LATTANZIO
■ ■ ADVISORY Public Sector

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

Thematic Evaluation on Women's Political Participation

Revised Final Evaluation Report

15 September 2016

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List of Acronyms

AS	Arab States
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CO	Country Office
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DaO	Delivering as One
DED	Deputy Executive Director
EC	European Commission
EM	Evaluation Matrix
EQ	Evaluation Question
ET	Evaluation Team
EVAW	Ending Violence Against Women
FPI	Flagship Programme Initiative
GATE	Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluation Use
GE	Gender Equality
GERAAS	Global Evaluation Report Assessment and Analysis System
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women Empowerment
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
HR	Human Rights
HRBA	Human Rights-based Approach
MCO	Multi-country Office
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEEF	Organizational Effectiveness & Efficiency Framework
QAS	Quality Assurance System
QCA	Qualitative Comparative analysis
RBM	Results Based Monitoring
RO	Regional Office
ROAS	Regional Office for Arab States
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SN	Strategic Note
SP	Strategic Plan
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
UNSMIL	United Nations Support Mission in Libya
WEE	Women Economic Empowerment
WPP	Women's Political Participation
WPS	Women Peace & Security

A note on spelling: This report uses UK English. Where original quotations appear in other versions of English, it has been replaced by UK English.

Executive Summary

Overview

This report presents findings from the Thematic Evaluation on Women's Political Participation (WPP) supported by UN Women's Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS). The evaluation was led by Lattanzio Advisory SpA, hereinafter referred to as Lattanzio. The evaluation took place from March to July 2016. The main purpose of the evaluation was to "contribute to enhancing UN Women's ROAS' approach to promoting women's leadership and political participation" (Terms of Reference, page 17).

The evaluation objectives are specified in the TOR as follows:

1. Assess the **relevance** of UN Women's ROAS WPP strategy at regional, national, and local levels, as well as UN Women's comparative advantage/added value in the WPP thematic area as compared to key partners, including the UN system overall.
2. Assess **effectiveness** and **organisational efficiency** in progressing towards the achievement of results, as defined in the 2012-2013, 2014, and 2015-2017 strategic plans.
3. Identify and validate **lessons learned**, good practice examples and innovations of work supported by UN Women[1].
4. Provide actionable **recommendations** with respect to UN Women's WPP strategy in the ROAS region.

The ***content scope*** of the evaluation covers the work directly implemented by the RO at regional level, in programme presence countries, as well as work funded and/or supported by the RO on WPP in countries where there are country offices. In terms of ***geographical scope***, ROAS itself has a remit that covers 17 countries, and WPP includes regional actions that cover all or some of these countries. Regional activities include regional convening, exchange visits, the development and dissemination of knowledge products, and regional advocacy. WPP programming is concentrated is 7 of the 17 countries, while WPP programming also takes place in some of the remaining countries. The *focal* scope is formative, emphasising lessons learned and planning the way forward within the thematic area of WPP. The evaluation *criteria* focused on a higher level assessment (i.e. strategic level) of the direction of WPP programming for ROAS, and on how the overall approach to WPP activities worked, rather than on a detailed assessment of specific programmes. The evaluation considered ROAS' normative, co-ordination and operational roles in WPP.

> Advocacy here refers to activities aimed at influencing decisions in the political realm. This refers to influencing decisions in legislatures, national assemblies, political parties, governments, international agencies, civil society, and community organisations. It includes influencing public policy and resource allocation[2].

> Innovation is defined as a 'new idea, device or method', with political innovation considering solutions within the political realm that aim at meeting emergent needs and opportunities.

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[1] Key informants were asked what activities UN Women had been involved with in WPP that were felt to be innovative. The respondent was left to determine what they thought was innovative.

[2] Overall definition from http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Political+advocacy. Reference to political advocacy elaboration is from https://www.justassociates.org/sites/justassociates.org/files/new-weave-eng-ch1-politics-advocacy.pdf

Evaluation Approach and Methods

As a *formative* process, the WPP Evaluation focused on assessing how well WPP has proceeded to date (2013-2015), with a particular focus on means for improving performance under the current ROAS Strategy Note for 2014-2017, thereafter updated for 2015-2017.

Human Rights and Gender Equality principles have been integrated throughout the entire evaluation process. Each phase of the evaluation has been developed to include human rights and gender responsive features. Stakeholders' identification has been designed and conducted including human rights role analysis. The stakeholder analysis was used to ensure that the voices and perspectives of a wide range of duty bearers and rights holders were included in the evaluation both in terms of informing the evaluation and in validation of the findings.   A review of UN Women documentation on gender equality and women's empowerment, UN documentation on human rights and human rights-based approaches to development, relevant normative frameworks, and UN and OECD definitions was also conducted. Questions regarding the extent to which gender equality and a human rights based approach have been integrated into WPP programming as well as progress towards results on gender equality and the empowerment of women have also been included under the three evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency and effectiveness in the TOR as well as the data collection tools. The UN Women Evaluation Policy was consulted and employed to ensure compliance during the evaluation.

The evaluation employed mixed methods, comprising a review of the extensive literature available at country and regional levels, and primary data collection through skype interviews, one-on-one interviews, and focus group discussions. For the WPP thematic evaluation, and consistent with a human rights approach to evaluation, the stakeholder mapping was conducted and stakeholders relevant to the evaluation identified. Case study fieldwork was conducted in two countries, Morocco and Palestine, and an off-site case study was conducted of Libya (fieldwork was not possible due to security considerations). Guides were developed for field interviews, with one covering one-on-one interviews and another on group interviews. Interviews were conducted in person and via skype and 100 respondents have been consulted of which 84 women and 16 men.

Context: Women's Political Participation Programming in UN Women

In 2012 a Guidance Note was issued on leadership and political participation by UN Women (UN Women, 2012b). The purpose of this guidance note was to outline key constraints facing WPP, the normative framework underpinning international engagement in WPP, and the institutional framework guiding WPP within the UN system and beyond. Two foundational arguments for WPP are: 1) that in representative democracy there should be mechanisms in place to support balanced representation; and 2) that gender equality improves governing. Unequal power relations in most societies manifest themselves in the level and nature of political participation, and build on other factors that tend to marginalise women. These are often magnified under conditions of conflict and transition.

Internationally, the normative framework guiding the approach to WPP most notably includes:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights that includes the right to political participation.
- The 2011 General Assembly Resolution on Women and Political Participation focused on attaining gender balance.
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).
- The Beijing Platform for Action.

UN Women's 2014-2017 Strategic Plan's Development Results Framework (UN Women, 2013a) notes two goals of relevance to WPP: Goal 1) women's increased leadership and participation in the decisions which affect their lives; and Goal 4) gender equality and women's leadership in peace, security and humanitarian response.

The UN Women Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS), established in 2012 and based in Cairo, Egypt, covers seventeen countries throughout the Arab States. The mandate of ROAS is to advance UN Women's global mandate in the Arab States region, aimed at promoting women's leadership and participation in public and political spheres at all levels. As per the global mandate, UN Women ROAS advances this aim through playing three aspects of programming:

1. Normative. Supporting inter-governmental bodies in their formation of gender-sensitive policies, global standards, and norms.
2. Operational. Helping Member States to implement endorsed international frameworks and standards and forge effective partnerships with civil society.
3. Co-ordination. Leading and co-ordinating the UN system's work on gender equality and women's empowerment through holding the UN system accountable for its own commitments on gender equality, including regular monitoring of system-wide progress

Through this the ROAS aims to achieve three main outcomes:

Outcome 1.1: Countries in the Arab States Region are incorporating and using relevant tools and knowledge to ensure constitutions, legal frameworks, and policies advance women's rights to participate in decision-making at national and local levels are reformed/adopted and implemented.

Outcome 1.2: Gender responsive measures (mechanisms, processes and services) promote women's leadership and participation in politics

Outcome 1.3: Gender equality advocates from the Arab States Region influence policies and frameworks to increase women's leadership and political participation through on-going participation in national dialogue.

To a certain extent programming was influenced by the Arab Uprisings in 2010, and the aftermath transitional period, which showed that women's political participation had not been enhanced on an equal footing with men as expected, especially since women played an equal role to men in demanding democratic change. These components were in response to demands articulated on the basis of UN Women's consultation with women's groups in various Arab States countries subsequent to the uprisings.

Much of this work is conducted through regional programmes. The 2015-2017 Strategic Note by ROAS (UN Women ROAS, 2015) states that ROAS has four regional programmes:

1. Spring Forward for Women, which started in 2012 and is due to end this year.
2. Citizen, Leadership and Participation: New Pathways for Arab Women, which started in 2012 and is due to end this year.
3. Syrian Women Economic Empowerment, which started in 2014 and which is due to end this year.
4. Men and Women for Gender Equality, which started in 2015 and which ends in 2017.

Of these, elements of (1) and (2) are relevant for the WPP thematic evaluation[3].

Key Findings

Relevance

1. Strategic Position and Value Added: The presence of ROAS has filled an important gap in WPP, helping to bring resources and provide backstopping support that complements and adds value to partners, but there are significant challenges remaining.

2. Alignment Globally: UN Women has focused regional and national attention to global normative frameworks in a manner that shows progress across the region, in the face of considerable challenges.

3. Coherence and Value Added: Overall findings suggest that ROAS is well positioned to add value to WPP in the region, and has already done so, and that it fills two critical gaps: 1) adding an element of coherence in WPP throughout the region (even in countries in conflict); and 2) offering relevant support to country offices.

4. Underlying causes of inequality and discrimination: the challenges of gender discrimination in the Arab Region are highlighted in ROAS documentation, however the focus on women's empowerment has not been sufficiently balanced with gender equality to counter a perception that gender is about women alone. Further, the focus on WPP in terms of programmes with an on-the-ground presence has not been implemented in a fashion consistent with a focus on inequality.

5. Alignment within the UN System and with Other Actors: UN Women is playing a critical role in a context where few other actors had focused attention. UN Women is investing efforts to influence programming of other actors to focus more attention on WPP, with mixed success and resource constraints. Transformation leadership was not well understood.

Effectiveness

6. Mechanisms for engagement to effect change and the adoption of good practices and innovative approaches: regional convening was argued to be central to learning and adoption of innovative interventions. Local initiatives were effective in making specific progress on women's involvement in politics at local level, changing gender dynamics and overcoming aspects of discrimination. Furthermore, interventions focused on the normative framework were effective in increasing WPP.

7. Progress Towards WPP Results: The actions of UN Women ROAS have improved WPP in the region, with gains varying across countries, but in some cases widespread gains across the region (e.g., in actions undertaken with the League of Arab States) based on effective engagement at that level. This includes gains in countries in conflict, with particular progress in Yemen and, to a lesser extent, Iraq.

8. Sustainable results and effective engagement: There are serious challenges to sustainability arising from limited investments in WPP, despite widespread perceptions that the regional focus

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[3] The Programme Men and Women for Gender Equality was considered in terms of its relevance for a thematic evaluation of WPP based on available information. The Programme aims at addressing the root causes of gender inequality, and focuses on strengthening civil society, focusing in particular on new and emerging movements and how mentorship and training programmes can support these movements. Interviews were attempted on this in Morocco, but the consultant was notified that the programme had only just started, and that there was nothing to say at this juncture. It was also not raised by key informants in Palestine, nor Libya.

has been correct. While limited to a subset of target groups, engagement procedures have been largely effective.

9. Tracking process and progress and sharing knowledge: Results monitoring systems are weak, but in part have been overcome by communications with country offices and regional actors and effective internal reporting.

Efficiency

10. Operational Mechanisms and Constraints and Resource Allocation: WPP interventions are generally being implemented in an environment that is conducive to success. Considerable care has been exercised by UN Women in avoiding over politicisation of WPP actions so as to avoid political rejection of initiatives. The overall 'footprint' of WPP actions is limited by resource constraints, and in some cases by expenditures being prioritized that some country staff members questioned. Efficiency has been undermined by confusion over the differences between gender equality and women's empowerment, which also undermines UN Women's normative role in WPP.

11. Learning and Reporting: Results monitoring systems need significant improvement before they can systematically contribute to learning. In its place, ROAS and country offices have put into place coping mechanisms to try and learn from field initiatives. Annual reporting suggests that such learning is taking place, but this is less the case in terms of systematic feedback to country offices and programmes.

12. Regional convening and south-south collaboration: The role of ROAS in regional convening was high valued, and examples of south-south collaboration were given by respondents as central to their learning. Documentation of such learning was, however, extremely limited.

13. Human Rights and Gender Equality: From the perspective of efficiency and cost effectiveness, WPP approaches that include human rights and women's empowerment have been efficient in terms of the normative framework, including policy development, engagement in high level institutions and legislation, and international protocols and conventions. However, gender equality has been undermined by perceptions that UN Women focuses on women's empowerment and not gender equality. The focus of programming on men remains limited. Procedures for inclusion as a means to exercise rights are limited, particularly when considering social exclusion and poverty.

Conclusions

Relevance

Conclusion 1: UN Women is well positioned to support programming in WPP in the Arab Region, with the clearest mandate to proceed in this regard. Overcoming constraints, noted elsewhere in this report and considered in recommendations below, will be critical. Consideration of normative, operational and co-ordination factors in its activities reflects a proper balance on the need to balance regional activities. Key informants noted that advancing WPP in its work with other agencies had been challenging, especially in conflict situations, and would require considerable effort.

Conclusion 2: ROAS convening efforts were viewed as highly relevant to WPP, as it brought various actors together in a way in which information and experience is shared, relationships built or strengthened, and builds commitment across countries.

Conclusion 3: ROAS was viewed as a central actor in WPP in the region, and WPP support from ROAS was critical in helping set the agenda in countries in the region. The key constraint was the magnitude of the challenge versus WPP interventions, with the need outstripping funds and human

resources, including in local partners, and the relatively high costs of making progress in WPP that required considerable attention on the part of senior personnel in country offices to build and maintain relationships and establish entry points.

Conclusion 4*:* UN Women has focused regional and national attention on normative frameworks, with key informants tending to argue that it had been successful in advancing WPP where they had concentrated their attention. Nevertheless, the scope of the challenge and resistance to women's empowerment throughout the region remain considerable.

Conclusion 5: UN Women has been effective in ensuring alignment with international normative frameworks, and has pursued these at regional level and, with country offices and programmes, at country level.

Conclusion 6*:* Available evidence suggests that discrimination and social exclusion have not received due attention in design and implementation. Rather, the focus has been on the exclusion of women overall, rather than subsets of women and men who may face discrimination and social exclusion. This does not mean that the focus should be on the disadvantaged *per se,* but rather that due consideration should be given to issues of discrimination and social exclusion.

Conclusion 7: Based on albeit limited fieldwork and documentation, the findings suggest that UN Women has been careful to adapt programming to fit the varied situations encountered in the region, but has met with greater success in some locations than others. Not surprisingly, conflict affected environments have been especially problematic, but even here learning has improved programming (e.g., Yemen and, in the recovery stage, Tunisia). Entry points are well considered, and strategies carefully deliberated.

Effectiveness

Conclusion 8: In most cases where UN Women has chosen to intervene in WPP in the region, they had largely been effective. Key strengths were a willingness and ability to engage with and listen to partners, and adapt programming to reflect partner priorities consistent with objectives, a recognition of the agency's own limitations and what is possible, and strategic focused outlined in 2014-2015 that is what is needed for the region, and an ability to avoid being caught up in partisan politics. UN Women has proven itself increasingly adept at balancing crisis needs and development activities. Change has been effective in the region in terms of WPP, including progress in conflict situations such as Yemen and in post-conflict Tunisia, but there has been less success noted in Libya.

Conclusion 9: ROAS attention to convening at regional and multi-country levels has been extremely well received in the region. Results from interviews in Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Yemen and Palestine, as well as the results from regional interviews, regularly underlined the high value that key informants placed on south-south collaboration, despite limited activities, and engaging with other activists and leaders. Many of these same key informants raised a range of convening needs that had not been met, and urged that ROAS consider further support in this regard. This support for the role of ROAS extended to expanding networking in WPP around the region, improved access to information resources, and mechanisms to share experiences and learn. One regional key informant underlined that south-south collaboration should be specifically driven by a clear agenda, and that UN Women should avoid as possible *ad hoc* actions.

Conclusion 10: There was solid support for ROAS expanding its role in knowledge management, helping to generate and share knowledge products and information. Current efforts were largely unrecognized in the region, while a review of documentation coupled with the results of interviews

highlight many challenges in this regard. There are particular challenges facing the monitoring of results, with tracking almost entirely focused on activities and outputs, and with analytic assessments based on this information suggesting, but not usually evidencing, impacts due to UN Women's activities. The absence of effective monitoring or results in the RMS is a limitation in programming, and would need to be part of any knowledge management strategy.

Conclusion 11: There are promising initiatives where careful attention to replication and scaling-up would be good ideas. Expanding actions with regional actors, experimenting with innovative actions in developmental and in particular emergency environments, and expanding sound local initiatives would all appear warranted. But, this can only move ahead with consistent financing and a strong implementing environment that includes effective field support and results monitoring. Securing partners who can provide support for replication and take-on operational aspects of interventions would help ensure that these initiatives could be sustained over time.

Conclusion 12: Gender equality would appear to have rapidly 'translated' into women's empowerment, rather than receiving considered and consistent attention. Gender is generally conflated with women, and in this respect gender equality in political participation has been undervalued.

Efficiency

Conclusion 13: There is limited external support for WPP in the region, and in this respect UN Women is a key actor. The cost effectiveness of UN Women's support is therefore especially important.

Conclusion 14: Considerable value was placed on cross-country convening, with perceived high returns on investment from these actions. Examples given by partner agencies involved in these cross-country convening actions would suggest that this view is warranted, and an effective use of finance.

Conclusion 15: Key informants felt that a regional knowledge hub facility was an excellent idea, and represented a cost effective way forward. There were particular concerns that, with the absence of an effective regional information sharing facility, efficiency was undermined. As the system currently operates, there are numerous problems associated with the document development, sharing and use that undermine efficiency. These efficiency problems would be overcome by the development of a robust and well-focused knowledge management strategy.

Conclusion 16*:* As the system currently operates, there are numerous problems associated with document development, sharing and use that undermine efficiency. These efficiency problems would be overcome by the development of a robust and well-focused knowledge management strategy.

Conclusion 17: Advocacy actions have been cost effective, but targeting men in these was inadequate. This was recognized by many of the key informants themselves, but there was a lack of clarity on the way forward in this regard. This in part arises from confusing gender equality with women's empowerment, with the emphasis heavily on the latter. Cost effectiveness in WPP activities would likely be improved by a stronger focus on advocacy and innovation.

Conclusion 18: Findings from Libya highlighted the importance of understanding, as possible, the situation on the ground. The 'no project' option may have been a better choice for the short-term, until more was known about what would work and what would not, highlighting the importance of solid analysis information prior to entry into a new country situation. This lesson was learned in

Yemen, and as a result more resources were invested up front in better understanding political dynamics and partnerships.

Conclusion 19*:* UN Women's WPP programming should be commended for its ability to 'read' the political environment and identify relevant modalities for implementation. What political economy analysis that is conducted and included in strategic plans and annual reports is useful in understanding how to proceed in the region. Deeper political economy analysis at the regional level would assist further in this regard, especially in situations of conflict. ROAS should therefore consider financing this type of analysis.

