaluation: Protecting WHR & Gender Justice (Sudan)

*Implementation period evaluated:* 2005-2006 for the project “Protecting and Promoting Women’s Rights and Leadership in Sudan”, 2005 – 2008 for the project “Gender Justice in Sudan”. Both projects are evaluated together.

*Thematic area:* Gender Justice and Democratic Governance

*Region:* Sudan

*Evaluation Budget:* USD 50,000 (SIDA/ Norway)

*Programme Budget:* USD 1.65 M

*Goal/Activities:* The two immediate objectives of the programme were: a) to advocate for donor support, build coordinated responses and strengthen partnerships for women’s rights promotion and protection in post-conflict Sudan through women’s leadership; and b) to build the capacity of women’s organizations to advocate for their rights.

**Key Evaluation Findings:** According to the evaluation report, the following results were largely achieved: a) The project managed to establish UNIFEM presence with staffing especially in Khartoum and Juba; b) Resources for gender equality issues have been allocated by bilateral and multilateral organizations; c) There is increased participation of women in governance structures and in constitution making processes; d) There is strengthened capacity of governance institutions to protect women’s rights and facilitate gender responsive planning, budgeting and monitoring; e) Gender and women’s issues for peace building and reconstruction are reflected in international forums and initiatives; and f) there is strengthened reconciliation amongst Sudanese women. In terms of challenges, the evaluation notes a gap between the high demand for UNIFEM support from the UN, government and NGOs in Sudan, and the small size of the UNIFEM team as well as the inadequate budget of the program. Research activities on VAW and GBV in Sudan commenced late. Also UNIFEM was not able to provide enough support to building the capacities of gender advocates and of national organizations to effectively drive the gender agenda in Sudan.

This report comprises the evaluation of two projects: a) the project “Protecting and Promoting Women’s Rights and Leadership in Sudan (2005-2006)” and b) the project “Gender Justice in Sudan (2005-2008)”. The report provides an overview to activities implemented by UNIFEM during this period. In the presentation and analysis it does not differentiate between the 2 projects being evaluated.

According to the 17 parameters used for assessing the evaluation reports, this report was rated as “Excellent” in the following 2 parameters: (1) Basic key information and (2) Executive summary. Rated as “Good” are the parameters: (1) Context of the subject and (2) the Annex. While the context analysis with 17 pages is rich in content, it is very long compared to the rest of the report that has overall length of 51 pages excluding Annexes. There are 5 Annexes to the main report that allow the reader to comprehend the different steps during the evaluation process.

Most of the parameters in this evaluation report scored as “Average” or “Weak”. For example, under “Purpose of the evaluation” the report does not specify how the evaluation will be used. Under “Evaluation objectives and scope” the report falls short in indicating potential limitations of the evaluation and in explaining the criteria that were used arriving at the evaluative judgments. Under “Description of the Subject” there is no description of the logic model or implementation strategy of the 2 projects in Sudan. In the analysis, while the report provides a description of the accomplishments made by the projects, it does not go beyond that through e.g.

providing evidence for certain findings, explaining reasons for accomplishments, and the underlying causes or constraints from which UNIFEM could possibly learn in the future.

In terms of structure of the report, the presentation of findings could be improved as well as the language of the report. The conclusions follow the lessons learned while the reverse order would make the reading of the report easier.

**Quality score: 61 in total (out of 105 score) = WEAK**

**Lessons learnt score: 3 (out of 5) = AVERAGE**

**7. Mid-term Evaluation of Phase II of the Regional Program: Developing Capacities for the Gender Analysis of the Region's Economies and Conditions for Positioning the Women's Agenda in the New Stage of Trade Opening**

*Implementation period evaluated:* 2006-2008

*Thematic area:* Women's Economic Security and Rights

*Region:* Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama

*Evaluation Budget:* USD 57,500

*Programme Budget:* USD 3.7 M

*Goal/Activities:* The program has the following 4 objectives: 1. Spaces and mechanisms are institutionalized and consolidated that promote the dialogue between government, civil society, academic community and development cooperation entities; 2. The Women's Economic Agenda (WEA) is incorporated into national economic agendas; 3. The WEA is widely recognized as a space to generate ideas, knowledge and proposals that have political impact on women's economic autonomy; and 4. Women's organizations and mechanisms and other entities advocating gender equality are positioned and coordinated to influence policies for women's economic autonomy.