Conclusion 20: UN Women's investments in building relationships with partners, while time consuming, are viewed quite positively, and have gone some distance to improve the cost effectiveness of actions taken.

Conclusion 21: Further, UN Women is dealing with WPP where, in a majority of countries they cover, political participation overall is constrained. Carving out WPP in such an environment requires considerable care. What does seem to be missing, at a country level, is effective political economy analysis that can inform programming. Yet understanding these broader issues would substantially inform WPP itself.

Conclusion 22: In considering the mandate that UN Women has in WPP, and in considering the mandates of other UN organisations, it is unlikely that other UN organisations would have more efficiently implemented WPP activities. Instead, UN Women should consider expanding its WPP co-ordination role to focus additional attention on political participation initiatives undertaken by other UN organisations, with specific attention to UN Women's mandate in gender equality and women's empowerment. This is consistent with the UN's adherence with the Human Rights Mainstreaming Mechanism, which prioritises integration of human rights principles and standards into UN operations, working within the UN country teams to mainstream human rights, and playing a key role in a coherent UN systems-wide approach[4].

Conclusion 23: Over time, UN Women has shown itself as increasingly able to balance the needs of both developmental efforts and crisis response. It has also approached the latter with a sense of how to take actions in a crisis situation that can inform post-crisis programming. In these respects, their actions are an increasingly cost effective use of funds.

Conclusion 24*:* There are limits regarding how cost effective UN Women has been in terms of supporting interventions that consistently engage across social exclusion and poverty. Without persistent engagement in this regard, the human rights foundation of programming is undermined.

Conclusion 25*:* An emphasis on gender equality has quickly transitioned to women's empowerment. While in part this is understandable given the paucity of resources, over the long term this will undermine the cost effectiveness of UN Women's interventions, affecting normative and operational aspects of the organisation.

Lessons Learned

1. UN Women is increasingly adept at WPP in both developmental and conflict environments. Additional progress can be made through more structured learning and knowledge management, and in greater convening actions. Good practice lessons learned indicate that the normative focus on Resolution 1325 and women's engagement in transitional processes

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[4] http://www.undg.org/content/working_groups_networks/undg_human_rights_mainstreaming_mechanism/about_the_undg-hrm

has been especially important. Convening has helped advance learning in this regard, including in Libya and Yemen.

2. Deficiencies in knowledge management systems, from collecting evidence to documentation protocols, hamper operations and undermine efficiency. This places additional burdens on staff within programmes, and at country and regional level. There are tools available to improve the management of knowledge, and if ROAS takes advantage of these resources and uses them in a structured fashion, this would significantly support country offices and programmes. If managed as a learning tool, a Theory of Change approach can significantly strengthen how knowledge is organised, and how information is tracked and used for WPP purposes. The WPP Theory of Change for the Arab States region, adopted in 2016, is a useful starting point in this regard.

3. Support for regional initiatives is an important focus for ROAS, and should be expanded as possible working with regional partners, but also providing regional support services to country offices. These have proven especially effective in terms of advancing the normative agenda, with good practice examples in terms of Resolution 1325, CEDAW, and Beijing+ 20.

4. Gender equality needs further attention, as it is getting 'lost' in the women's empowerment concept. There are no good practice examples in this regard, in part because the need for women's empowerment is overwhelming in the region, but there are good examples of where country programming recognises the importance of the dynamics in relations between women and men and the need to engage men not merely as advocates for women's empowerment, but also as agents of change under gender equality.

5. Social exclusion and discrimination are not receiving adequate attention, and also tends to get lost when programming in WPP. Understanding how discrimination and social exclusion affect different women differently, and men as well, needs attention. The only good practice example found in the evaluation was the programming focused on the disabled in Palestine, but that particular activity faced a number of operational constraints.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: UN Women's engagement in WPP at the regional level in the Arab Region is especially relevant given: a) the absence of another agency with UN Women's global mandate in the region that could focus on gender equality and women's empowerment, in this case WPP b) the region's below average ranking on a number of gender equality and women's empowerment indicators; c) examples of success in WPP interventions in the Region; and d) its history of careful attention to context, and its adaptation to these environmental circumstances. **It is <u>recommended</u> that UN Women ROAS and country offices continue to engage in WPP in the Region, and give due attention to high level advocacy and engagement and programming that supports the ability of women to exercise their right to political engagement.**

Recommendation 2: There is some confusion in the country offices about the role of the Regional Office in supporting country offices and countries without a CO presence**. It is <u>recommended</u> that ROAS consult with country offices in the region to clarify what support ROAS can offer to the COs**. In addition, given that there is potential for growth in WPP within the political participation programming of other UN agencies and other donors, **it is also <u>recommended</u> that ROAS consult with these partners at regional level to consider opportunities to advance WPP.**

Recommendation 3: The focus on the empowerment of women has tended to mean that issues around social exclusion, discrimination and poverty have received less attention. This does not mean that ROAS should specifically target disadvantaged women, and it does not mean that the overall

disadvantaged nature of women in political engagement should be ignored. Rather **it is recommended that as part of its strategies it gives due attention to actions that can reach these groups. This engagement should include specific consideration in convening activities.**

Recommendation 4: UN Women ROAS has a central role to play in convening across countries in the region. Key informants repeatedly highlighted how important their interactions were with other activists and leaders in the region, in neighbouring countries, and within countries where isolation is a particular problem (e.g., war affected countries, the West Bank and Gaza, etc.). While unit costs are high, **it is recommended that ROAS expand its convening activities based on regional priorities, but also based on where national priorities would be advanced. This convening should not be *ad hoc* in nature, but should rather build towards specific objectives.**

Recommendation 5: Nascent efforts to build knowledge management infrastructure centred at ROAS was strongly supported by key informants. Further, the absence of critical tools, lessons learned documentation, data, and other materials, as well as knowledge of access to international resources, were all raised as constraints. In particular, examples of what to do and not to do in conflict zones was valued. The knowledge management problems faced by ROAS, country offices and programmes are considerable, but a well-focused strategy that draws on international resources and focuses on regional needs should be achievable. **It is recommended that ROAS develop a knowledge management strategy in collaboration with country offices and existing and emergent programmes, and appoint a knowledge management officer to co-ordinate these efforts.**

Recommendation 6: It is recommended that ROAS consider a regional institution that could eventually house the knowledge hub, transitioning this to a regional organisation and building capacity in that organisation to continue to serve as a knowledge hub in terms of document management and special studies; the UNDP Regional Office works regularly with the Centre for Arab Research and Studies.

Recommendation 7: **It is also specifically recommended that ROAS work with country offices and programmes to develop a strong results monitoring system,** and that it invest the necessary resources in personnel and data collection to enable this system.

Recommendation 8: To the extent that UN Women believes that it has a competitive edge in the financing of specific activities falling under partner agencies that may best be financed by the agencies themselves, it should continue to do so, but only if there are strategic reasons for doing so (focusing on strategic aspects of capacity development) and if funds are available for such actions. This should only be done if it does not present an opportunity cost to the work with partners on advocacy, innovation and knowledge management. However, if there are important opportunity costs associated with these investments, UN Women should consider instead focusing on its core mandate. **It is recommended that UN Women ROAS consider further prioritising based on its core mandate related to WPP, and considering fund-raising and financing based on UN Women's competitive edge in terms of advocacy, innovation and knowledge management.**

Recommendation 9: Adaptive programming centres around learning from experimentation and innovation. In these respects, for those aspects of programming that are adaptive, **it is recommended that ROAS explore opportunities to finance small-scale promising initiatives, based on sound evidence and clear results.**

Recommendation 10*:* The concept of gender equality often transforms to women's empowerment, and the gender equality aspects of programming are undervalued. In such an environment gender is conflated with women, and challenges to GEWE are heightened. Complaints that gender equality unfairly challenges socio-cultural norms, undermines religious teaching and tenets, and creates unnecessary conflict. **It is <u>recommended</u> that ROAS develop a GEWE concept note (or similar) that begins a process of approaching both gender equality and women's empowerment in the organisation and in the region.** The design of training activities, programme development, and normative work would all need to clearly deal with the complementary but discrete aspects of gender equality and women's empowerment. A greater focus on gender equality would also enhance programming that includes men. This does not mean that the emphasis should not be on women, as women are disadvantaged throughout the region. But it does mean that UN Women's network of women's advocates and political actors can be used to both meet GE and WE needs.

Recommendation 11: In the context of this continued engagement in development and WPP, **it is <u>recommended</u> that UN Women ROAS and country offices consider focusing particular attention on *advocacy*, consistent with Outcome 1.1** (see Annex E). Advocacy includes direct consideration of human rights-based approaches to WPP, and focused capacity development within key political institutions.

Recommendation 12: **It is also <u>recommended</u> that UN Women ROAS and country offices also focus on *innovation,* consistent with Output 1.1.1 and Output 1.1.2** (see Annex E). Innovation includes carefully considered and focused capacity development, rather than broad-ranging capacity development, the provision of long-term technical support as appropriate and as central to ROAS' actions (as is being done with the placement of an officer in the League of Arab States), experimentation (such as the local council members programme in Palestine, testing of innovative technologies), and effective collection and use of information.

Recommendation 13: It is further <u>recommended</u> that ROAS expand its work with regional organisations as deemed relevant to its WPP actions.

Recommendation 14: UN Women is dealing with WPP where, in a majority of countries they cover, political participation overall is constrained. Carving out WPP in such an environment requires considerable care. What does seem to be missing, at a country level, is effective political economy analysis that can inform programming. Yet understanding these broader issues would substantially inform WPP itself. UN Women's WPP programming should be commended for its ability to 'read' the political environment and identify relevant modalities for implementation. What political economy analysis that is conducted and included in strategic plans and annual reports is useful in understanding how to proceed in the region. Deepening the analysis of the structural causes that contribute to gender inequality in the region would assist further in this regard. **It is <u>recommended</u> to consider the potential benefits of a deeper analysis of structual causes contributing to gender inequality which have been identified as hindering the advancement of WPP.**

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Overview

This report presents findings from the Thematic Evaluation on Women's Political Participation (WPP) supported by UN Women's Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS). The evaluation was led by Lattanzio Advisory Public Sector, hereinafter referred to as Lattanzio. The evaluation took place from March to July 2016.

This report is structured as follows:

- Section 1: Introduction and Overview
- Section 2: Findings by Evaluation Criteria
- Section 3: Conclusions and Lessons Learned
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- Annex L: Terms of Reference

As per the annex listing, more detailed information has been placed in annexes, with the main report focused on findings from the evaluation.

1.2   Evaluation Purpose and Objectives

1.2.1   Purpose

According to the Terms of Reference (p.17), the main purpose of the Thematic Evaluation of Women's Political Participation (WPP) is "to contribute to enhancing UN Women ROAS's approach to promoting women's leadership and political participation". This includes considering 2013-2015 programme development and early implementation, reflecting on the WPP approach identified in the current ROAS Strategic Note (2015-2017), and considering on-going efforts by ROAS to rework its strategic vision and approach in the area of WPP programming.

For the purpose of this evaluation, WPP also includes women's involvement in Peace and Security processes, a key issue in the Arab Region with a number of countries in conflict. As the Terms of Reference (ToR) note in this regard (p.16), "the normative work involves the provision of technical support to national and regional partners to increase their capacity to advocate for women to take active roles in national dialogues and peace processes'. Elsewhere the ToR elaborate that (p17) "the evaluation will focus on interventions whose primary focus is supporting women's participation in political processes, including ensuring women's leadership and participation in pace and security processes, specifically national dialogues".

1.2.2   Objectives

The evaluation objectives are specified in the TOR as follows:

1. Assess the **relevance** of UN Women's ROAS WPP strategy at regional, national, and local levels, as well as UN Women's comparative advantage/added value in the WPP thematic area as compared to key partners, including the UN system overall.

2. Assess **effectiveness** and **organisational efficiency** in progressing towards the achievement of results, as defined in the 2012-2013, 2014, and 2015-2017 strategic plans.

3. Identify and validate **lessons learned**, good practice examples and innovations of work supported by UN Women.

4. Provide actionable **recommendations** with respect to UN Women's WPP strategy in the ROAS region.

1.3 Evaluation Scope

The *content* scope of the evaluation covers the work directly implemented by the RO at regional level, in programme presence countries, as well as work funded and/or supported by the RO on WPP in countries where there are country offices. In terms of *geographical* scope, ROAS itself has a remit that covers 17 countries, and WPP includes regional actions that cover all or some of these countries as well as working with regional agencies. Regional activities include regional convening, exchange visits, the development and dissemination of knowledge products, and regional advocacy. WPP programming is concentrated in 7 of the 17 countries[5], while WPP programming also takes place in some of the remaining countries. Of these seven countries, case studies were conducted in three: Morocco and Palestine for field visits, and Libya for off-site assessment. The *focal* scope is formative, emphasising lessons learned and planning the way forward within the thematic area of WPP.

The evaluation *criteria* focused on a higher level assessment (i.e. strategic level) of the direction of WPP programming for ROAS, and on how the overall approach to WPP activities worked, rather than on a detailed assessment of specific programmes. The evaluation considered ROAS' normative, co-ordination and operational roles in WPP.

The evaluation is therefore based on the information sought and secured during the overall timeline, including secondary materials review and fieldwork.

1.4 Evaluation Context

1.4.1 Women's Political Participation Programming in UN Women

In 2012 a Guidance Note was issued on leadership and political participation by UN Women (UN Women, 2012b). The purpose of this guidance note was to outline key constraints facing WPP, the normative framework underpinning international engagement in WPP, and the institutional framework guiding WPP within the UN system and beyond. Two foundational arguments for WPP are: 1) that in representative democracy there should be mechanisms in place to support balanced representation; and 2) that gender equality improves governing. Unequal power relations in most societies manifest themselves in the level and nature of political participation, and build on other factors that tend to marginalise women. These are often magnified under conditions of conflict and transition.

Internationally, the normative framework guiding the approach to WPP most notably includes:

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[5] Palestine, Morocco, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Yemen, and Iraq. WPP work was also supported in Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon (in 2014).

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights that includes the right to political participation.
- The 2011 General Assembly Resolution on Women and Political Participation focused on attaining gender balance.
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).
- The Beijing Platform for Action.

UN Women's 2014-2017 Strategic Plan's Development Results Framework (UN Women, 2013a) notes two goals in this regard: Goal 1) women's increased leadership and participation in the decisions which affect their lives; and Goal 4) gender equality and women's leadership in peace, security and humanitarian response.

The Guidance Note specifies that UN Women has the mandate to promote system-wide coherence on gender equality and women's empowerment at global level and as part of UN country teams. Given that all UN agencies are meant to mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment, UN Women is tasked by the General Assembly to lead, co-ordinate and promote gender equality and women's empowerment accountability.

Core areas of support include (UN Women, 2012b):

- Making the electoral process free and accessible for women as voters, candidates and electoral activists.
- Working with political parties to provide technical frameworks and practices that support the integration of gender equality in institutions.
- Supporting women's movements and civil society organisations to advance women's interests in the policy agenda.
- Enhancing the decision-making and oversight capacity of women when they are elected into public office.
- Strengthening women's leadership in local governance structures through support to peer networks, capacity building, and similar.

1.4.2 WPP in the ROAS Region

The UN Women Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS), established in 2012 and based in Cairo, Egypt, covers seventeen countries throughout the Arab States[6]. UN Women ROAS has a physical presence in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia and Algeria, with a multi-country office in Morocco that includes Tunisia and Algeria. It provides support to programmes or other activities in Bahrain, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. Programme expansion has more recently included Yemen and Lebanon, although in Yemen placement has been limited due to the conflict.

ROAS is headed by a Regional Director, and is comprised of a Strategic Support Unit, Programme and Policy Unit, Operations Unit, and a Programme Support Unit. Knowledge management falls under the Strategic Support Unit. The Operations Team, headed by an Operations Manager, provides operational support to regional programmes as well as to countries where UN Women has a programme presence. The Programme and Policy Team, led by the Deputy Regional Director, includes policy advisors and regional programme managers (UN Women ROAS, 2015b).

The WPP areas of focus are on: (i) advancing women's rights and gender responsive agenda in constitutional, legal and institutional frameworks; (ii) promoting women's participation in electoral

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[6] Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

processes both as candidates and as voters; and (iii) influencing political parties, service delivery organizations, media and local government to promote gender equality in leadership and participation (UN Women, 2014).

The magnitude of the challenge should not be underestimated. The Arab Region has the second lowest participation of women in political life globally, with performance across a range of measures below the global average, from representation of women in representative institutions, to engagement in political parties and civil society. Only 18.4% of members of parliament were women in the Arab States region, with the Pacific at the lowest rate of any region in the world.[7] In a framework of continued instability around the region, the challenges remain considerable. As UN Women ROAS (2012: 3) itself noted, "for Arab women … this has meant pursuing gender equality as part of a tall agenda for: functioning democracies and meaningful citizenship; equitable development; equality under the law; national freedom from occupation and/or foreign intervention; and gender-based human rights concerns shared the world over, such as violence against women"[8].

Disabling factors included political, socio-economic, cultural and institutional constraints, with both temporary special measures and gender equality and women's empowerment programming to overcome these constraints. Temporary special measures comprised affirmative action, including quotas within political parties, parliaments, local and regional legislatures, and similar measures. For gender equality and women's empowerment, these have included electoral campaign financing, capacity development for women wanting to run for elections, gender mainstreaming, legislative frameworks (e.g., constitutions, electoral laws), media interventions, gender budgeting, and the establishment of gender units in unions, political parties, government agencies and others aimed at improved gender equality.

The UN Women ROAS report summarises key gender gaps but also notes advances made in recent years (UN Women ROAS, 2016: 14):

> All countries in the region have signed and ratified CEDAW and all of them (except for Palestine, Tunisia and Morocco) have reservations on specific articles which are said to "contradict" Sharia law according to religious interpretation. The region has the lowest percentage of females in the labour market with 21.7% compared to 50.3% globally. Female unemployment rate stood at 21.3% in 2014, 2.3 times the male equivalent. Women mainly participate in agriculture and civil service. Data shows that women are usually working in more vulnerable employment compared to men (33.2% vs. 23.7%). Women acquired the right to vote in 2015 in Saudi Arabia. The representation of women in parliament regionally was only 2.6% in 2000, but reached 17.9% in 2015. The number

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[7] http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm

[8] A more recent internal report by UN Women covering 2015 (Annual Report, UN Women ROAS, 2016: 14) summarised the situation succinctly: "The region continues to be defined by conflict, political turmoil and transition. Currently three of the world's four humanitarian emergencies are in the Arab States, Syria, Iraq and Yemen. The conflict in Syria has spurred the largest refugee crisis since the second world war, with more than 4.5 million people registered as refugees and an additional 13.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance inside Syria. In addition to the Syrian crisis, Iraq is affected by the on-going conflict with armed groups including the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, which forced nearly 3.2 million people to flee their home since January 2014". There are also large numbers of displaced persons and refugees from Libya and Yemen. http://www.internal-displacement.org/middle-east-and-north-africa/libya/figures-analysis found almost a half million internally displaced persons in Libya as of mid-2015, with an unknown number of refugees. http://www.internal-displacement.org/middle-east-and-north-africa/yemen/figures-analysis found that there were some 2.5 million displaced Yemenis, with an unknown number of refugees.

of women hired in ministerial positions is zero for countries like Qatar and Saudi Arabia, while it reaches up to 20% in Algeria.

1.4.3 Key Regional Initiatives

In terms of the approach to WPP programming, the mandate of ROAS is to advance UN Women's global mandate in the Arab States region, aimed at promoting women's leadership and participation in public and political spheres at all levels. As per the global mandate, UN Women ROAS advances this aim through supporting three aspects of programming:

1. Normative. Supporting inter-governmental bodies in their formation of gender-sensitive policies, global standards, and norms.
2. Operational. Helping Member States to implement endorsed international frameworks and standards and forge effective partnerships with civil society.
3. Co-ordination. Leading and co-ordinating the UN system's work on gender equality and women's empowerment through holding the UN system accountable for its own commitments on gender equality, including regular monitoring of system-wide progress.

Through this the ROAS aims to achieve three main outcomes:

Outcome 1.1: Countries in the Arab States Region are incorporating and using relevant tools and knowledge to ensure constitutions, legal frameworks, and policies advance women's rights to participate in decision-making at national and local levels are reformed/adopted and implemented.

Outcome 1.2: Gender responsive measures (mechanisms, processes and services) promote women's leadership and participation in politics

Outcome 1.3: Gender equality advocates from the Arab States Region influence policies and frameworks to increase women's leadership and political participation through on-going participation in national dialogue.

To a certain extent programming was influenced by the Arab Uprisings in 2010, and the aftermath transitional period, which showed that women's political participation had not been enhanced on an equal footing with men as expected, especially since women played an equal role to men in demanding democratic change. These components were in response to demands articulated on the basis of UN Women's consultation with women's groups in various Arab States countries subsequent to the uprisings.

Much of this work is conducted through regional programmes. The 2015-2017 Strategic Note by ROAS (UN Women ROAS, 2015) states that ROAS has four regional programmes:

1. Spring Forward for Women, which started in 2012 and is due to end this year.
2. Citizen, Leadership and Participation: New Pathways for Arab Women, which started in 2012 and is due to end this year.
3. Syrian Women Economic Empowerment, which started in 2014 and which is due to end this year.
4. Men and Women for Gender Equality, which started in 2015 and which ends in 2017.

Of these, elements of (1) and (2) are relevant for the WPP thematic evaluation[9].

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[9] The Programme Men and Women for Gender Equality was considered in terms of its relevance for a thematic evaluation of WPP based on available information. The Programme aims at addressing the root causes of gender inequality, and focuses on strengthening civil society, focusing in particular on new and emerging movements and how mentorship and training programmes can support these movements. Interviews were attempted on this in Morocco,

1.4.3.1 Spring Forward for Women

The Spring Forward for Women Programme is a regional programme co-financed by UN Women (1,227,813 Euro) and the European Commission (7,000,000 Euro), managed by UN Women ROAS and expected to end in 2016, having started in 2012. Approximately 43 percent of this funding supports the political participation work.

The overall objective of the Programme is to "promote the access and effective participation of marginalised women in economic and public life by addressing the barriers that have impeded their access and engagement in these areas" (UN Women/EC, 2015: 2). The Programme focuses on four areas: 1) capacity development; 2) evidence-based advocacy; 3) knowledge building and information sharing; and 4) partnership building, co-ordination and engaging with multiple stakeholders.

The overall goal is improved access and effective participation of marginalised women in economic and political life. The objectives comprise the empowerment of women politically in order to assure women's active engagement in decision-making spaces, and to empower women economically. The outcomes comprise 'a women's rights and gender perspective agenda is increasingly reflected in constitutional, legal and institutional framework', and 'increased economic empowerment of women, especially of those who are most excluded'.

The normative focus under the Spring Forward for Women Programme has been on increasing WPP through support in gender mainstreaming constitutions, national policies, and national frameworks. This component has different type of partners (governing bodies, political parties, civil society organisations) and countries of direct implementation are Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Palestine, Israel and Tunisia. More specifically:

- In **Libya**, where UN Women has no programme presence, ROAS established a collaboration with UNSMIL and UNDP to support key stakeholders (governing bodies and CSOs) in integrating a gender perspective in constitutions and political dialogue, as well as engendering institutions and supporting women's empowerment. The main components of the Libyan programme were engendering the constitution-making process and operationally expanding space for women's active engagement in political dialogue, enhancing women's capacities to actively engage in the transition processes and the post-agreement phases, and through developing the Women's Common Peace Agenda for the post-agreement timeline.

- In **Egypt, Jordan, Palestine and Tunisia**, where UN Women has a country presence, the regional programme supports the national efforts at three levels: 1) integrating a gender perspective in key stakeholders' organisational structures through capacity building, production and dissemination of the evidence-base, tools, and advocacy; 2) increasing women's participation in electoral processes (as voters, candidates and parliamentarians); and 3) supporting work with the media, raising their awareness on women's issues in a more gender sensitive perspective.

- The programme also aims to create a greater understanding and knowledge of women's political participation and economic empowerment, through exchanges, the production of knowledge products and tools, and through the creation of regional networks to inform and advance legislative change. As such, ROAS helped launch and continues to support a Regional Network of Women Parliamentarians (Ra'edat) - identified as key change makers - to partner with the Arab League and foster closer the relations between member States and increase women

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but the consultant was notified that the programme had only just started, and that there was nothing to say at this juncture. It was also not raised by key informants in Palestine, nor Libya.

Members of Parliament solidarity and influence. The work with women parliamentarians has also involved Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco, Bahrain, Kuwait and Iraq. In Libya, the Spring Forward for Women worked with UNSMIL and UNDP in supporting the engagement of thirty-three women from civil society in a study tour to Cairo to share best practices on enhancing the role and participation of women in constitutional processes.

- At the regional level, ROAS in partnering with the League of Arab States' Women, Family and Childhood Department on the implementation of the Plan of Action for the Cairo Declaration: The Post-2015 Development Agenda for Arab Women 'Opportunities and Challenges'. Through the Plan of Action, the League is engaging with Member States to enact legislation and policies aimed at ending discrimination against women and promoting equality between men and women in the Arab Region.

Coordination, under the programme has largely focused on coordination with non-UN stakeholders, specifically inter-governmental and governmental actors and civil society. There has been UN coordination at country level supported by the programme, including in Libya on WPS efforts and in Tunisia on CEDAW.

Operationally, this includes Spring Forward for Women's support for the creation of two regional networks comprising the Arab Women Economic Empowerment Network 'Khadija' as well as the Arab Women Parliamentarians Network for Equality 'Ra'edat'. Both networks brought together regional actors with diverse backgrounds to exchange good practices and share strategies aimed at enabling change. Ra'edat aims to formulate policies that respect gender equality in the region and bridge the gender gap in the region by 2030. Ra'edat attracted over 80 women parliamentarians from twelve countries to become members. The existence of Ra'edat has helped the development of the Algerian women caucus, with the direct engagement of the Government of Algeria. The Spring Forward for Women website was launched in both English and Arabic, serving as a platform to share reports and publications related to women's empowerment. At country level, this has included contribution to the establishment and launching of a post-graduate multi-disciplinary Professional Masters' Degree in Gender and Development in Egypt; working with national partners to enhance the capacity of female members in trade unions and professional associations to promote women's rights in Jordan; and supporting advocacy and awareness activities by partners which contributed to gender sensitive policies and / or laws in Palestine where the Palestinian Central Council adopted an increase in the quota for women representation from 20% to 30% in the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the State of Palestine Institutions and in Tunisia where a gender related article was integrated into the draft budget organic law - article 17 -, opening the doors to the adoption of gender-responsive national budgeting.

1.4.3.2 Citizenship, Leadership and Participation: New Pathways for Arab Women

The Citizenship, Leadership and Participation Programme , funded by the Government of Finland through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland (2,000,000 Euro), is a three-and-a-half-year programme (2012-2016) whose overall development goal is to increase women's leadership, participation and inclusion of a gender equality perspective to the transitional political processes in the Arab States region. The programme is a funding mechanism to seek entry points to advance women's political and decision-making roles in 'countries in transition', while it also has a technical knowledge hub to provide regional knowledge. The main outcome is 'a women's rights and gender responsive agenda is reflected in constitutional, legal and institutional frameworks', with outputs focused on the capacity of governing bodies, political parties and civil society to engage in WPP and peace and security.

In the first two years, the programme focused its activities in Morocco, and in countries experiencing unrest such as Iraq, Syria (through work conducted in Jordan). In its last year of implementation, the programme was able to carry out activities on Algeria and Yemen.

To advance the normative agenda, the programme collaborates with a wide range of stakeholders to establish sustainable mechanisms to advance a women's rights and gender equality legislative and policy agenda in the region, including the establishment of women's cross-party parliamentarian caucuses in both Algeria and Iraq. In Morocco, the programme contributed to the introduction of a 27% quota of seats for women in the municipal and regional councils in the framework of the local elections, held in September 2015.

Supporting **co-ordination**, at regional level, the programme has established partnerships with UNDP for the development of knowledge products for the Arab region. The Programme has contributed to the development of an online legal database, Qawaninha, compiling laws related to the status of women in twenty countries of the region. It has provided a technical knowledge hub that focuses on the collation and dissemination of experiences and lessons learned under the initiative. Collaboration also included notably the League of Arab States, and the Centre for Arab Women for Training and Research.

Operationally, the programme delivers technical support and expertise on WPP and facilitates south-south exchanges with the aim to strengthen the capacity of governing bodies to develop and implement gender responsive policies and legislation, and support a normative framework aimed at strengthening a women's rights and gender perspective in constitutional, legal and institutional frameworks. Activities have included data collection and the development of knowledge products aimed at supporting WPP, compiling lessons learned and good practices in WPP in legislative bodies, and capacity-building through co-ordination actions aimed at cross-country stakeholder engagement. In Iraq and Morocco, the emphasis is on capacity development of female parliamentarians, political candidates and women policy-makers and leaders at the national and local levels. In Morocco, the programme has also supported the establishment of General Directorate of Local Governments (GDLG-Ministry of Interior) Gender Unit (GU) to mainstream gender equality in public policies for the promotion of women's access to leadership and decision-making, as well as a range of activities aiming to prepare local communities for the September 2015 elections (for example; awareness raising and advocacy for the promotion of women's political representation at local elections; action-oriented research to identify barriers in the voting system and the electoral division; capacity building of women for transformational leadership; advocacy of policy makers; including political parties and unions to adopt a gender approach in temporary special measures to promote women's political participation at local levels). The programme has also helped create platforms to ensure that women's voices are heard by decision-makers and that the priorities and demands of women are included in peace and security processes, for Syria and Yemen by bringing together women to articulate their demands, as well as the regional "We are Here" campaign, an advocacy tool to press stakeholders in the region to advance gender equality in leadership and participation.

1.4.3.3 Additional Activities

Additional **normative** activities include ROAS support for the League of Arab States for its regional WPS strategy, coordinating the Beijing +20 review process, and support for a shadow process for Beijing +20.

UN Women has also **coordinated** efforts with UNDP to support increased women's political participation in electoral processes in through a gender assessment of the Election Management Body (EMB) in Lebanon, and the organization and facilitation of BRIDGE workshops in Egypt and Lebanon to ensure that gender is mainstreamed throughout the entire election cycle. UN Women has also provided workshops on gender and gender mainstreaming in elections to UNCT members.

Additional **operational** activities include UN Women support to mechanisms to help governments implement international frameworks. This has included support to the launch and operationalization of the National Women's Parliamentarian Caucuses in Algeria and Iraq and the institutionalization / strengthening of women's empowerments unit and gender units, regional and national convenings and capacity development of government and civil society stakeholders.

1.5   Approach and Methodology

As a *formative* process, the WPP Evaluation focused on assessing how well WPP has proceeded to date (2013-2015), with a particular focus on means for improving performance under the current ROAS Strategy Note for 2014-2017, thereafter updated for 2015-2017.

Human Rights and Gender Equality principles have been integrated throughout the entire evaluation process. Each phase of the evaluation has been developed to include human rights and gender responsive features. Stakeholders' identification has been designed and conducted including human rights role analysis. The stakeholder analysis was used to ensure that the voices and perspectives of a wide range of duty bearers and rights holders were included in the evaluation both in terms of informing the evaluation and in validation of the findings.   A review of UN Women documentation on gender equality and women's empowerment, UN documentation on human rights and human rights-based approaches to development, relevant normative frameworks, and UN and OECD definitions was also conducted. These are included in the 'list of documents' consulted at the end of this report. Questions regarding the extent to which gender equality and a human rights based approach have been integrated into WPP programming as well as progress towards results on gender equality and the empowerment of women have also been included under the three evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency and effectiveness in the TOR as well as the data collection tools.

The UN Women Evaluation Policy was consulted and employed to ensure compliance during the evaluation (see UN Women 2012, but also the Evaluation Strategy, 2013c, and Implementation Plan, 2013d). United Nations Evaluation Group Ethical Norms as well as the Standards were reviewed at the start of the evaluation (UNEG, 2011).

To ensure that the evaluation approach and report were consistent with UN Women global standards, the consultants reviewed the 'Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System' (GERAAS). GERAAS was designed to consider the quality of evaluation reports. The 'quality assessment checklist' was reviewed on multiple occasions during report preparation to ensure that, as possible considering limitations of the evaluation, considerations incorporated into the evaluation report. More detail is provided in Annex G.

Ethical protocols were employed for interviews, with information kept confidential, with the right of refusal to answer questions, and the right to end an interview at any time. In the write-up, care was taken to not refer to specific individuals. Care was taken to ensure that interviews were held with a range of actors, and not just implementing partners and senior officials. The content of interviews included discussions of underlying factors that can disadvantage one group compared to another in the political arena, which throughout the region tended to undermine the ability of women to engage in politics. A gender equality approach to WPP aims to reduce conflict between women and men by

moving past the notion that politics is a zero sum game, and that political accountability is a shared objective. It also aims to challenge the particular problems facing women in the political arena. For example, quotas for women in political parties and in parliament is a temporary measure aimed at overcoming the problem of a lack of women in the political sphere, while having women and men engaged in politics helps to support a balance on priorities that benefit women, men, families and communities.

To further enhance the utility of the evaluation, primary intended users and uses have been identified (see Inception Report for more information). Primary intended users include UN Women Senior Management and programme staff working on WPP at regional and country level, as well as donors and other regional actors working in the area of Women's Political Participation (WPP). The evaluation process has been designed to maximise utilization by these primary intended users, while adhering to the human rights principles of participation, non-discrimination and accountability.

As specified in the TOR (page 17), the evaluation had three levels of analysis and validation of information. Level 1 has started with a desk review of information sources on ROAS WPP work including annual reports, donor report, programme documents, existing portfolio analyses of political participation programming, and monitoring reports. Level 2 has involved more in-depth analysis in all of the countries where ROAS has conducted work on WPP. The analysis has been primarily based on a document review and supplemented with additional skype interviews with the key stakeholders. Level 3 has involved field visits to 2 countries and has included an off-site Case Study and deployed a number of evaluation methods, comprising a review of the extensive literature available at country and regional levels, and primary data collection through skype interviews, one-on-one interviews, and focus group discussions. A comparative analysis has been applied to compare and analyse data from levels 2 and 3 to identify, if possible, necessary characteristics and factors for the progress towards results to occur.

The evaluation went through the following phases:

Inception

- Literature review of documents provided by ROAS, materials relevant to the evaluation within the UN system, WPP materials, relevant normative frameworks.
- Theory of Change (ToC) and Outcome Mapping.
- Stakeholder mapping and, thereafter, identification of key stakeholders for interview jointly with the country offices.
- Development of interview protocols (key informant interview guide and focus group discussion guide).
- Preparation of an Inception Report.

Data Collection and Analysis

- In-country key informant interviews and focus group discussions for case studies in Palestine (West Bank -- as well as skype interviews with Gaza) and Morocco.
- Off-site key informant interviews for a case study of Libya.
- Outcome mapping of results of interviews and materials review of case study countries.
- Skype interviews with key informants in Algeria, Iraq, Tunisia and Yemen and at regional level.
- WPP thematic analysis and write-up via the materials review noted above, interviews with ROAS, interview(s) with a regional organisation involved in the programme area, and the results of the three case studies.

Synthesis and Reporting Phase

- Preparation of the case study reports (draft, revised draft, final) for Libya, Morocco and Palestine.
- Preparation of a PowerPoint presentation summarising the evaluation process and findings (draft, revised draft, final).
- Preparation of the main evaluation report.
- Review of the report by the Evaluation Reference Group, including members from the three country offices.
- Evaluation brief.

Dissemination, communication and facilitation of use of evaluation

- UN Women follow-up based on the management response (managed by ROAS).
- UN Women dissemination of WPP evaluation through a webinar (managed by ROAS) and an evaluation brief.

Theory of Change and Outcome Mapping

The Theory of Change (ToC) essentially comprises a series of hypotheses that are linked at 'goal' level and, at a lower level, between outputs and outcomes comprising a series of sub-hypotheses. The analysis of the ToC underpinning ROAS' efforts in the area of WPP has led to the identification of the following main elements[10]:

> "If (1) structural barriers are weakened enhancing women's civic engagement, representation, leadership and mediation; if (2) a cadre of interested and competent women leaders, decision-makers, and mediators is formed; if (3) women are perceived equal partners in politics, decision-making and mediation; and if (4) women are supported in different institutions and by local communities, then (5) women will be politically empowered and realise their rights, because (6) women will be perceived as equal partners".

For Outcome Mapping, a specific table was prepared where evidence to inform the desired outcomes included in the ToC and associated with WPP actions financed and supported by UN Women was included. The table was constructed around the Theory of Change (ToC) for the ROAS WPP thematic area, issued in its current form in 2016, but in draft versions prior to that time. Two columns are provided, the first indicating the ToC elements, and a second column specifying sources employed to track the match between the ToC elements and the reporting itself. This helped to guide the elaboration of findings in the main report to ensure that this helped inform the ToC[11].

Table 1: Outcome Mapping

Theory of Change	Sources and Resources and Limitations
'If (1) structural barriers are weakened enhancing women's civic engagement, representation, leadership and mediation; if (2) a cadre of interested and competent women leaders, decision-makers, and mediators is formed; if (3) women are perceived equal partners in politics, decision-making and mediation; and if (4) women are supported in different institutions and by local communities, then (5) women will be politically empowered and realise their rights, because (6) women will be perceived as equal partners".	
Structural barriers - If (1) women's active civil engagement, representation and leadership are enabled through legal and policy frameworks then (2) women percentage as voters, candidates, representatives in	Field interviews and FGDs conducted in Palestine and Morocco. Skype interviews with Libya.

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[10] More detail is provided in Annex E.

[11] It should be noted that the WPP evaluation did *not* evaluate the ToC itself, nor did it specifically strive to evidence the ToCs are increasingly being evidenced, rather than just being used during design, and this would be an important activity for ROAS to engage in as implementation proceeds.