**Key Evaluation Findings:** The following are the main findings of the evaluation: a) The regional program "Developing Capacities for the Gender Analysis" is an innovative program with great potential for generating changes to correct the gender-based inequalities in Central America. b) The program is relevant to UNIFEM's mandate and current strategic plan, and the actions of the program do serve the real economic needs of women, primarily at the country level. c) The Program has implemented an effective system of collegiate direction between government, civil society, academia, private sector and international cooperation agencies. d) The program effectiveness in general terms is satisfactory, however the Program is far from achieving the objective of incorporating the women's economic agenda into regional and national economic agendas. Greater systematization of the efforts of political influence is needed to build policy frameworks for mitigating and eliminating gender-based inequalities. e) The logical framework of the Project Document does not fully meet UNIFEM standards and significant gaps are found in the chain of results, resulting in poor program evaluability. f) The program produced numerous documents but has not shown the capacity to disseminate them effectively. g) The organizational structure of the program is operating satisfactorily and process management at the country level is good. However, linkages between regional and national initiatives were observed to be poor, and monitoring and control systems are very weak.

This is a very long (100+ pp.) and detailed report that provides a thorough insight to the achievements of this regional programme. It is one of the few reports that includes a specific reference to the UNEG evaluation norms.

Following the 17 parameters used for assessing the evaluation reports, this report is rated as "Excellent" in the following parameters: (1) Evaluation Objectives and Scope; (2) Findings; and (3) Analysis. Rated as "Good" are the parameters: (1) Basic key information; (2) Evaluation methodology; (3) Context of the subject and (4) Conclusions.

The findings of the report are particularly strong because they include a differentiation between inputs and activities as opposed to outputs, outcome and impact of the programme. There is mentioning of unintended and multiplier effects and the results are related back to the contributions of different stakeholders. The report also

includes an analysis of the external factors that have played a role in the accomplishment of results including the social and economic situation in which the programme has been operating.

Amongst the weaknesses of the report is the Executive Summary, given that it only includes conclusions and recommendations but lacks information about the subject being evaluated, the purpose of the evaluation etc. The report also falls short in providing clear and precise lessons learned because many of the “lessons” are in fact findings. In terms of structure of the report, lessons learned are followed by findings and conclusions, and the Annexes are not provided. The sometimes difficult language and overall length of the report pose a certain challenge in terms of reader-friendliness of the report. Part of this challenges could be related to the fact that the original report was written in Spanish and then translated into English.

**Quality score: 73 in total (out of 105 score) = AVERAGE**

**Lessons learnt score: 2 (out of 5) = WEAK**

## 8. Evaluation of Peace and Security Programme in Colombia

*Implementation period evaluated:* 2003-2007

*Thematic Area:* Gender Justice and Democratic Governance

*Evaluation Budget:* USD 23,000

*Programme Budget:* USD \$ 3,340,248.45

*Goal/Activities:* The main objectives of the programme include the following: 1) Increasing technical capacities to implement CEDAW and monitoring its results in terms of achieving constitutional and legislative guarantees in gender equality; 2) creating associations to ensure women's equal participation in the electoral processes, peace negotiations, conflict prevention, disarmament and other processes; 3) Establishing national and local mechanisms (governmental and nongovernmental to achieve gender equality in the post conflict reconstruction and 4) to improve the information, documentation and orientation to reach justice in gender related issues.

**Key evaluation findings:** The report shows that the programme has developed successful strategies to achieve the intended results. Relevant institutions have adopted mechanisms to protect the rights of women affected by conflict and social violence in Colombia and have incorporated the gender perspective in their work strategies at the national and local level. There is also more acknowledgment by institutions of the impact of the conflict on women and this is being taken into account in the development of public policy. Local governments have instruments to include women's rights in public policy. UNIFEM's technical assistance was found to be key in the creation and strengthening of national and local women's mechanisms and is considered a key partner. UNIFEM has worked with Afro-Colombian and indigenous organizations in the development of an agenda for recognition of violations of their rights.

Following the 16 parameters used for assessing the evaluation reports, this report has been rated as excellent or good in none of the parameters; it has been rated as average in parameters (1) Basic key information; (8) Findings; (9) Analysis; (10) Conclusions; and (11) Recommendations.