Theory of Change	Sources and Resources and Limitations
political and governmental structures increases because (3) a more level playing field exists.	Skype interviews with key informants in Iraq, Algeria and Yemen. Secondary materials reviewed and processed prior to fieldwork.
Cadre is formed - If (1) women are technically and personally empowered to take up roles in public and political spheres, then (2) more women will run/be nominated to political and governmental structures because (3) sufficient number of competent women exist.	Field interviews and FGDs conducted in Palestine and Morocco. Skype interviews with Libya. Skype interviews with key informants in Iraq, Algeria and Yemen. Secondary materials reviewed and processed prior to fieldwork.
Equal partners - If (1) entrenched gender stereotypes are altered leveraging gender equality and women's empowerment, (2) local communities will support women public and political engagement and representation because (3) women are accepted as equal partners in public and political spheres.	Field interviews and FGDs conducted in Palestine and Morocco. Skype interviews with Libya. Skype interviews with key informants in Iraq, Algeria and Yemen. Programme literature on Spring Forward in particular, as well as other documentation from partners. Little additional literature available.
Women supported - If (1) women representatives, decision-makers and mediators are supported by local communities and institutions then (2) stakeholders' capacities to recognise women's needs and demands will increase because (3) women are equal partners.	Field interviews and FGDs conducted in Palestine and Morocco. Skype interviews with Libya. Skype interviews with key informants in Iraq, Algeria and Yemen. Available results reporting for programmes.

Literature Review

A drop-box was set up by ROAS for the evaluation, and populated with a wide range of materials relevant to WPP in the region, including regional documentation and country specific materials. Team assembled materials were also shared, and reviewed by all the team members. Each document reviewed was marked up for two purposes: 1) to inform responses to research questions; and 2) to identify issues for consideration in the field. As per the TOR, this covered what was referred to as Level 1, which comprised a desk review of ROAS WPP and women's engagement in peace and security efforts documentation, annual reports, country level documentation, donor documents, programme documentation, results monitoring materials, special reports and others. This was followed by more in-depth review of documents specific to case study countries.

Stakeholder Analysis

For the WPP thematic evaluation, and consistent with a human rights approach to evaluation, the stakeholder mapping was conducted and stakeholders relevant to the evaluation identified. The matrix considered who, what, why, when, how and prioritisation, covering duty-bearers who have primary decision-making authority over a programme, duty-bearers who have direct responsibility for programme implementation, other (secondary) duty-bearers, rights-holders reached by the programme, and other interest groups who are familiar with the programme area.

For the field and Skype interviews in the three case study countries, the team made contact with UN Women staff members responsible for WPP in each country, with back-and-forth communications on who should be interviewed and why. The stakeholder mapping which informed the selection of field interviewees is summarised in the following table:

Table 2: Stakeholders Analysis

Human Rights Role	Social groups (stakeholders)	Representative for the purposes of the evaluation
Principal Duty Bearers (who have the authority to make decisions related to WPP)	1. National governments 2. National parliaments 3. "Special Bodies", i.e. transitional organisations, Commissions, Crisis Management Groups etc.	1. National women machineries at national level 2. Parliamentary Committees 3. Ministries Representatives
Primary Duty Bearers (individuals and organizations with immediate direct responsibility)	4. Citizens Organisations on WPP 5. Implementing partners 6. UN Women management and staff at regional level 7. UN Women management staff at country level 8. Other UN agencies and staff	4. UN Women Regional, Country and Multi country offices 5. UN agencies such as UNDP 6. Implementing partners
Secondary duty bearers (non state or supra state institutions with indirect involvement in the lives of right holders)	10. Print media 11. Television and radio 12. Social media 13. Development partners	8. European Union 9. League of Arab States 10. UNDP Regional Office
Right Holders	12. Women politicians 13. Women in political parties and other organisations 14. Activists in government, in civil society, and in society at large (women and men) 15. Voters and citizens (women and men)	11. Community-based organisations and NGOs 12. Activists 13. Voters and citizens 14. Marginalised and disadvantaged groups

This stakeholder analysis was then considered in terms of who to interview about which issues, organised into the following table:

Table 3: Targeted Groups for Interview

Targets	Evaluation Criteria	Key Evaluation Issues
ROAS, Country Offices	1) Relevance	**Design**: alignment up to global level within UN Women; alignment with international frameworks and standards; alignment within the region; identification of entry points and value added; selection among alternatives and rationale; resources to define the problem and entry points and role of different interests in influencing decisions; support for country level programme design; ferreting out opportunities and running with them; accommodating the unexpected. **Logframe and DRF**: Development of outputs and outcomes, specification of indicators. **Conceptual:** Hypotheses in the ToC and use during design; use of evidence, influence of evidence; statistics and sex-disaggregated data and how it was considered to affect programming and policy-making; gender norms and challenges in this regard; **Operational:** regional 'hub' and links between global and region/ country. **Programme Design:** Specific discussion of Spring Forward, Citizen Leadership and Participation, and WPP elements of Women for Women and Men for Women.
ROAS, Country Offices, Implementing partners and Donor	1) Relevance 2) Efficiency (operational issues, normative functioning, co-ordination efficacy)	**Implementation:** Operational alignment (as it works through AWPs and monitoring); programme support for country level programme implementation; results-based management and results monitoring; logframe planning and tracking implementation; specific issues around ROAS and multi-country offices, country offices, and non-country presence; relevant 'fit' into how human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment programming has taken place in the region and where to push this agenda; clarify on strategic planning processes and products and confusion over overlap; reporting burdens across different financing agencies and effects of UN Women programming in this regard; accommodating the unexpected and effects on programming; response to opportunities arising **Logframe and DRF:** tracking indicators; results monitoring; updating indicators during implementation and adaptability; consistency and inconsistency and related to this clarity; discussion at outcome level and implementation efficacy; establish the critical roles, if any, played by UN Women; review output clusters;

		operational support to country offices (surge capacity, remote technical assistance, Iraq transitional support); **Conceptual:** Testing hypotheses in the ToC and use during implementation; how tracked, how tested, and how ToC adapted/will be adapted; use of evidence, influence of evidence; statistics and sex-disaggregated data and how it has affected programming and policy-making, extent of 'buy in' and understanding of value; gender norms and challenges in this regard; **System functioning:** system management, issues around effective liaison, technical support, etc. **Programmatic:** Specific discussion of Spring Forward, Citizen Leadership and Participation, and WPP elements of Women for Women and Men for Women. Programme deliverables, quality, use.
Duty-bearers that know UN Women's work in WPP (non-implementing agencies)	1) Effectiveness 2) Relevance	**Design:** WPP problem identification and engagement in problem identification; identification of entry points and value added; selection among alternatives and rationale. **Results:** knowledge; knowledge products and use; contextualise UN Women in WPP programming; **Implementing Environment:** understanding of human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment; conceptual confusion re: gender vs. women; relevant 'fit' into how human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment programming has taken place in the region and where to push this agenda; relative 'fit' within how policymaking and related processes work in region and countries;
ROAS, Country Offices, Donors, Implementing partners	1) Efficiency 2) Effectiveness	**Design:** WPP problem identification and engagement in problem identification; identification of entry points and value added; selection among alternatives and rationale. **Results:** knowledge; knowledge products and use; contextualise UN Women in WPP programming; evaluation support and evaluations; **Implementing Environment:** understanding of human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment and valuation; conceptual confusion re: gender vs. women; relevant 'fit' into how human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment programming has taken place in the region and where to push this agenda; relative 'fit' within how policymaking and related processes work in region and countries.
Target groups reached by UN Women	1) Effectiveness 2) Relevance	**Design**: engagement with target groups (e.g., parliamentarians, other legislators, policy makers, women's organisations, political parties, local authorities, community-based organisations, local activists), with particular reference to those who are least likely to be engaged in political processes. **Results:** what has resulted due to WPP, relevant to each organisation/grouping. **Implementing Environment:** assessment by target groups of how relevant and effective the process of engagement has been.

Interview Protocols

To guide fieldwork, two tools were prepared: 1) a key informant interview guide for one-on-one interviews; and 2) a focus group discussion guide for group interviews. This gave sufficient flexibility during field implementation to engage with individuals and with groups, with the latter emphasising group members building on the responses of others. These tools covered the range of issues to be considered in the evaluation, and were not meant to be implemented as questionnaires. Instead, interviewers followed relevant themes for different interviewees, as per the above table, and administered the tools as relevant for the interviews. Both included specific questions about gender equality and human rights.

Case Studies: Palestine, Morocco and Libya

Country visits were undertaken to Palestine and Morocco as part of the Level 3 analysis in the TOR.

For Palestine, data collection included a desk review of relevant documents and a four-day data collection visit to Palestine (CO in Jerusalem and West Bank – excluding Gaza which was contacted via skype). The list of interviewees by organisation was shared by the UN Women Country Office for Palestine prior to the field visit, and revised and finalised based on discussions with the evaluators.

The data collection mission took place from 11-15 April, 2016. In total 46 people were consulted for this case study, of which 39 were women and 7 were men. The list of those interviewed is included in the Annex H.

For Morocco, data collection included a desk review of relevant documents and a five-day data collection visit to Rabat and environs by the evaluator. The list of interviewees by organisation was shared by the UN Women MCO in Rabat, led by the Programme Co-ordinator for the Citizenship, Leadership, and Participation Programme. Additional interviewees were identified from a review of documents prior to arrival in Morocco, and final interviewees were identified during fieldwork. Fieldwork comprised interviews with UN Women MCO, and one-on-one and group interviews with partner agencies and other stakeholders. Additional secondary materials were also collected during this time. Supplementary Skype calls were made after the evaluator's return from Morocco, to follow-up on some information gaps and to interview those actors not present during the time of the fieldwork. In total 28 people were consulted for this case study, of which 21 were women and 7 were men. The list of those interviewed are included in the Annex H.

The Libyan case study was carried out off-site, due to security considerations and consequent restrictions on travel. The case study involved i) the review of programme and country specific documents provided by UN Women (ROAS) and the ii) conducting off-site interviews with a selected number of stakeholders in Libya and ROAS in Egypt relevant to the Libyan operations and iii) follow-up review of materials. Interviews were conducted via Skype or phone between 25 April and 7 May 2016, with additional interviews completed in early July. In total 14 people were consulted for this case study, of which 13 were women and 1 was a man. A list of interviewees is included in Annex H.

Skype Interviews in Additional Countries and the Region

Skype interviews were conducted with two ROAS staff members, the League of Arab States, UN Women staff members in Iraq, Yemen, Algeria and Tunisia, and other stakeholders in Yemen and Algeria and the region. In total 12 people (of which 11 women and one man) in additional countries within the Arab States Regional have been consulted. The full list of people interviewed is provided in Annex H.

In total 100 people have been consulted of which 84 were women and 16 men. The diagram below presents the overall picture of the stakeholders' consultation disaggregated by type of stakeholders and gender:

Figure 1: Number and Type of Stakeholders Consulted

Stakeholders' Consultation

	UN Staff	Government	Impl. Partners	Beneficiaries	Donor	Total
Women	20	16	8	39	1	84
Men	5	7	1	3	0	16

■ Men ■ Women
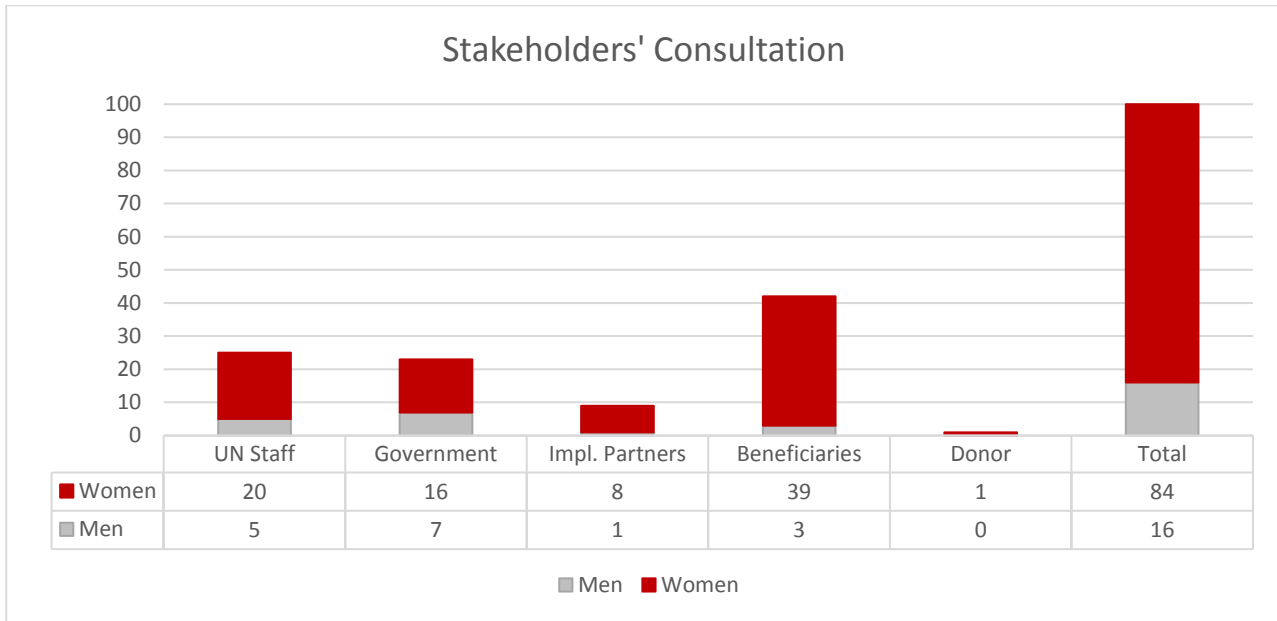
Limitations

Financial and time constraints meant that three countries were selected for more in-depth case study work, of which two could be visited (Libya could not be visited due to security concerns). In addition, no provision was made to visit ROAS itself in Cairo and conduct on-site interviews.

The two country visits were quite short, but a wide range of actors were nevertheless met. Gaps were also in part overcome by interviews in other countries and at regional level via skype. For Skype interviews, some of those who were reached for interview were non-responsive, and in the end additional follow-up interviews were conducted in July. A few interviewees remained unavailable. For the Libyan case study, 14 of the 23 interviewees were completed, with the remaining 9, including the Chief of the Women's Empowerment Section in UNSMIL, not interviewed due to the non-availability or non-responsiveness and in some cases technical difficulties in communications.

There were limitations associated with results monitoring, where results were not clearly reported (with the focus rather on activities and outputs, rather than how these outputs are used), with confusing document naming conventions, and with limitations in documentation itself and document availability. These limitations facing the evaluation have been noted as limitations facing implementation, and recommendations made accordingly.

1.6   Concluding Comment

In addition to the main evaluation questions in the TOR, the evaluation questions were further broken down during the inception phase to ensure that the evaluation followed Human Rights and Gender Equality (HR&GE) principles, and so that the evaluation was conducted in a manner consistent with the Global Evaluation Report Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS) protocols (see Annex D for an assessment of the evaluation against GERAAS criteria). These questions, when combined with the above, were then used to raise questions about relevance in the fieldwork, and in the review of secondary materials. The questions took care to cover both the normative and operational aspects of programming, and co-ordination. These sub-questions are included in Annex C.

2   FINDINGS BY EVALUATION CRITERIA

2.1   Introduction

In this section the findings from the thematic evaluation are presented by evaluation criteria, covering Relevance, Efficiency, and Effectiveness. For each, sub-evaluation criteria are covered based on the research questions. Each considers evidence from the regional programming in WPP, as well as country-specific evidence available from the case studies in Morocco, Palestine and Libya and document review and virtual interviews with a select number of non-case study countries in the region.

2.2   Relevance

"Relevance provides information about the relationship of the most important GE and HR issues present in the situation to the objectives of the intervention. It should also assess whether the programme design was guided by international Conventions, principles and protocols (e.g., CEDAW, United Nations Declaration on Human Rights) and whether it followed adequate GE and HR analysis" (UN Women, n.d: website).

The specific evaluation questions for relevance included in the Terms of Reference were as follows:

- To what extent is UN Women strategically positioned to enhance WPP at national and regional levels?
- To what extent does UN Women's approach complement and add value to that of its key partners?
- Has UN Women been able to generate a process to strengthen women leadership supporting women's strategic interests and promoting sustainable progress on WPP? Which strategies should be implemented to reinforce this?
- To what extent has UN Women ROAS established a relevant, realistic, strategic, innovative and clear approach (covering normative, operational and co-ordination roles) for its work in support of women's political participation?
- To what extent do the WPP activities undertaken by UN Women address the underlying causes of inequality and discrimination?
- To what extent is UN Women's work aligned with other agencies globally recognised concepts and objectives such as promoting parity and transformational leadership?
- How can UN Women's approach to WPP be enhanced to better contribute to current development priorities such [as] they post-2015 development framework and Beijing +20 discussions?

The paragraphs in the following pages describe the evaluation main findings related to relevance.

Finding 1 - Strategic Position and Value Added: The presence of ROAS has filled an important gap in WPP, helping to bring resources and provide backstopping support that complements and adds value to partners, but there are significant challenges remaining.

The UN Women ROAS' Development Results Framework for 2014-2017 included Outcome 1.1 focused on constitutions, legal frameworks, and policies to advance women's rights to participate in decision-making[12]. A review of available materials and questions to interviewees considered whether UN Women was strategically placed to strengthen women's political participation in the region and at national level. This was considered in terms of advancing towards achievement of Outcome 1.1,

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[12]Impact, outcome, and outputs are included in Annex F.

adaptability to changing circumstances (including conflict and post-conflict situations), alignment with international protocols, alignment with human rights programming approaches, and the ability to set into motion processes that supported alignment at national level.

Interviews at regional level and at country level yielded mixed responses, and documentation that would help in assessing UN Women's role in this regard is inadequate (see below). What has emerged from the available information is summarised as follows:

- *Perceptions of UN Women ROAS Roles and Services:* The interviewees within UN Women and in partner agencies felt that there were aspects of UN Women's operations that would have been difficult to do without UN Women's regional presence. Highly valued among these interviewees was the convening function played by UN Women, bringing together key actors in WPP from across the region, securing financing for regional programming, providing technical support to country offices and bringing a broader perspective, and helping to keep countries that might be neglected due to the shifting of finance to the Syrian crisis 'on the map'.

> ROAS has filled a key gap in WPP in the region, relevant for both region wide activities and support to country offices.

- *UN Women ROAS Role in Pushing WPP Agenda in the Region:* Those key informants asked about ROAS and its role in advancing WPP at a regional level suggested that getting WPP onto the agenda had been enabled by ROAS presence and programme/projects. In the absence of a regional office, some key informants argued that the critical role of changing the discussion at a regional level with senior political authorities in advancing WPP would be a great deal more difficult. Other agencies in the UN system were considered to have less of a normative focus on WPP, and less influence within the UN system on advancing WPP. Countries were also noted to have been more responsive to adopting CEDAW without reservations, and that regional actions in this regard were key. In these respects, the Regional Office filled a critical gap in advancing WPP actions in the region.

- *Perceptions About ROAS Technical Services:* Technical support from the Regional Office (directly, through a full-time technical advisor, as well as staff and consultants) was highly valued at the regional level and in Palestine, Libya and Iraq and to a limited extent Yemen. There was some confusion about how one could call upon direct support from the Regional Office. Programme support from the region in Palestine was mentioned as key to policy development, legal reform (family law was specifically mentioned), changes in WPP in Parliament, and in changes in WPP in political parties. Some of the partner key informants in Palestine felt that the regional office helped to keep international frameworks and standards on the agenda, holding for both 1325 and CEDAW, a point also noted by a regional organisation, who stated that this was vital to political leaders taking WPP seriously in the region.

- *Perceptions of UN Women ROAS Strategic Role in Conflict Situations:* While evidence is limited, the strategic role of the Regional Office in situations of conflict was mixed. The reliance on one partner in Libya, for example, was felt to have limited what was being accomplished. The question was raised as to whether alternative mechanisms could have been used. In Yemen, the presence of an active UN Women staff member in a nascent office engaged in extensive consultations appears to have built a coalition around effective WPP in a very uncertain environment, with support from the Regional Office. In Iraq, the office has been relying on ROAS' support in developing the Iraqi programme, in particular with the restructuring of the offices in Baghdad. In Palestine, it has proven difficult for UN Women to engage in WPP in Gaza, but it appears to have

correctly identified viable entry points for small actions around the press and community activism, linked to continued conflict and reconstruction. There is, however, no way to establish whether this is having any impact, and results reports do not describe clear results from activities in Gaza.

- *Perceptions of UN Women ROAS Role in Pushing Forward UNSC Resolutions:* What was regularly mentioned was the importance of the Regional Office's efforts to advance Security Council Resolution 1325, passed in 2000 and focused on gender responsiveness and women's engagement in United Nations peacekeeping and security efforts[13]. This was mentioned in Libya and Yemen, and in both cases was considered to be key to an effective WPP response, while UN Women's support to the development of the 1325 is also mentioned in the National Action Plan in Iraq (also confirmed by the interview with the KII in Iraq). To help advance this objective, three approaches were employed: 1) deploying ROAS technical expertise to support women in building solidarity, trust and skills to better engage in political and transactional processes (the Libyan Women Minimum Agenda for Peace conference is one example); 2) lobbying for engendering the political and transitional processes (the Women's Track within the Political Dialogue in Libya example); and 3) convening activities intended to align women's perspectives and voices to enhance their influence in the political arena (here again the Libyan Women Minimum Agenda for Peace conference is an example).

Finding 2 - Alignment Globally: UN Women has focused regional and national attention to global normative frameworks in a manner that shows progress across the region, in the face of considerable challenges.

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA, 2016) reviewed the status of women's empowerment and gender equality twenty years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995). The report highlights a point also raised by a ROAS interviewee, that helping to build women's machineries in the region requires careful consideration of engagement with powerful families and clans to secure their important backing while recognising that capture is a possibility.

There was particular support for innovative activities that could offer useful lessons on what works and what does not. Frequently mentioned in this regard was the focus on building improved women's representation through party systems on local councils. However, there are numerous other opportunities for innovation in terms of knowledge management and information sharing, means of convening that bring together actors who would not normally interface, and women's involvement in peace and security.

Building broad-based coalitions were noted to be especially important in this respect, and in Yemen this has been a feature of the work. The report also noted that helping to build co-operation between national women's machineries and civil society organisations is central to a balanced strategy, and that historically this has proven to work best in countries where there is a long history of active women's movements and a substantial public presence. This is consistent with the case study findings for Palestine and Morocco, as well as Algeria and Tunisia, while the ESCWA report notes that the evidence suggests that this applies for Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Algeria and Palestine.

The magnitude of the challenges facing WPP in the Arab Region is considerable. ROAS documentation reflects an important understanding of the changing dynamics arising from changes in the political environment. For example, the 2015-2017 Strategic Note (UN Women ROAS, 2015: 3) noted that "the aspirations of Arab States women to participate fully in the shaping of their

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[13] http://www.un.org/ womenwatch/osagi/wps/.

countries have also largely been a disappointment. While women have been active to call and act on change next to their male counterparts, this has not translated in representation or participation in decision-making bodies". A number of key informants in Palestine mentioned just this point, and noted that their support for the movement leading to the Oslo Accords did not translate into advancement in terms of WPP as per expectations. One ROAS key informant elaborated that while there have been women's movements in the region for many years, the changes that emerged from the Arab Spring rarely translated into greater access to decision-making processes.

Instead, it has taken many years to effect even modest change, with much remaining to be done. In terms of relevance, this means that decisions around what to finance and what to prioritise made by UN Women on WPP present considerable opportunity costs. Financing established partners means spending less on structured advocacy with a range of political actors, and challenges the notion that UN Women ROAS has been strategic in its approach in this regard. It further questions the relevance of challenging discrimination through such means, and whether its innovative activities around high level advocacy work and local programming are weakened by insufficient funds and insufficient focus.

> A focus on advocacy was noted as important by a number of key informants during the evaluation. While advocacy often had specific purposes associated with policy advances, alignment with international frameworks, expanding women's representation in political institutions, and similar, advocacy was also noted as more general, working on relationships with key decision-makers and networking with key actors that encouraged policy advances. This is time-consuming, but was felt to be central to supporting an enabling environment for specific WPP initiatives.

UN Women ROAS alignment with UN Women at global level was evident in the planning documents, and further evident at country level documentation examined for the evaluation. This worked its way through workplans and in the results reports (for those who reported activities in the results reports). Unfortunately, documentation was not always clear, and linkages between documents were not always immediate. For example, the 2014-2017 Strategic Plan and the 2015-2017 Strategic Plan, in particular when compared to other work planning documents, were inconsistent across indicators and what information was being tracked. This occurred at a level *below* the global UN Women plans, and in some cases it appeared that later documents were improvements to the earlier ones in terms of viable actions and realistic indicators. But it is worth noting that the actions on the ground did not always clearly align with broader intents, and that meant a lack of clarity on how alignment with global norms affected actual implementation.

A careful review of WPP documents offered important insights into the strategic role of the Regional Office in strengthening commitment to global normative standards, in particular the internal Annual Reports. Well-constructed narratives in the Annual Reports pointed out how the Regional Office processed and reflected on its actions and what was going on in the region, including how the Regional Office was trying to understand the evolving political economy of the region and what this meant for WPP (UN Women ROAS 2013, 2014a and 2015c). What was less evident was how results evidence from the region was making its way into Regional Office documentation, including in the results monitoring reports themselves (UN Women ROAS, 2015a). Much of what was included in results reporting was not actually discussing results, and instead focused on activities supported, trends, and changes in the area of WPP nationally. Evidence of attribution was largely absent. This is a particular weakness in WPP, and undermines the Regional Office's strategic position.

Transformation leadership, defined as initiating a process for or making changes to how partners/stakeholders address WPP and how their operating context and actions have been

improved, was not easy to assess. In part this could be due to it is a process which require more time, as one key informant from ROAS noted. Nevertheless, a strong potential in this sense has been perceived and there is already early evidence from Palestine that a focus on transformational leadership may help effect change. In considering the issue of the extent of UN Women's work aligning with partner agencies and a focus on parity and transformational leadership, alignment would appear to be consistent with how women leaders view actions to effect change. Indeed, this particular point of alignment with national needs, as far as these activists were concerned, was a key strength of UN Women's programming. Considering UN Women's role in strengthening processes around transformational leadership and progress towards WPP, one key informant from UN Women's Country Office highlighted the importance of this transformational leadership, noting that this helped 'build the foundation for activism for improving the situation of women in Palestine'. Others noted that one aspect that stood out was actions associated with female local council members and what that implied for priorities, and for changing attitudes within councils and communities. In addition to the supported offered by UN Women to local councils, the German agency GIZ is implementing a local council strengthening programme across 36 councils that may serve as an important partner for UN Women's actions in this regard, with WPP being specifically supported.

Finding 3 - Coherence and Value Added: Overall findings suggest that ROAS is well positioned to add value to WPP in the region, and has already done so, and that it fills two critical gaps: 1) adding an element of coherence in WPP throughout the region (even in countries in conflict); and 2) offering relevant support to country offices.

One consistent finding was a sense among partners that UN Women had listened to their needs and endeavoured to respond, central to a process focused on the rights of actors involved in WPP. This included the majority of partner interviews in Palestine and Morocco, and was also mentioned for Yemen. For Morocco, the case study found that national partners were extensively involved in defining the specific nature of the Citizenship, Leadership and Participation Programme, with the development and implementation of action plans, regular engagement between partners and the Programme Co-ordinator, and regularly engagement. Secondary materials and discussions with ROAS and in Skype interviews also point out similar patterns in Tunisia, Algeria Jordan and Lebanon[14], as well as at a regional level. The lack of other donors specifically and actively engaged in WPP, in particular at a regional level, was raised by a number of partner agencies. Bilateral agencies did have country-level programmes, but UN Women was considered to have brought more attention to the issues around WPP.

Advocates operating at a regional level were especially positive in this regard, and felt that UN Women has been effective in helping them to make proper use of the international frameworks and standards to pressure governments to take appropriate actions. This was felt to be especially important in an environment where, as UN Women itself put it, both international pressures and leadership in the region tended to result in considered efforts to 'control' what was regarded as a foreign concept, i.e. feminism (UN Women ROAS, 2014).

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[14] In some respects, these observations are drawn from UN Women documentation, and materials independent of UN Women were uncommon. Nevertheless, the findings were consistent with what was found from the fieldwork, and were well reasoned in the written materials. This includes the three Annual Reports for 2013, 2014, and 2015, reports on consultations such as the consultative report for Algerian members of parliament, and available Spring Forward memos and reports. As will be discussed later, the absence of systematic results monitoring and the nascent state of the knowledge hub undermine the ability to assess programming from results reports and independent sources.

UN Women had also been largely successful in avoiding the possibility to interfere in politics by differentiating approaches between strengthening the political process overall for WPP, and direct engagement in decisions that were considered to be political. This was pointed out by two senior level UN Women key informants in Palestine and by a UN Women key informant in Yemen, underlining the importance, in situations of uncertainty and political tensions, of being seen to not be involved in politics itself. A normative approach that pursued efforts to align with international frameworks and standards was felt to have been effective in avoiding a number of challenges in this respect.

While effective listening strengthened alignment with partner expectations, it did raise questions about the value added of some of these actions. This tended *not* to be an issue at high level WPP, that is, in terms of parliamentary quotas, CEDAW, etc., but was rather a challenge at a more operational level. In discussions with partners in Palestine, there were numerous concerns raised about the sustainability of WPP activities without UN Women financing, and the wisdom of UN Women acting as a donor in this regard. This was less the case in Morocco and Algeria, because of stronger machinery, and would likely be similar in countries with similar strengths. But for most countries, including those with less stable political environments, the Palestine example likely applies [15]. The relevance of such support is therefore of concern.

> An important contribution of ROAS has been the strengthening of the coherence of WPP overall. This applies for alignment upwards to global frameworks, and across countries in the region through regional programming and regional convening, south-south and similar actions. What has also emerged is an increasingly importance in this regard for the involvement of women in peace and security in countries affected by conflict.

Finding 4 - Underlying causes of inequality and discrimination: the challenges of gender discrimination in the Arab Region are highlighted in ROAS documentation, however the focus on women's empowerment has not been sufficiently balanced with gender equality to counter a perception that gender is about women alone. Further, the focus on WPP in terms of programmes with an on-the-ground presence has not been implemented in a fashion consistent with a focus on inequality.

The ROAS focus on normative frameworks was noted to be highly valued in the case study countries of Morocco and Palestine, and was specifically raised in interviews as well in Tunisia, Algeria, by regional interviewees and with the League of Arab States. In the two case studies, both UN Women country offices and partners mentioned the key role that UN Women had played in this regard. This included CEDAW reporting in Palestine and the focus in Morocco on policy advancement based on international conventions. For the region, UN Women's role in advancing the normative framework across the region including 1325 and CEDAW was felt to be central to the ability of the League to make advances on the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda. In these respects, the approaches to engagement with various actors adopted by ROAS were relevance for normative advancement. Further, the approach to engagement was consistent with a human rights approach, effectively engaging with partners and ensuring that voices were heard, and building on a commitment to the right to self-expression.

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[15] A full review of available documents found little evidence of consideration of this issue for other countries, therefore the findings are reliant on the case studies for Palestine and Morocco, and on the discussion of programme actions contained in results reports for Palestine.

What is less evident is the extent to which mechanisms to ensure effective engagement with target groups were extended to local populations. Programmatic approaches, including the Spring Forward Programme, did include consultations at community level in some cases, but the extent to which these consultations encouraged engagement with disadvantaged groups was less

> Women are disadvantaged overall in terms of political participation in the region, but there has been inadequate attention devoted to the situation facing disadvantaged groups.
>
> The magnitude of the challenge in terms of WPP in the region has reinforced an emphasis on women's empowerment that, while important, tends to weaken a focus on gender equality.

evident from documents reviewed. In discussions with local council members in Palestine, none mentioned the specific needs of poorer women, nor did they discuss how they engaged with less influential families and women. They did note that their experience was that they had different priorities than most of their male counterparts. Day care, street lighting, expansion of electricity, subsidies for basic needs, and similar were mentioned as examples. In addition, these Local Council members noted their efforts to meet with women and men in their communities on a regular basis to hear their needs. However, none mentioned issues around disadvantaged groups. Given that this entry point is recognised with the UN Women Country Office and among partner agencies as an important focus of their programming, the relevance of the approach would be enhanced by further attention to these issues.

While both legal and policy improvements and on-the-ground examples of women's involvement in decision-making process can be considered as substantial for advances in gender equality, one persistent problem was that gender equality is still commonly understood as synonymous with women's empowerment. While UN Women country offices in both Morocco and Palestine recognised the importance of advancing on both fronts, the programming approaches were not fully considered,

> At a regional level, UN Women in partnership with the League of Arab States co-ordinated the regional Beijing +20 review process. This collaboration results in the Arab Declaration on Beijing +20 in 2015 that included specific discussion of women in conflict situations and under occupation.

and instead tended to focus on ensuring that some WPP programming included men. In discussions with members of parliament and with UN Women staff in Palestine, and in terms of UN Women's involvement with women and transitioning to peace in Yemen, the involvement of males was largely associated with reducing male resistance to female advancement, rather than considering the negative implications of gender inequality for both women and men. The type of 'bridgehead' leadership found in the local council efforts in Palestine were important in terms of women's empowerment, but had made little headway in terms of gender equality.

Finding 5 - Alignment within the UN System and with Other Actors: UN Women is playing a critical role in a context where few other actors had focused attention. UN Women is investing efforts to influence programming of other actors to focus more attention on WPP, with mixed success and resource constraints. Transformation leadership was not well understood.

The issue of alignment between UN Women and other agencies' work in WPP, and the broader alignment with international norms around human rights and gender equality, was considered both in the review of materials and in interviews conducted. This included whether UN Women was able to support better alignment by these agencies with international standards and frameworks, and whether there was greater coherence in WPP programming as a result. It was also designed to consider whether the approach employed by UN Women ROAS was relevant for advancing WPP.

In Morocco, the well-established operations of development partners and high level engagement of national actors in the national women machinery meant that it was relatively easy for UN Women to

ensure alignment overall. It also meant that gender issues were already on the agenda of many of these actors, and that UN Women could therefore focus its attention in WPP on identified gaps. The Theory of Change may help focus programming in this regard.

As noted in the case study report, the Moroccan MCO was able to effect the desired changes it had prioritised with its partners in the last programme cycle, including gender equality and the new constitution, and a commitment to meeting obligations under international conventions. In Tunisia, UN Women was increasingly becoming known as the 'go to' organisation in terms of support for WPP. Extensive partnerships had been established, including with the Ministry of Development and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Women, the Ministry of Social Affairs, and for gendered data collection and publishing the National Institute for Statistics. Significant changes in the implementing environment in Tunisia also meant that UN Women had to be highly adaptive, and had modified their interventions to accommodate these changes.

In Algeria, the small size of the UN Women office coupled with its effective working relationships with UNDP, meant that it had an outsized effect in terms of WPP. With relatively strong gender machinery in government and with some strong civil society organisations working in this area, this approach was considered to be relevant to country needs. One area that was specifically noted was support for the functioning of the Algerian Female Member of Parliament National Caucus, established in 2015, where UN Women has been providing support in action planning, skills development support for the design of effective legislation, and by-law development. This support was specifically needed because of problems affecting the functioning of the National Caucus, including what was felt to be political interference and leadership challenges. In Iraq, the women machinery had been thrown into considerable uncertainty with the abolishment of the Ministry of Women Affairs in 2015.

In Palestine, while there was an established women's machinery, it was noted to be weak, largely due to the uncertain situation arising from the occupation and outbreaks of conflict. The strains put on political systems in such an environment undermined political participation overall, and WPP specifically. The Country Office had been focusing considered attention on high level political engagement, and

> In Palestine UN Women engagement before and after CEDAW ratification was felt by a number of key informants to have been central to the ratification without reservations.

this included with a wide range of actors within the development community. Findings from the field discussions also suggest that getting WPP 'on the agenda' within a range of organisations was extremely challenging, and that this will require persistence. Given UN Women's central role in WPP advocacy, this would appear to be a relevant use of resources.

Alignment is more complicated in conflict situations. In the case of Libya, for example, the case study found that the limited number of partners on the ground constrained the work that could be conducted. This is despite sound alignment of the Libyan programming with international conventions. In Yemen, despite the extremely difficult circumstances, the local office has invested heavily in hearing from a wide range of actors in the development community and within civil society,

> Findings from Yemen suggest that UN Women has learned from other countries in conflict in the region that broad-based engagement with a range of actors was central to women's engagement in the peace process. Understanding 'who is who' in this respect has been especially important, highlighting the importance of effective political economy analysis.

and may well build a viable country programme in this regard, should circumstances allow. More attention was noted as needed in this regard, including working with women to enhance their

involvement in national dialogue and supporting reaching the quota of 30% at national level. In Iraq, based on a request from government, UN Women's focus has been on working with women members of Parliament aimed at supporting their efforts to include women in the national reconciliation process (currently no women were involved in the process, while civil society organisations were also largely excluded), and to promote women's concerns and gender issues at local and national levels. Effectiveness of UN Women's actions in Iraq have been undermined by the abolishment of the Ministry of Women's Affairs in 2015, creating uncertainty in terms of the women machinery in country. As a result, the focus of UN Women's programming has been on the Women's Caucus in Parliament, consisting of 83 women members of Parliament (out of 87), based on a request from Iraq for UN Women to provide technical assistance. By the time of this evaluation the Women's Caucus had not yet been activated because of Parliament not being in session. Only preparatory work was possible, in addition to training for both male and female MPs in gender responsive budgeting in the legislative agenda and gender mainstreaming in parliamentary work, and for this it was too early to speak about whether actions were specifically aligned with other actors and with Iraqi needs.

2.3   Effectiveness

The specific evaluation questions elaborated in the Inception Report, as derived from the Terms of Reference, are as follows:

- What is the progress towards results at regional and national levels that UN Women has contributed to so far?
- Are there opportunities for replication and scaling-up good practices and innovative approaches?
- Which level of intervention is most effective to influence gender structural transformations, local, sub-regional, national or international?
- What innovative factors, dynamics and mechanisms would contribute to the achievement of more sustainable results, e.g., with parliamentary women caucus, with political parties, with electoral commissions, with municipalities?
- To what extent has UN Women's approach to engaging with key partners (Arab League, UN System, CSOs, others) been effective?
- To what extent were human rights-based approaches and gender equality incorporated in the design and implementation of WPP interventions?
- What are enabling and limiting factors that contribute to the achievement of results and what actions need to be taken to overcome any barriers that limit progress?