The report has been rated as weak in the majority of parameters: (2) Executive Summary; (5) Evaluation Methodology; (6) Context of subject; (7) Description of Subject and as very weak in (3) Purpose of the evaluation; (4) Evaluation objectives and scope; (12) Annex; (14) Stakeholder participation; (15) Ethical safeguards and (16) Clear communication.

Overall, most parameters were assessed as weak and required strengthening. The methodology applied in this evaluation could have been more consistent; however, the findings of the evaluation address to some extent the evaluation objectives and questions. In addition, gender equality and human rights aspects were covered in the findings and the views of women and other groups subject to discrimination were considered.

Regarding basic ethical safeguards, the report does not respect confidentiality of the informants in line with the UNEG Code of Conduct for evaluators.

**Quality score: 61 in total (out of 105 score) = WEAK**

## 9. Final Evaluation: Accountability for Protection of Women's Human Rights

*Implementation period evaluated:* 2006-2009

*Thematic area:* Gender Justice and Democratic Governance

*Region:* Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, and Bosnia-Herzegovina (B-H)

*Evaluation Budget:* USD 65,000

*Programme Budget:* USD 1M

*Goal/Activities:* The 2 objectives of the project were: (1) Key government institutions as well as political parties demonstrate increased capacity and accountability to fulfil commitments to gender equality and women's human rights, and (2) Gender equality advocates gain knowledge and confidence to advocate for the integration of gender equality priorities within constitutional reform processes and with respect to the implementation of women's economic rights

**Key Evaluation Findings:** The evaluation established that out of the seven expected outcomes (four targeting government institutions and political parties, and three targeting CSOs) most have been fully or partially achieved in the target countries, with probably best results attained in Montenegro and most weaknesses identified in Kosovo. For the outcomes that have not been fully achieved, most reasons lie in the changing political circumstances beyond the control of the project, weak Gender Equality Mechanisms and low institutional partner capacities. Examples of achieved outcomes at the level of key governmental institutions include a) engendered constitutions in Montenegro and in Kosovo; b) a revised Labor Law in Montenegro that includes provisions on harassment and rights of pregnant women, and c) in B-H, increased awareness amongst representatives of labor inspectorates and judiciary of gender aspects of the Labor law. However, their capacities to enforce existing mechanisms are assessed as low. Outcomes achieved at the level of CSOs and GE advocates include c) increased capacities of civil society to advocate on gender equality standards and priorities in Serbia, B-H and Montenegro and to a limited extent in Kosovo. d) There is also evidence of improved cooperation between governments and civil society on monitoring and implementation of labor policies and regulatory frameworks in B-H and Montenegro. e) Women have gained awareness of their economic rights and access options to assert these rights in privatization processes in Serbia, while in Kosovo this outcome has not been fully achieved. f) Sustainability of results reached at the level of CSOs is assessed as relatively high, contingent on further targeted support and systematic sharing and dissemination of project produced research and analyses.

This is a well-written report with illustrative graphs and tables. With 36 pages in total it is succinct and to the point.

Following the 17 parameters used for assessing the evaluation reports, this report is rated as "Excellent" in the following parameters: (1) Basic Key Information; (2) Executive Summary; (3) Findings; and (4) Annexes. Rated as "Good" are the parameters: (1) Analysis; (2) Conclusions; (3) Recommendations and (4) Key UNIFEM's Programming Approaches and Strategies; and (5) Communication.

The strength of this evaluation is that it identifies reasons for the accomplishment of results including enabling and constraining factors. It goes beyond the mere description of the implementation of activities and includes an analysis of the underlying causes and constraints. The conclusions are substantiated by findings that appear to be consistent with the data collected and the methodology applied. This is an example of an evaluation that



provides specific recommendations on key UNIFEM programming approaches i.e. working through partnerships and capacity building in particular at the Government level.

Amongst the weaknesses of the report is that it does not indicate how the evaluation will be used and / or what decisions will be taken after the completion of the evaluation. It does not explain the evaluation criteria and performance standards and benchmarks that were used during the evaluation process. Also the report does not provide any specific lessons learned.

**Quality score: 78 in total (out of 105 score) = GOOD**

## **10. Mid-term Evaluation: Promoting Gender Equality in National Development Policies and Programmes in Moldova**

*Implementation period evaluated:* 2007-2008

*Thematic area:* Gender Justice and Democratic Governance

*Region:* Moldova

*Evaluation Budget:* USD 27,600

*Programme Budget:* USD 1.3 M

*Goal/Activities:* The intended results of the programme include the following: 1. Political will enhanced and manifested by support at the policy and operational level to key priority areas for action; 2. National capacities and mechanisms to develop policies on gender are strengthened and used to implement actions in priority areas; and 3. Monitoring and accountability of progress on gender equality in priority areas are exchanged through strengthened mechanisms, including sex-disaggregated data and gender-responsive indicators along common standards and agreements.

**Key Evaluation Findings:** The mid-term evaluation findings have shown a satisfactory level of achievement across programme objectives and outcomes. Significant strides have been made in the Government's understanding of, and commitment to, principles of Gender Equality. This progress can be evidenced across key areas such as a) the creation of a National Strategy on Gender Equality, b) significant progress in advancing towards gender-sensitive statistics, and c) progress in sensitizing journalists and print media to gender-based discrimination. Further achievements include d) the overhauling of the Government Committee on Gender Equality, e) capacity building for a wide range of Government stakeholders and task forces, and f) the creation of a transparent platform and process where CSOs can play a role in contributing to the advancement of gender equality within Moldovan economy and society. The UNIFEM programme approach has been characterized by an inclusive approach and one of partnership, where the programme has as much acted as a support and catalyst to government and other actors as much as leading the way itself. An important constraint to sustainability is the short duration and the focus of the UNIFEM programme at national level. UNIFEM will need to address the weak state of civil society in Moldova, and significant work at the local level is required if gender equality is to really take root in all aspects of Moldovan society. Significant risks are associated with UNIFEM ending its programme involvement at the end of the current programme mandate.

This report provides for interesting reading and provides specific recommendations for different scenarios i.e. maintaining, scaling up or scaling down the programme in Moldova.

Following the 17 parameters used for assessing the evaluation reports, this report is rated as "Excellent" only in the parameter of (1) Basic Key Information. Rated as "Good" are the parameters: (1) Evaluation Objectives and Scope and (2) Context of the Subject.

The strength of the report is the clear description of the objectives and scope of the evaluation, the explanation of the evaluation criteria and of the performance standards that were used during the evaluation. It also includes a good narrative of the social, political and legal context of the programme, in particular with respect to the situation of gender equality in Moldova.

The report is weak in the description of the methodology because it does not reflect on whether the evaluation approach, data collection and analysis have been gender equality and human rights responsive. Also the report

does not provide insight into potential limitations of the evaluation. In the analysis, there is little mentioning of external factors that could have possibly contributed to the accomplishment or difficulties of the project in Moldova. The report also falls short in providing evidence for certain findings. Regarding the conclusions, some of them are simplistic and obvious. They are formulated in a general, unspecific manner and add little value in terms of new knowledge. The language of the report could be more specific. In general the report seems very much on the positive side, with few critical elements concerning the project in Moldova.

**Quality score: 66 in total (out of 105 score) = AVERAGE**

**Lessons learnt score: 2 (out of 5) = WEAK**

## Annex 4:

### List of Documents Consulted

#### 2009 Evaluations

1. Amariles Erazo, Fabiola, Carolina Escobar Sarti and Fabrizio Feliciani. "Mid-Term External Evaluation of Phase II: of the Regional Programme: Developing Capacities for the Gender Analysis of the Region's Economies and Conditions for Positioning the Women's Agenda in the New Stage of Trade Opening, Phase II," 2009
2. Burke, Seán J. New Frontiers Services. "Promoting Gender Equality In National Development Policies and Programmes in Moldova Mid-Term Evaluation, Draft Final Report Mid-Term Evaluation" , February 2009
3. CSM Social. "Final Evaluation of UNIFEM's Regional Programme for HBWs in South Asia Phase II" 2009.
4. Fawzi El-Solh, Camillia and Evelyn Bazalgette. "Arab Women Parliamentarian Project, Final Evaluation"2009
5. Reed, Sheila. "Evaluation of Strengthening Women's Legal Rights in Ache, Indonesia", 2009
6. Riyada Consulting and Training. "Sabaya Programme Evaluation", 2009.
7. Sciortino, Rosalia and Fabio Saini. "Final Evaluation Report of Phase II Regional Programme on Empowering Women Migrant Workers in Asia (EWMWA)" 2009.
8. Social Development Direct. "Corporate Evaluation of the Programme Portfolio: UNIFEM's work on Gender-Responsive Budgeting", 2009
9. Universal Management Group. "Evaluation of UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence Against Women", 2009
10. Universal Management Group. "Evaluation of UNIFEM Partnerships with Regional Organisations Evaluation", 2009
11. Webb, Kathleen Linda. "End of Programme Evaluation 'Protecting and Promoting Women's Rights and Leadership in Sudan' (2005 - 2006) and 'Gender Justice in Sudan' (2005 – 2008)" 2009.
12. Miošić-Lisjak, Nivas et al. "External Final Evaluation Report: Accountability for Protection of Women's Human Rights", 2009.