Finding 6 - Mechanisms for engagement to effect change and the adoption of good practices and innovative approaches: regional convening was argued to be central to learning and adoption of innovative interventions. Local initiatives were effective in making specific progress on women's involvement in politics at local level, changing gender dynamics and overcoming aspects of discrimination. Furthermore, interventions focused on the normative framework were effective in increasing WPP.

At the regional level, UN Women's convening functions have been especially valued. There were a range of convening actions, including programme-associated convening for the Citizenship, Leadership and Participation: New Pathways for Arab Women Programme as well as the Spring Forward Programme. The importance of convening was raised repeatedly in terms of:

- the League of Arab States (LAS) to strengthen the normative mandate around WPP, including the development of the Women, Peace and Security Strategy which has a pillar on women's active political participation in transitional processes;
- the wider consultations among member states and the League itself with regard to Resolution 1325 and the development and regional endorsement of the Regional Action Plan on Security Council Resolution 1325, the Cairo Declaration (LAS, 2014) and related Strategic Action Plan detailing measures and means to enhance women's active political engagement in transitional and peace processes;
- the review of the regional Beijing +20 process and the review meeting held in February 2015 that yielded a commitment to scaling up the Beijing Plan of Action and
- support to the shadow report for the Beijing Plan of Action report. The Beijing +20 process was noted to have yielded considerable data and analysis to inform the Cairo Declaration's Strategic Action Plan, including a greater focus on marginalised women. It also included a regional convening activity targeting parliamentarians, women and men youth leaders and the media held in late 2013 in Tunis. As one regional key informant argued, 'there is now a sense that things are changing because of this mobilisation. With UN Women, we have been able to get high level commitment that would not have been there otherwise".

The regional findings on valuing the ROAS convening role were also noted in the country case studies. The Libyan case study report found that UN Women had made efficient use of resources to bring together Libyan women in study tours and workshops to expose them to south-south exchanges and experiences. According to the interviewees, this exchange has been of particular value to enrich their own experience and learn from countries which have undergone similar conflicts and transition phases. At the same time south-south exchanges and cooperation appear to be a valid and effective approach to informing regional planning, in particular with reference to Yemen and Iraq as countries undergoing conflict. Having said this, there were some concerns expressed in interviews for Algeria, Morocco, Yemen and Tunisia that feedback from convening actions was weak.

For Palestine, planning documents and annual reporting offer further insights on how regional convening activities were considered to fit well into the country needs of Palestine. Palestine's contribution to recent annual reports has offered important details in this regard (see UN Women ROAS 2014b, UN Women ROAS 2015c), where the Country Office has usefully linked programmatic actions with regional convening forums, as well as training and technical support,

> ROAS has engaged in mechanism that have been effective in terms of fulfilling a regional support function, including regional-level activities, regional convening, south-south collaboration, actions supporting on the normative agenda, and similar. There are areas that were largely supported by interviewees but which remain underdeveloped, including the knowledge hub. There are also areas where the level of activities is felt to be inadequate, including regional convening and south-south collaboration.

when discussing priority areas, including WPP. What appeared to be more relevant to partner organisations and activists was not the knowledge products *per se*, but rather opportunities to build relationships and share experiences via regional convening opportunities supported by ROAS, whether through a particular programme like Spring Forward Programme or with non-programme financing. Examples included women parliamentarians who had been involved in regional convening activities associated with a review of international conventions, visiting women involved in political parties and in women's CSOs focused on WPP, and learning across countries in conflict.

It was through these mechanisms that participants were able to information and materials, with a strong willingness to learn from and inform others in their work in WPP. This was not only noted by powerful leaders at the top of political movements, but also by local women Council members. In the latter case, knowing what other women Council members faced and how they had pursued priorities and resolved problems was felt to be vital to the women councillor's confidence and strategies. One key informant argued that this was indeed important but went a step further to argue that sharing insights and strategies was relevant beyond Palestine's borders. Jordan was specifically mentioned in this regard. Unfortunately, with inadequate staffing, uncertain financing streams, and inadequate systems in place in Palestine, the ability to plan for even within-country exchanges or forums was proving problematic. Regional exchanges were far more difficult to effect. This is where the regional office could prove especially relevant to the country's needs. As one key informant concluded, 'south - south collaboration from local councils across different countries is currently undervalued'.

Despite the considerable costs associated with convening across countries, this particular aspect of ROAS support was highly valued by both country staff and partner agencies alike. Virtually every interviewee who had been engaged in conferences, workshops, training sessions, country exchange visits, etc. attended on a voluntary basis. Participants gave examples of how they had learned from these experiences, how this had improved networking, and how this was a key ingredient to effect WPP. For example, groups in Palestine noted that achieving the "simple" understanding that their situations were not unique was important in remaining committed to change; that it was possible to effect change within a local council and to identify means to do so; and that building on information sharing to explain how to practically engage in the politics around policy development was key to overcoming constraints. While these might be seen as expensive in terms of unit costs, from a cost effectiveness point of view, they were highly valued and would appear to offer important returns on investment commensurate with expenditures.

The co-ordination with partners was noted as having been very solid, noting that this was deemed successful in Libya (UNSMIL), the UN special envoys in both Yemen and Syria, and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq. This 'promoted synergy and creativity'. This does not mean that the results of this co-ordination has always been effective, with constraints in this regard mentioned in particular in Libya.

Despite a range of efforts by various actors, the task of enhancing women's participation in political space in the region is considerable, and framework conditions remain inhospitable. This means that there are considerable risks in supporting political engagement, requiring UN Women to proceed with caution and focus on both opportunities and risk minimisation.

Finding 7 - Progress Towards WPP Results: The actions of UN Women ROAS have improved WPP in the region, with gains varying across countries, but in some cases widespread gains across the region (e.g., in actions undertaken with the League of Arab States) based on effective engagement at that level. This includes gains in countries in conflict, with particular progress in Yemen and, to a lesser extent, Iraq.

The centrality of regional support varied from countries to countries, with Morocco MCO less in need of external support for country actions, and Palestine more in need of regional support in a situation where funding was felt to be less certain. For Libya and to a lesser extent for Iraq, the inputs were strategic and, in the case of the latter, were felt to be central to progress made to date. In the case of Palestine, the regionally supported Spring Forward Programme, along with periodic interactions with ROAS, were felt to be critical to the ability of the Country Office to reach target groups, and support objectives associated with policy and strategy development. For Tunisia, the UN Women

Results Monitoring System noted that a partnership with the Ministry of Development and International Cooperation helped ensure that the government's 2016-2020 development plan was gender responsive, and that commitments had been made by various actors to agreed actions. UN Women's involvement has also contributed to developing gender disaggregated data with the National Institute for Statistics (NIS). This data will be included in the NIS report published annually. Having gender-disaggregated date provides "gender lenses," for planning and implementing activities, which enhances their effectiveness. An interview in Tunisia underlined that their strategic positioning is due to their partnerships with the Ministry of Development and International Cooperation, Ministry of Women, Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA), the National Institute for Statistics (NIS), and with NGOs.

Strategic decisions in the period from 2012 in part came from reconsidering how countries in the region had performed in earlier years, and what value had been added by a regional UN Women presence. As they noted in the 2012-2013 Regional Plan (UN Women ROAS, 2012: 9) for the previous programming period, "despite some useful results, the value-added of the regional dimension - as opposed to having multiple country projects - has not always been clear".

Key informants from UN Women Country Offices and the Morocco MCO were asked about the role and activities of the regional office[16], and how they felt ROAS had helped give direction and support to their offices and programming. At the regional level, three interviews were conducted with those knowledgeable about regional programming, while numerous country level interviews were conducted that considered regional issues. Key findings regarding effectiveness were as follows:

- *Support for WPP:* Insufficient financial and political commitment for strengthening WPP among countries in the region meant that strategic interventions by ROAS were highly valued by activists, and felt to be central to advancing WPP. What is less certain is how long direct support will be required before this dynamic changes, and what ROAS plans to do in this regard.

- *Context:* Numerous examples were given of how ROAS had supported processes that considered important contextual factors in designing activities. This had helped avoid accusations of being 'involved in politics' rather than being involved in strengthening WPP, had allowed country offices and partners to influence programming and set priorities, and allowed flexibility into country programming, being particularly effective in strengthening women's engagement under conflict situations. In this latter case, problems encountered in both Libya and Syria served as lessons learned for Yemen on how to avoid the pitfalls of accusations of partisanship, and the importance of starting engagement early.

- *Financing Streams:* Uncertainty over finances was felt to undermine programming in the countries where interviews were conducted, and magnified problems in cases where funds were not felt to have been spent as wisely as possible (e.g., the need to focus on advocacy and high-level engagement rather than operational support to institutions). Staffing constraints in country offices, a range of reporting requirements due to the multiple streams of financing, and lack of budgets for valued activities (knowledge products and cross-country convening were both commonly mentioned as gaps) were felt to have undermined effectiveness in WPP programming.

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[16] Unfortunately, a number of these key informants had only been with UN Women for a few years in the region, and therefore were not able to discuss how things were in past years. Most respondents therefore referred to the past few years.

More insights are offered through the three case studies. At a thematic level, the key aspects of ROAS' support to Palestine was summarised as follows in the Palestine case study report:

- *Strategic Approach:* Among those interviewed across government, political parties, and civil society, there is broad agreement that the strategy employed by UN Women as an organisation has helped Palestine advance in the area of WPP. The most effective activities related to high level engagement with a range of actors and support for civil society to engage in advocacy, and field activities associated with local councils. The engagement of ROAS in these processes was felt to be quite supportive.

- *Focus:* There are questions within the Country Office and in discussions with two key government agencies about the effectiveness of some aspects of UN Women's support, with suggestions about UN Women focusing more on high level advocacy and engagement with senior political and administrative actors and field innovation, exploring new ideas, and less on programmatic financing of partner agencies. A few of the Country Office personnel raised concerns that the agency was trying to be 'all things to all people', and in doing so it risked undermining its own goals. One senior decision-maker noted that things had improved with ROAS involvement because it provided strategic direction through programme and non-programme support, but that the strategic direction of the Country Office needed better definition.

> One intervention mentioned as innovative by CO officers in Palestine was programming focused on getting more women onto party lists for local council elections. What was noted as especially important was the ability of these female council members to influence priorities among the council itself.

- *Monitoring:* Monitoring was driven by donor requirements and less by Country Office needs.

- *Knowledge Hub:* There was little knowledge of ROAS serving as a knowledge hub in terms of access to materials and tools and mechanisms to share knowledge, but the idea itself was very welcome.

The Morocco report considered MCO programming more broadly, as the office was well established and functioning, with ROAS support less direct. For the MCO, the key findings on effectiveness were as follows:

- UN Women has been effective in promoting gender structural changes is increased through a multi-dimensional approach involving national state and non-state actors, working well with international partners. Some co-ordination problems were noted within specific programming.

- UN Women has taken care to listen carefully to partner organisations and government and, in doing so, have helped ensure a catalytic effect on WPP. The number of women who sought office and who have served has risen consistently over the programme timeline.

> In Morocco, UN Women supported the operationalization of a partnership between government and civil society, between the Ministry of the Interior and the Movement for Democratic Parity, aimed at promoting new laws concerning women's political participation at the local level in areas of the country where this has been quite constrained in the past.

- The results of key informant interviews would suggest that the MCO effectively managed the regional programme Citizenship, Leadership and Participation: New Pathways for Arab Women.

- Consistent with findings from other countries, a focus on women's empowerment rather than broader attention to gender equality in political participation undermined the effectiveness of programme activities, and weakened efforts to overcome how gender is misunderstood.

- Also consistent with findings from other countries, the underlying causes of gender inequality and discrimination have not been adequately addressed.

- Overall, findings from the evaluation highlight largely positive attitudes and experiences with UN Women's support for WPP in Morocco.

For Libya, the absence of a country office meant that UN Women's activities there were carried out by UNSMIL, with technical and financial support from ROAS. Findings on effectiveness were as follows:

- UN Women has been effective in providing support to country level programming, with the UN Women ROAS policy advisor playing a critical role in this regard in terms of making use of regional experience and exposing women in Libya to these other experiences with other countries that had been in transition. Results were limited by the complexity of implementation, but the effectiveness findings suggest a strong basis for advancing programming in Libya.

- The establishment of a women's track in the national political dialogue supported by UN Women yielded an increased number of women involved in the national dialogue. At the same time, there was a missed opportunity in terms of mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment into on-going actions.

- Capacity-building efforts have been limited, and there is little systematic follow-on information on what these efforts have accomplished.

- UN Women's work in Libya has been constrained by an inability to function directly in the field in country, only partially overcome by working with UNSMIL. This partnership has itself been limited by the unclear delineation of responsibilities.

The annual reports include extensive information associated with WPP gains supplemented by other regional reports although, as noted, weaknesses in results monitoring undermine the veracity of conclusions drawn in this regard. At the same time, there are questions about the direction of regional support that would warrant possible adjustment, with the provision of long-term support for some critical agencies (e.g., the League of Arab States), strengthening operations after starting activities on a sound footing (e.g., Yemen), retooling approach and partnership options (e.g., Libya, Tunisia and, as some noted, Syria), and focusing greater attention on advocacy over direct programme support (e.g., Palestine and Morocco).

> Findings in the whole suggest that programming is increasingly effective, as learning and adaptation takes place, and as those involved in implementation gain experience and advance WPP agendas. In such a volatile region, adapting is central to effective programming. As one regional key informant noted, 'sometimes things are so difficult that you focus on something else and then advance in an area where it was hopeless before but not now. So, you make progress where you can, and then think more systematically about what can be done in, for example, a conflict zone'.

Finding 8 - Sustainable results and effective engagement: There are serious challenges to sustainability arising from limited investments in WPP, despite widespread perceptions that

the regional focus has been correct. While limited to a subset of target groups, engagement procedures have been largely effective.

When asked about the direction of actions and what these might imply in terms of longer term aims, including desired impacts and outcomes, there was widespread optimism that UN Women's involvement has advanced enabling environment conditions in some cases (e.g., strengthening women's involvement in local government, acceptance of quotas as the lowest acceptable percentage (which apply to ten countries in the region), challenging laws and tracking progress on CEDAW and Beijing, providing comparative data for the region), and were helping to begin a process for eventual improvement in others (e.g. Morocco, Yemen, and Tunisia).

ROAS itself expressed concern (notable in the 2014-2017 Strategy Note; UN Women ROAS, 2014) that it was having difficulty balancing pressures to respond to urgent needs especially in emergency situations with continued investment in its work in a development context. Overall, key informants argued that the situation had improved in recent years because of an implementation approach that combined effective listening to local offices and partners with a good sense of strategic focus,

> It is early to consider sustainability, especially considering the magnitude of the challenges and limitations in terms of financing.

and the strengthening of the gender response within institutions (e.g., within workers' unions, within government ministries) and across institutions. While, operationally, examples were given on how this may have been misdirected in some situations, it was felt that learning was taking place in a manner that would allow improved actions to take place. This was much more problematic in conflict situations, but even there learning was taking place that allowed a better focus on what worked (e.g., learning from Libya and Syria to inform Yemen and Iraq, according to interviewees in the latter). What was less commonly noted was systematic learning through documentation and knowledge sharing, which a wide range of key informants noted as inadequate. Nevertheless, the direction of WPP would suggest that momentum is building[17].

Both regional and national level interviewees from partner organisations highlighted the value of what one key informant termed 'respectful listening'. In the Palestine case study and from the interviews with Yemen, local partners and stakeholders placed considerable value on feeling that their views were being heard, that they influenced agencies, and that they were treated with respect. In these respects, the Country Office in Palestine and the operation in Yemen were felt to have behaved in a manner consistent with efficient implementation by taking the time to hear from various actors, strengthening ownership.

From the evidence garnered from the field interviews in Palestine, the programme actions that were focused on female local Council members would appear to have been both highly popular with women leaders in political movements and other activists in the West Bank. With support from UN Women, a database was established for local councilwomen so that a dialogue could be established with a range of councilwomen. One finding from these communications was that it wasn't just enough that a woman served as a councillor, as men and women and the system itself did not adjust to the different needs of women (e.g., timing of council meetings), nor were a number of these women Council members finding it possible to carve out political space to achieve their objectives. UN Women therefore supported networking, skills development, and in some cases specific projects. As one councillor argued, 'the training was key to getting the job done, but it was also important for us to be confident of our work. We learned about the laws, we learned public relations, we learned

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[17] Issues of the cost effectiveness of actions taken versus alternatives are discussed under 'efficiency' below.

how to listen to others. We also learned how to address the media, about how to prepare project proposals, and how to implement activities".

Building the skills and experience of local Council members was noted by key informants directly involved with this activity as key to a problem facing women in politics and in political movements in Palestine, but which also resonated for other countries in the region: aging leadership that had been involved in politics for a long time. In such an environment, it was difficult to challenge their positions in such a way that younger leaders could begin to play a greater role in political movements. The Arab Spring had increased these tensions, and in many cases this remained unresolved. One recommendation was that UN Women needed to consider how to engage in this regard to support the engagement of younger women in politics, 'bringing new blood into the political discussion'.

Finding 9 - Tracking process and progress and sharing knowledge: Results monitoring systems are weak, but in part have been overcome by communications with country offices and regional actors and effective internal reporting.

The evaluation considered the effectiveness of regional engagement in learning and knowledge generation and use. This included the effectiveness of results monitoring, the role of ROAS in knowledge sharing and tracking use, evidence on underlying causes of inequality and discrimination, and support to countries and country offices for effective learning.

Weaknesses in results monitoring meant that implementing partners, country staff, and the region overall was not able to draw from clear evidence to nuance programming and learn from interventions as effectively as possible. In volatile situations where progress is not always achieved, documenting learning as implementation proceeds is especially important for effectiveness. As one ROAS key informant noted, 'we need to document, this is central to the efficacy of our work'. Data collection focused on activities and outputs, which were then linked to achievements and, to a lesser extent, gaps. Attribution to UN Women was often made without results evidence, and it was therefore difficult to judge the veracity of reporting that argued that UN Women's actions had had the desired impacts. While both annual reports and the results of many of the key informant interviews both contended these links, a review of regional results monitoring underlined the lack of reporting on results.

Narratives give examples of progress made, such as in Algeria the amendment of the Criminal Code to criminalise gender-based violence, inputs into the constitutional reform process (also noted for Tunisia, where early drafts excluded gender equality), and other advances. In the section asking about UN Women's contribution, the Algerian example notes a wide range of activities aimed at promoting stakeholder awareness, including policymakers and political leaders, on GBV, and later in the same report on results refers to support for the establishment of an operational Female MPs' National Caucus (RMS Search Results, UN Women ROAS, 2015a). But here again, the linkages between UN Women-supported actions and these achievements are not well documented, and not logically built on steps in the process, nor is it clear whether stakeholder awareness, for example, yielded important results.

> There is room for significant improvement in terms of knowledge sharing, tracking progress, and reporting. The results of interviews in the field and a review of documentation suggests that ROAS could play an important role in this regard, but that this would require that they carefully consider how to proceed.

The development of the results framework set targets in 2014 (UN Women ROAS, 2014b), further elaborated in 2015 for some countries (UN Women ROAS, 2015b). The indicators associated with

the outcome were not clearly measured in any systematic manner for the region, but there was some tracking at country level. The measures themselves don't clearly seem to align with what is going on in WPP programming, but with an institute given as an outcome level indicator in 2014. Of particular concern, there is no systematic reporting of progress towards the results framework for 2014 or 2015.