#### Other Documents

1. Dale, Reidar. *Evaluating Development Programmes and Projects*. Second Edition. Sage Publications, 2004
2. Danida. *Evaluation Guidelines*. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1999
3. Davidson, E. Jane. *Evaluation Methodology Basics: the Nuts and Bolts of Sound Evaluation*. Sage Publications, 2005
4. Earl, Sarah, Fred Carden and Terry Smutylo. *Outcome Mapping. Building Learning and Reflection into Development Programmes*. IDRC, 2001

5. Ljungman, Cecilia. "A Rights-Based Approach to Development", in Mikkelsen *Methods for Development Work and Research A New Guide for Practitioners*, Second Edition, Sage Publications 2005.
6. Ljungman, Cecilia. *UNIFEM 2004-2007 & 2008 Meta-Evaluation*. UNIFEM 2010.
7. Mikkelsen; Britha. *Methods for Development Work and Research - a New Guide for Practitioners*, Chapters 3,7 and 8. Sage Publications 2005
8. Scrivens, Michael. *Key Evaluation Checklist*: [www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklists](http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklists)
9. Sida. *Looking Back, Moving Forward*. Sida evaluation Manual 2<sup>nd</sup> Revised Edition. Sida 2007
10. Stufflebeam, Daniel L. "Evaluation checklists: practical tools for guiding and judging evaluations". *American Journal of Evaluation*, 22(1), 71-80
11. UNEG "Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation" 2007
12. UNEG "Norms for Evaluation in the UN System", 2005
13. UNEG "Standards for Evaluation in the UN System" 2005

UNIFEM Guidance Note 8: Quality Criteria for Evaluation Reports, October 2009

[http://intra.unifem.org/page.php?f\\_page\\_pid=67&sid=ee6251e597cbc0bc130d45c6737c7f4a](http://intra.unifem.org/page.php?f_page_pid=67&sid=ee6251e597cbc0bc130d45c6737c7f4a)

## Annex 5: The Evaluator

Ms. **Cecilia Magnusson Ljungman** has a Masters degree in Political Science, Economics and Philosophy from Balliol College, University of Oxford and has more than 16 years' experience of international development co-operation. She has specialised in development policy, evaluation and rights-based approaches in areas related to civil society development, human rights, media, gender equality, culture and assistance in conflict settings. She has headed or been involved in over two dozen evaluations – including large-scale global policy evaluations, sector evaluations and organisational evaluations.

Ms Ljungman has assisted donors, multilateral organisations and NGOs in policy / strategy development, enhancing effectiveness through monitoring and evaluation and the co-ordination of aid efforts - including brokering innovative development partnership processes.

Much of Ms. Ljungman's work has centred on the multilateral system. She has been employed by two different UN agencies in the field; worked in the multilateral department of the Swedish Foreign Ministry; and, as an independent consultant researching and assessing aid effectiveness, she has undertaken numerous assignments with system-wide perspectives. For instance, she authored the first independent evaluation of the CCA/UNDAF process, *Laying the Keystone of UN Development Reform*, (2001).

Ms. Ljungman has conducted in-depth research into rights-based approaches and advised several organisations in this area. In 2005 her work was published in *Methods for Development Work and Research - a New Guide for Practitioners*, by Britha Mikkelsen (Sage Publications, 2005). Her work has also been presented in academic fora and used as course literature.