There is only anecdotal documentation that would enable an understanding of how inequality, discrimination, and social exclusion affects women in different circumstances. The Spring Forward Programme reporting, for example, doesn't raise these issues. The issues around power and connections, versus powerlessness and exclusion, were not raised by key informants during interviews, save geographical factors that were felt to exclude rural women more than urban women. When the interviewers raised the issue, comments were generally on the order of 'all women are excluded', without nuance on levels and nature of exclusion.

Regional workplans duly track key activities and these activities are reported in the results monitoring systems, but there is no clear reporting arising from these workplans that inform the status of workplan indicators. Numerical targets are given at country level, but the status is not clear as to what happened. A cumbersome system is in place trying to plan across a multitude of countries on indicators in the Development Results Framework, but this is not the same as a system in place for measuring progress against various activities in terms of how outputs delivered are used by those reached. Links between overall development results and UN Women supported actions is not clear. Nevertheless, as mentioned, the annual reports are able to draw conclusions from various activities, with annual workshops on results monitoring for staff, as per the Organisational Effectiveness & Efficiency Framework (OEEF).

The operational support from ROAS includes support for annual work planning processes. However, there was little written evidence on how this support manifests itself, nor how effective this support has been. The other operational support to country offices include: a) surge capacity to ensure that staff are deployed to address immediate back-office operations needs; and b) remote technical assistance to ensure smooth functioning of daily, monthly, and annual actions. The documentation of these actions and their effectiveness was lacking. The ROAS also aimed at 'investing in building UN Women's staff capacities in results-based management and managing gender responsive programming and evaluations', but there was little explanation of what had been accomplished. Activities and outputs are reported for some countries in results monitoring documents, and are described in summary form in annual reports. However, the actual results are not regularly reported, and inferences made between actions taken and outcomes are not evidenced. This applies across programming areas.

Beyond the annual reports, which offer useful and cogent insights, UN Women documentation regularly provides overviews of previous activities. For example, the 2012-2013 Regional Work plan (UN Women ROAS, 2012) systematically outlines activities associated with women's leadership and political participation and elaborates lessons learned. They also report on broad-based progress in this regard at a very high level (e.g., quotas adopted, legislation passed, women elected, adoption of gender-based budgeting, CEDAW adoption without reservations, the completion of gender equality assessments, etc.), and advances in programming (e.g., using what has been learned to apply to new programming, joint programming, partnerships, UN Women taking a leadership role in some countries on gender equality and women's empowerment, etc.). Two factors are, however, less clear: 1) the extent to which progress would have been made (and regress avoided) without the efforts of ROAS, and UN Women's contribution in this regard and 2) the extent to which progress would have been made (and regress avoided) at country level without ROAS engagement.

The pressures noted under 'relevance' regarding strains on CO personnel impact effectiveness as well. One key area is the ability to engage systematically in learning from the field, and translating this learning into formats that would inform the CO overall, the RO, and UN Women's partners in the WPP arena. This is discussed in more detail under efficiency below.

More generally, there is no clear system to measure the use of knowledge products, and their influence as a result. Specifically, what is not measured is the use of these products throughout the political arena, the extent to which lessons learned and best practices have been considered by a range of actors in the development community, civil society, and government is not known, nor is it planned.

One evaluation question was with regard to the use of the Theory of Change (ToC) to guide programming. As with many agencies, the consistent use of a theory of change approach within UN Women is relatively new. There has been progress at agency level for the development of theories of change for UN Women's 'flagship programmes', such as Safe Cities, where alignment with UN Women at international level is clear. At regional level, the global outcomes are consistent with ROAS outcomes noted in their Theory of Change for programming overall, including WPP. Outcome 1 outputs, associated with strengthened legislative framework enabling women's participation and leadership, political party policies and procedures reformed to include women, and electoral arrangements enhancing women's political participation and leadership, are all aligned with global priorities[18]. However, as ROAS itself pointed out, the finalisation of the ToC only took place in 2016, well into the current strategy phase. In this respect, none of the country offices or other interviewees noted that the ToC played any role, nor has the region itself established a process of systematically reviewing progress against the ToC, nor programmatic ToCs. Some also expressed concerns about the complexity that is often associated with ToCs, and expectations regarding agency planning to accommodate heightened information needs. In a situation where planning, reporting and monitoring requirements are all considered to consume considerable time, this was of particular concern.

2.4   Efficiency

A particular focus is on cost effectiveness and the specific evaluation questions elaborated in the Inception Report, as derived from the Terms of Reference, are as follows:

- What operational mechanisms are needed to make UN Women's approach to WPP more efficient?
- To what extent is learning from initiatives being implemented in the field under regional programmes feeding into the regional approach and vice-versa?
- Do current reporting guidance and practices reflect the medium term impact on UN Women's WPP work?
- Are human and financial resources in line with the political mandate of UN Women in WPP and the solid substantive input required to respond to demands identified in the field?
- Which strategies would be more efficient to promote south-south cooperation, enhancing mutual knowledge of initiatives and programmes promoting WPP?
- Have their existed obstacles at country level (political, bureaucratic) that have limited the progress on the commitment towards women's political empowerment?
- Were there any constraints (e.g., political, practical, and bureaucratic) to addressing human rights and gender equality efficiently during implementation? What level of effort was made to overcome these challenges?

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[18] Annex F includes the DRF elements relevant to WPP.

Finding 10 - Operational Mechanisms and Constraints and Resource Allocation: WPP interventions are generally being implemented in an environment that is conducive to success. Considerable care has been exercised by UN Women in avoiding over politicisation of WPP actions so as to avoid political rejection of initiatives. The overall 'footprint' of WPP actions is limited by resource constraints, and in some cases by expenditures being prioritized that some country staff members questioned. Efficiency has been undermined by confusion over the differences between gender equality and women's empowerment, which also undermines UN Women's normative role in WPP.

The evaluation analysed whether UN Women ROAS' programming was well considered. Issues included whether it would have been better to have focused finance elsewhere, whether the best implementing mechanisms were employed, and whether information systems collected evidence that best informed programming and evaluation. Related issues included the cost effectiveness of support for country offices and their programming, and whether levels of funding were sufficient to yield a cost effective response.

Key findings for efficiency and cost effectiveness were as follows[19]:

- *Scope of Support for WPP:* There is limited external support for WPP in the region, and in this respect UN Women is a key actor. The cost effectiveness of UN Women's support is therefore especially important.

- *Convening Function:* Considerable value was placed on the cross-country convening, with perceived high returns on investment from these actions. Examples given by partner agencies involved in these cross-country convening actions would suggest that this view is warranted, and an effective use of finance.

- *Knowledge Hub:* Key informants considered the regional knowledge hub facility as an excellent idea which could represent a cost effective way forward. There were particular concerns that, with the absence of regional information sharing, efficiency was undermined. As the system currently operates, there are numerous problems associated with document development, sharing and use that undermine efficiency. These efficiency problems would be overcome by the development of a robust and well-focused knowledge management strategy.

- *Advocacy:* Advocacy actions have been cost effective, but activities focused on men were inadequate. This was recognized by many of the key informants themselves, but there was a lack of clarity on the way forward in this regard. This in part arises from confusing gender equality with women's empowerment, with the emphasis heavily on the latter.

- *Cost Effectiveness:* Cost effectiveness in WPP would likely be improved by a stronger focus on high level political engagement and attention to policy and local innovation, with new ideas best understood through effective political economy analysis, tested through field consultations, and tested, often with a local partner.

> In Morocco, key informants in the MCO noted that one constraint in their programming was associated with male involvement in the promotion of gender equality through evidence-based advocacy, awareness raising, and community-level engagement.

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[19] Because of limited fieldwork, the ability to compare the cost effectiveness of actions taken against actions not taken was difficult or impossible.

- *Establishing and Maintaining Relationships:* UN Women's investments in building relationships with partners, while time consuming, are viewed quite positively, and have gone some distance to improve the cost effectiveness of actions taken.

Results of the key informant interviews highlight limited external support for WPP outside of UN Women's assistance. Partner agencies argued that it was difficult to attract external support for WPP programming, including within the area of political participation support itself, and UN agencies themselves were noted to have devoted insufficient attention to gender issues. According to a number of key informants, the problem was growing worse given that funds were being shifted to Syria. In these respects, the UN Women programme is bringing WPP to the foreground, and is in this respect a cost effective use of resources within the organisation, and within the UN itself.

In Tunisia Spring Forward Programme financing was considered to be sufficient for programming and Country Office capacity. There were problems associated with the availability of qualified international consultants and implementing partners, and an inability to afford the services of those with the requisite skills. When international expertise is needed, the process of securing names is hampered by the absence of a roster and the need to go to the MCO in Morocco or, if that does not prove effective, to ROAS, and if that does not prove effective to UN Women HQ. The process was noted as lengthy and inefficient.

> Considerable care has been exercised by UN Women in avoiding the politicisation of WPP actions, not an easy task in the ROAS region. This should set a firm foundation for expanded actions, important given limits resulting from financial and human resource constraints.

In Palestine, some of the key informants in government and in country offices argued that UN Women's role should be focused on advocacy and innovation, rather than financing major programme activities. In this respect, there was a concern that cost effectiveness was undermined. The partner agencies receiving the financing themselves did not agree with this, arguing that this support was needed, but in making this case did not do so in terms of the cost effectiveness of UN Women's expenditures on these activities rather than alternatives. These issues were not mentioned in interviews in Morocco or Libya, in the former case likely due to the focus of programming on advocacy, and in the latter case because of the absence of such programming.

Finding 11 - Learning and Reporting: Results monitoring systems need significant improvement before they can systematically contribute to learning. In its place, ROAS and country offices have put into place coping mechanisms to try and learn from field initiatives. Annual reporting suggests that such learning is taking place, but this is less the case in terms of systematic feedback to country offices and programmes.

In considering whether learning was taking place based on field findings, the problems with results monitoring were noted above. Nevertheless, the documentation constraints discussed would be expected to have created onward communications problems between the country office, country office personnel, and ROAS. Yet for the most part this does not appear to be the case. Based on interview results, system shortcomings are at least in part overcome by an ability to communicate directly with ROAS. ROAS was regularly reported to be willing and able to help solve problems and provide guidance.

In this respect the problems around results monitoring are less important that they might otherwise be, as staff members have coped with limitations by filling gaps through non-system approaches. Despite this coping, the problems with weak results monitoring do have consequences for the ability of ROAS to effectively track what is being accomplished in WPP in the short- and medium-terms.

Evaluations can in part make up the difference, as may have been the case for the Spring Forward Programme evaluation, but evaluability assessments (including the one for Spring Forward) point out the importance of this information for the conduct of an efficient evaluation. As UN Women has results monitoring templates, the task now would be to effect these through careful attention to results monitoring capacity development in the country offices and within programmes, and sufficient time allocated to supporting the results monitoring system at regional level.

It is worth reiterating the value that country staff members and partners place on regional convening. ROAS would be well served in furthering these activities, and also linking this to regional initiatives. This is one aspect of operations that would improve efficiency, along with a communications strategy that would regularly engage with country offices, programmes, and partners in non-country offices about what support ROAS can provide to WPP, improving efficiency as a result. The adaptation of tools used in other areas, or updating tools that are relevant to the Middle East, would also encourage efficiency in training and field operations, including in conflict areas. For example, one interviewee in Yemen noted that there are presumably tools that would help the Country Office better understand what works and what does not work in engaging across a range of stakeholders in a situation where national reconciliation efforts have excluded women. Some of the staff noted that there are specific inefficiencies around the ebb and flow of financing that are said by some key informants to affect the performance and morale of staff and affects their ability to do their jobs. It is of course recognised that UN Women, as a young agency, has difficulty in securing the funds necessary to support its mandate, and that this will continue. This makes it even more important to spend funds wisely, and in as efficient a manner as possible.

Over time, UN Women ROAS has shown itself as increasingly able to balance the needs of both developmental efforts and crisis response. It has also approached the latter with a sense of how to take actions in a crisis situation that can inform post-crisis programming. In these respects their actions are an increasingly cost effective use of funds.

For country office-level reporting across programme areas and financing streams, a number of inconsistencies were noted in format, content, document naming conventions, and presumably other aspects of documentation at both regional and country levels. Procedures for planning, implementation oversight, and reporting are not always clear based on the documents themselves, although procedures themselves might be clear within ROAS. At both regional and country levels, the reporting procedures seem to be adapted to the specific systems of the reporting staff member mixed with the requirements of specific funding mechanisms, overlaid by expectations and requirements from (in the case of country offices) the regional office. The result is that staff have to report in varied ways using different formats at different times and often reporting similar information, yielding inefficiencies in information and documentation management. For less resourced country offices overworked staff do not spend sufficient time in the field and provide less support to field operations than would otherwise be the case, resulting in gaps in reporting that a systematic review would highlight.

> Efficiency in information management and programme management could be improved by more attention to results monitoring. Regional convening and south-south collaboration, while relatively expensive, are highly valued and yield a good return on investment in terms of commitment to WPP.

Further undermining efficiency, there is an absence of systematic results monitoring, both within country offices (based on available information) and in information that reaches ROAS. Within ROAS, annual reporting systems reflect good analytical work in pulling together evidence across multiple countries (although even here a number of countries do not provide the relevance

evidence for the results monitoring system), but the evidence that informs this reporting is not always clear. Attribution is therefore problematic, and arguments about UN Women impacts weakened.

Finding 12 - Regional convening and south-south collaboration: The role of ROAS in regional convening was high valued, and examples of south-south collaboration were given by respondents as central to their learning. Documentation of such learning was, however, extremely limited.

Despite the considerable costs associated with convening across countries, this particular aspect of ROAS support was highly valued by both country staff members and partner agencies alike. This was raised by key informants for the three case study countries, it was mentioned as central to the success of regional initiatives by a regional key informant interviewee, and it was noted by skype interviewees. A wide range of interviewees who had been engaged in conferences, workshops, training sessions, country exchange visits, etc. attended those meetings on a voluntary basis. Participants gave numerous examples of how they had learned from these experiences, how this had improved networking, and how this was a key ingredient to effect WPP. While these might be seen as expensive in terms of unit costs, from a cost effectiveness point of view, they were highly valued and would appear to offer important returns on investment commensurate with expenditures.

In Tunisia, convening at the inception stage of any programme development activity that would have a regional dimension was critical to the cost effectiveness of any programme. In Libya, UN Women's support for south-south activities was highly valued, despite the complexity in engaging in these activities in Libya. Study tours to neighbouring countries were felt to have been extremely important for learning about ways of moving past conflict and transitioning to peace. In Morocco, south - south co-operation has been enabled by the Networking of Elected Women of Africa.

Finding 13 - Human Rights and Gender Equality: From the perspective of efficiency and cost effectiveness, WPP approaches that include human rights and women's empowerment have been effective in terms of the normative framework, including policy development, engagement in high level institutions and legislation, and international protocols and conventions. However, gender equality has been undermined by perceptions that UN Women focuses on women's empowerment and not gender equality. The focus of programming on men remains limited. Procedures for inclusion as a means to exercise rights are limited, particularly when considering social exclusion and poverty.

Local partners and stakeholders placed considerable value on feeling that their views were being heard, that they influenced agencies, and that they were treated with respect. In these respects, UN Women has behaved in a manner consistent with efficient implementation.

In discussing the Spring Forward Programme with partners in Palestine, for example, and in discussing engagement with stakeholders in conflict situations in Libya and Yemen, engagement did not generally extend beyond those with influence in society. Systematic engagement of socially excluded groups was not noted during any of the field interviews, with the specific exception of one programme in Palestine that focuses on disabled women. This does not negate the fact that women as a whole are less engaged and less influential in political participation, but it does suggest the need for more attention to especially marginalised groups.

Discussions of gender equality quickly moved to discussions of women's empowerment, holding for interviews with UN Women country offices, and with partner agencies. This is perhaps not surprising, given relatively low levels of financing for WPP overall and the need to 'carve out' space for WPP with partners and with other development partners (who tended not to give gender equality much attention in their programming, according to key informants from UN Women). The cost effectiveness

of such an approach *in the long term* is therefore questionable, unless UN Women ROAS focuses on normative standards that including gender equality and women's empowerment as *two* aspects needing attention.

Country officers noted the importance of understand the context within which WPP takes place, and that it takes time to understand these dynamics. Their work could be simplified, and enabled, by regular political economy analysis that uncovers this information to inform programme design and implementation. Political economy analysis needs to be nuanced so that it uncovers who the key actors are, what stands in the way of achieving objectives, what actors can enable these objectives, and whether the overall environment is supportive or disabling.

3 CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

3.1 Introduction

'If you want to change the face of politics, you have to change the faces in politics'.

This comment, made by one of the key informants, highlights the importance of women serving in leadership positions to effect changes in attitudes, systems, laws and policies. These leadership positions refer to high level positions in countries throughout the region as well as local and other sub-national levels, where in the latter cases the role of women is especially important in changing circumstances on the ground. There is no substitute for women's direct engagement in the political arena.

At the same time, progress would be difficult in an environment that makes advances in gender equality and women's empowerment difficult. Focusing attention on an enabling environment is warranted.

In both cases, UN Women would appear to be particularly well placed to help advance both of these agendas in the Arab States region, but it is limited by human and financial resource constraints, the newness of the regional office, and contextual factors undermining gender equality and women's empowerment.

In this section, key conclusions are drawn and lessons learned considered. Conclusions include two impact related questions: 1) to what extent as a result of UN Women's interventions can we observe positive changes in the decisions adopted by women politicians; and 2) to what extent as a result of UN Women's interventions can we conclude that political parties (or other regional and national legislative bodies) are better off in terms of gender sensitive policies?

Lessons learned in turn inform recommendations that are included in the final section. Conclusions are organised around the main evaluation questions, considering as well the sub-questions.

3.2 Key Conclusions

3.2.1 Relevance

Conclusion 1 (based on Finding 1): UN Women is well positioned to support programming in WPP in the Arab Region, with the clearest mandate to proceed in this regard. Overcoming constraints, noted elsewhere in this report and considered in recommendations below, will be critical. Consideration of normative, operational and co-ordination factors in its activities reflects a proper balance on the need to balance regional activities. Key informants noted that advancing WPP in its work with other agencies had been challenging, especially in conflict situations, and would require considerable effort.

Conclusion 2 (based on Finding 3)*:* ROAS convening efforts were viewed as highly relevant to WPP, as it brought various actors together in a way in which information and experience is shared, relationships built or strengthened, and builds commitment across countries.

Conclusion 3 (based on Finding 3)*:* ROAS was viewed as a central actor in WPP in the region, and WPP support from ROAS was critical in helping set the agenda in countries in the region. The key constraint was the magnitude of the challenge versus WPP interventions, with the need outstripping funds and human resources, including in local partners, and the relatively high costs of making progress in WPP that required considerable attention on the part of senior personnel in country offices to build and maintain relationships and establish entry points.

Conclusion 4 (based on Finding 2)*:* UN Women has focused regional and national attention on normative frameworks, with key informants tending to argue that it had been successful in advancing WPP where they had concentrated their attention. Nevertheless, the scope of the challenge and resistance to women's empowerment throughout the region remain considerable.

Conclusion 5 (based on Finding 5): UN Women has been effective in ensuring alignment with international normative frameworks, and has pursued these at regional level and, with country offices and programmes, at country level.

Conclusion 6 (based on Finding 4)*:* Available evidence suggests that discrimination and social exclusion have not received due attention in design and implementation. Rather, the focus has been on the exclusion of women overall, rather than subsets of women and men who may face discrimination and social exclusion. This does not mean that the focus should be on the disadvantaged *per se,* but rather that due consideration should be given to issues of discrimination and social exclusion.

Conclusion 7 (based on finding 5): Based on albeit limited fieldwork and documentation, the findings suggest that UN Women has been careful to adapt programming to fit the varied situations encountered in the region, but has met with greater success in some locations than others. Not surprisingly, conflict affected environments have been especially problematic, but even here learning has improved programming (e.g., Yemen and, in the recovery stage, Tunisia). Entry points are well considered, and strategies carefully deliberated.

3.2.2 Effectiveness

Conclusion 8 (based on finding 6): In most cases where UN Women has chosen to intervene in WPP in the region, they had largely been effective. Key strengths were a willingness and ability to engage with and listen to partners, and adapt programming to reflect partner priorities consistent with objectives, a recognition of the agency's own limitations and what is possible, and strategic focused outlined in 2014-2015 that is what is needed for the region, and an ability to avoid being caught up in partisan politics. UN Women has proven itself increasingly adept at balancing crisis needs and development activities. Change has been effective in the region in terms of WPP, including progress in conflict situations such as Yemen and in post-conflict Tunisia, but there has been less success noted in Libya.

Conclusion 9 (based on finding 6): ROAS attention to convening at regional and multi-country levels has been extremely well received in the region. Results from interviews in Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Yemen and Palestine, as well as the results from regional interviews, regularly underlined the high value that key informants placed on south-south collaboration, despite limited activities, and engaging with other activists and leaders. Many of these same key informants raised a range of convening needs that had not been met, and urged that ROAS consider further support in this regard.

This support for the role of ROAS extended to expanding networking in WPP around the region, improved access to information resources, and mechanisms to share experiences and learn. One regional key informant underlined that south-south collaboration should be specifically driven by a clear agenda, and that UN Women should avoid as possible *ad hoc* actions.

Conclusion 10 (based finding 7): There was solid support for ROAS expanding its role in knowledge management, helping to generate and share knowledge products and information. Current efforts were largely unrecognised in the region, while a review of documentation coupled with the results of interviews highlight many challenges in this regard. There are particular challenges facing the monitoring of results, with tracking almost entirely focused on activities and outputs, and with analytic assessments based on this information suggesting, but not usually evidencing, impacts due to UN Women's activities. The absence of effective monitoring or results in the RMS is a limitation in programming, and would need to be part of any knowledge management strategy.

Conclusion 11 (based on finding 8): There are promising initiatives where careful attention to replication and scaling-up would be good ideas. Expanding actions with regional actors, experimenting with innovative actions in developmental and in particular emergency environments, and expanding sound local initiatives would all appear warranted. But, this can only move ahead with consistent financing and a strong implementing environment that includes effective field support and results monitoring. Securing partners who can provide support for replication and take-on operational aspects of interventions would help ensure that these initiatives could be sustained over time.

Conclusion 12 (based on finding 9): Gender equality would appear to have rapidly 'translated' into women's empowerment, rather than receiving considered and consistent attention. Gender is generally conflated with women, and in this respect gender equality in political participation has been undervalued.

3.2.3 Efficiency

Conclusion 13 (based on finding 10): There is limited external support for WPP in the region, and in this respect UN Women is a key actor. The cost effectiveness of UN Women's support is therefore especially important.

Conclusion 14 (based on finding 10): Considerable value was placed on cross-country convening, with perceived high returns on investment from these actions. Examples given by partner agencies involved in these cross-country convening actions would suggest that this view is warranted, and an effective use of finance.

Conclusion 15 (based on finding 10): Key informants felt that a regional knowledge hub facility was an excellent idea, and represented a cost effective way forward. There were particular concerns that, with the absence of an effective regional information sharing facility, efficiency was undermined. As the system currently operates, there are numerous problems associated with the document development, sharing and use that undermine efficiency. These efficiency problems would be overcome by the development of a robust and well-focused knowledge management strategy.

Conclusion 16 (based on finding 10)*:* As the system currently operates, there are numerous problems associated with document development, sharing and use that undermine efficiency. These efficiency problems would be overcome by the development of a robust and well-focused knowledge management strategy.

Conclusion 17 (based on finding 10): Advocacy actions have been cost effective, but targeting men in these was inadequate. This was recognised by many of the key informants themselves, but there

was a lack of clarity on the way forward in this regard. This in part arises from confusing gender equality with women's empowerment, with the emphasis heavily on the latter. Cost effectiveness in WPP activities would likely be improved by a stronger focus on advocacy and innovation.

Conclusion 18 (based on finding 11): Findings from Libya highlighted the importance of understanding, as possible, the situation on the ground. The 'no project' option may have been a better choice for the short-term, until more was known about what would work and what would not, highlighting the importance of solid analysis information prior to entry into a new country situation. This lesson was learned in Yemen, and as a result more resources were invested up front in better understanding political dynamics and partnerships.

Conclusion 19 (based on finding 11)*:* UN Women's WPP programming should be commended for its ability to 'read' the political environment and identify relevant modalities for implementation. What political economy analysis that is conducted and included in strategic plans and annual reports is useful in understanding how to proceed in the region. Deeper political economy analysis at the regional level would assist further in this regard, especially in situations of conflict. ROAS should therefore consider financing this type of analysis.

Conclusion 20 (based on finding 12): UN Women's investments in building relationships with partners, while time consuming, are viewed quite positively, and have gone some distance to improve the cost effectiveness of actions taken.

Conclusion 21 (based on finding 13): Further, UN Women is dealing with WPP where, in a majority of countries they cover, political participation overall is constrained. Carving out WPP in such an environment requires considerable care. What does seem to be missing, at a country level, is effective political economy analysis that can inform programming. Yet understanding these broader issues would substantially inform WPP itself.

Conclusion 22 (based on finding 13): In considering the mandate that UN Women has in WPP, and in considering the mandates of other UN organisations, it is unlikely that other UN organisations would have more efficiently implemented WPP activities. Instead, UN Women should consider expanding its WPP co-ordination role to focus additional attention on political participation initiatives undertaken by other UN organisations, with specific attention to UN Women's mandate in gender equality and women's empowerment. This is consistent with the UN's adherence with the Human Rights Mainstreaming Mechanism, which prioritises integration of human rights principles and standards into UN operations, working within the UN country teams to mainstream human rights, and playing a key role in a coherent UN systems-wide approach[20].

Conclusion 23 (based on finding 13): Over time, UN Women has shown itself as increasingly able to balance the needs of both developmental efforts and crisis response. It has also approached the latter with a sense of how to take actions in a crisis situation that can inform post-crisis programming. In these respects, their actions are an increasingly cost effective use of funds.

Conclusion 24 (based on finding 13)*:* There are limits regarding how cost effective UN Women has been in terms of supporting interventions that consistently engage across social exclusion and poverty. Without persistent engagement in this regard, the human rights foundation of programming is undermined.

Conclusion 25 (based on finding 13)*:* An emphasis on gender equality has quickly transitioned to women's empowerment. While in part this is understandable given the paucity of resources, over

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[20] http://www.undg.org/content/working_groups_networks/undg_human_rights_mainstreaming_mechanism/about_the_undg-hrm

the long term this will undermine the cost effectiveness of UN Women's interventions, affecting normative and operational aspects of the organisation.

3.3 Good Practices and Lessons Learned

The identification of good practices and lessons learned are as follows:

1. UN Women is increasingly adept at WPP in both developmental and conflict environments. Additional progress can be made through more structured learning and knowledge management, and in greater convening actions. Good practice lessons learned indicate that the normative focus on Resolution 1325 and women's engagement in transitional processes has been especially important. Convening has helped advance learning in this regard, including in Libya and Yemen.

2. Deficiencies in knowledge management systems, from collecting evidence to documentation protocols, hamper operations and undermine efficiency. This places additional burdens on staff within programmes, and at country and regional level. There are tools available to improve the management of knowledge, and if ROAS takes advantage of these resources and uses them in a structured fashion, this would significantly support country offices and programmes. If managed as a learning tool, a Theory of Change approach can significantly strengthen how knowledge is organised, and how information is tracked and used for WPP purposes. The WPP Theory of Change for the Arab States region, adopted in 2016, is a useful starting point in this regard.

3. Support for regional initiatives is an important focus for ROAS, and should be expanded as possible working with regional partners, but also providing regional support services to country offices. These have proven especially effective in terms of advancing the normative agenda, with good practice examples in terms of Resolution 1325, CEDAW, and Beijing+ 20.

4. Gender equality needs further attention, as it is getting 'lost' in the women's empowerment concept. There are no good practice examples in this regard, in part because the need for women's empowerment is overwhelming in the region, but there are good examples of where country programming recognises the importance of the dynamics in relations between women and men and the need to engage men not merely as advocates for women's empowerment, but also as agents of change under gender equality.

5. Social exclusion and discrimination are not receiving adequate attention, and also tends to get lost when programming in WPP. Understanding how discrimination and social exclusion affect different women differently, and men as well, needs attention. The only good practice example found in the evaluation was the programming focused on the disabled in Palestine, but that particular activity faced a number of operational constraints.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Introduction

As per the Terms of Reference, key recommendations are included in this report. These are based on findings from the evaluation. These should be considered by UN Women tempered by the understanding of the situation on the ground by UN Women ROAS and country office/multi-country office in terms of WPP.

4.2 Key Recommendations

Key recommendations arising from the evaluation are as follows:

Recommendation 1: UN Women's engagement in WPP at the regional level in the Arab Region is especially relevant given: a) the absence of another agency with UN Women's global mandate in the region that could focus on gender equality and women's empowerment, in this case WPP b) the region's below average ranking on a number of gender equality and women's empowerment indicators; c) examples of success in WPP interventions in the Region; and d) its history of careful attention to context, and its adaptation to these environmental circumstances. It is recommended that UN Women ROAS and country offices continue to engage in WPP in the Region, and give due attention to high level advocacy and engagement and programming that supports the ability of women to exercise their right to political engagement.

Recommendation 2: There is some confusion in the country offices about the role of the Regional Office in supporting country offices and countries without a CO presence. It is recommended that ROAS consult with country offices in the region to clarify what support ROAS can offer to the COs. In addition, given that there is potential for growth in WPP within the political participation programming of other UN agencies and other donors, it is also recommended that ROAS consult with these partners at regional level to consider opportunities to advance WPP.

Recommendation 3: The focus on the empowerment of women has tended to mean that issues around social exclusion, discrimination and poverty have received less attention. This does not mean that ROAS should specifically target disadvantaged women, and it does not mean that the overall disadvantaged nature of women in political engagement should be ignored. Rather it is recommended that as part of its strategies it gives due attention to actions that can reach these groups. This engagement should include specific consideration in convening activities.

Recommendation 4: UN Women ROAS has a central role to play in convening across countries in the region. Key informants repeatedly highlighted how important their interactions were with other activists and leaders in the region, in neighbouring countries, and within countries where isolation is a particular problem (e.g., war affected countries, the West Bank and Gaza, etc.). While unit costs are high, it is recommended that ROAS expand its convening activities based on regional priorities, but also based on where national priorities would be advanced. This convening should not be *ad hoc* in nature, but should rather build towards specific objectives.

Recommendation 5: Nascent efforts to build knowledge management infrastructure centred at ROAS was strongly supported by key informants. Further, the absence of critical tools, lessons learned documentation, data, and other materials, as well as knowledge of access to international resources, were all raised as constraints. In particular, examples of what to do and not to do in conflict zones was valued. The knowledge management problems faced by ROAS, country offices and programmes are considerable, but a well-focused strategy that draws on international resources and focuses on regional needs should be achievable. It is recommended that ROAS develop a knowledge management strategy in collaboration with country offices and existing and emergent programmes, and appoint a knowledge management officer to co-ordinate these efforts.

Recommendation 6: It is recommended that ROAS consider a regional institution that could eventually house the knowledge hub, transitioning this to a regional organisation and building capacity in that organisation to continue to serve as a knowledge hub in terms of document management and special studies; the UNDP Regional Office works regularly with the Centre for Arab Research and Studies.

Recommendation 7: It is also specifically recommended that ROAS work with country offices and programmes to develop a strong results monitoring system, and that it invest the necessary resources in personnel and data collection to enable this system.

Recommendation 8: To the extent that UN Women believes that it has a competitive edge in the financing of specific activities falling under partner agencies that may best be financed by the agencies themselves, it should continue to do so, but only if there are strategic reasons for doing so (focusing on strategic aspects of capacity development) and if funds are available for such actions. This should only be done if it does not present an opportunity cost to the work with partners on advocacy, innovation and knowledge management. However, if there are important opportunity costs associated with these investments, UN Women should consider instead focusing on its core mandate. It is <u>recommended</u> that UN Women ROAS consider further prioritising based on its core mandate related to WPP, and considering fund-raising and financing based on UN Women's competitive edge in terms of advocacy, innovation and knowledge management.

Recommendation 9: Adaptive programming centres around learning from experimentation and innovation. In these respects, for those aspects of programming that are adaptive, it is <u>recommended</u> that ROAS explore opportunities to finance small-scale promising initiatives, based on sound evidence and clear results.

Recommendation 10*:* The concept of gender equality often transforms to women's empowerment, and the gender equality aspects of programming are undervalued. In such an environment gender is conflated with women, and challenges to GEWE are heightened. Complaints that gender equality unfairly challenges socio-cultural norms, undermines religious teaching and tenets, and creates unnecessary conflict. It is <u>recommended</u> that ROAS develop a GEWE concept note (or similar) that begins a process of approaching both gender equality and women's empowerment in the organisation and in the region. The design of training activities, programme development, and normative work would all need to clearly deal with the complementary but discrete aspects of gender equality and women's empowerment. A greater focus on gender equality would also enhance programming that includes men. This does not mean that the emphasis should not be on women, as women are disadvantaged throughout the region. But it does mean that UN Women's network of women's advocates and political actors can be used to both meet GE and WE needs.

Recommendation 11: In the context of this continued engagement in development and WPP, it is <u>recommended</u> that UN Women ROAS and country offices consider focusing particular attention on *advocacy*, consistent with Outcome 1.1 (see Annex E). Advocacy includes direct consideration of human rights-based approaches to WPP, and focused capacity development within key political institutions.

Recommendation 12: It is also <u>recommended</u> that UN Women ROAS and country offices also focus on *innovation,* consistent with Output 1.1.1 and Output 1.1.2 (see Annex E). Innovation includes carefully considered and focused capacity development, rather than broad-ranging capacity development, the provision of long-term technical support as appropriate and as central to ROAS' actions (as is being done with the placement of an officer in the League of Arab States), experimentation (such as the local council members programme in Palestine, testing of innovative technologies), and effective collection and use of information.

Recommendation 13: It is further <u>recommended</u> that ROAS expand its work with regional organisations as deemed relevant to its WPP actions.

Recommendation 14: UN Women is dealing with WPP where, in a majority of countries they cover, political participation overall is constrained. Carving out WPP in such an environment requires considerable care. What does seem to be missing, at a country level, is effective political economy analysis that can inform programming. Yet understanding these broader issues would substantially inform WPP itself. UN Women's WPP programming should be commended for its ability to 'read'

the political environment and identify relevant modalities for implementation. What political economy analysis that is conducted and included in strategic plans and annual reports is useful in understanding how to proceed in the region. Deepening the analysis of the structural causes that contribute to gender inequality in the region would assist further in this regard. It is recommended to consider the potential benefits of a deeper analysis of structual causes contributing to gender inequality which have been identified as hindering the advancement of WPP.

Annex A: List of Documents Consulted

Advance Consulting Services (2014). Final Project Evaluation Report. 'Enhancing Palestinian Women's Participation in Public and Political Life', submitted to the Association for Women Committees for Social Works and the UN Women Fund for Gender Equality, Advance Consulting Services, no location given.

ESCWA (2016). Against Wind and Tides: Women and Gender Equality in the Arab Region (Beijing +20), prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

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1.2 Evaluability Assessment Recommendations, spreadsheet.

2. Spring Forward for Women Program

2.1 Regional Office for Arab States, *Spring Forward: Regional Program for the Economic and Political Empowerment of Women in the Southern Mediterranean Region*, Palestine Briefing Note, December 2015-March 2016.

2.2 Regional Office for Arab States, *Spring Forward: Regional Program for the Economic and Political Empowerment of Women in the Southern Mediterranean Region*, Palestine Performance Monitoring Framework, table, 2015.

2.3 Palestine Country Office, *Spring Forward: Regional Program for the Economic and Political Empowerment of Women in the Southern Mediterranean Region*, First Progress Report, November 2013, Covering Program Activities from November 1, 2012 to October 31, 2013, 2013.

2.4 Palestine Country Office, *Spring Forward: Regional Program for the Economic and Political Empowerment of Women in the Southern Mediterranean Region*, Second Progress Report, November 2014, Covering Program Activities from November 1, 2013 to October 31, 2014, 2014.

2.5 Success Story, Ms. Raga' Shahwan, 2014.

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2.7 Media Strategy, Arabic.

2.8 Women's Affairs Technical Committee, Study on Women's Voting Trend in Local Elections, 2012-2013, Arabic, 2015.

2.9 Public Perception Survey Results, Arabic.

Yemen Documents

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1.2 "Citizenship, Leadership and Participation: New Pathways for Arab Women Regional Program", Reflection on the Current Conflict, Report, August 2015.

1.3 Consultative Meeting for Yemen, Larnaca, Cyprus, 6-8 October 2015, Agenda, 2015.

1.4 Women Participation in Peace Building, A Workshop for Yemeni Women Leaders, 9-12 October 2015, Larnaca, Cyprus, English and Arabic, 2015.

1.5 Preparatory Meeting on Promoting Yemeni Women Civil Society Organizations' Engagement in Peace and Reconciliation Processes, 9-12 October 2015, Larnaca, Cyprus, 2015.

1.6 Yemeni Women Pact for Peace and Security, Second Meeting on Promoting Yemeni Women Civil Society Organizations' Engagement in Peace and Reconciliation Processes, December 2015.

1.7 Draft Agenda Equal Alliance Yemen, Arabic, 2015.

1.8 UN Women Meeting with the Yemeni Network of Independent Youth for an Alliance for Peace Based on Gender Equality, Meeting 13, April 2015, Report, 2015.

1.9 Women Participation in Peace Building, Second Meeting of the Yemeni Women's Pact for Security and Peace, 20-22 December 2015, Dead Sea, Jordan, 2015.

1.10 Yemeni Women Pact for Peace and Security, Consultations Meetings, Yemeni Women Engagement in Peace and Reconciliation Processes, February-December 2016.

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Annex B: Evaluation Terms and Definitions

Evaluation Terms

Key evaluation terms are as follows:

Relevance

"The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with the evolving needs and priorities of beneficiaries, partners, stakeholders-within country and global contexts" (OECD, 2010: 32). "Relevance provides information about the relationship of the most important GE [gender equality] and HR [human rights] issues present in the situation to the objectives of the intervention. It should also assess whether the programme design was guided by international Conventions, principles and protocols (e.g., CEDAW, United Nations Declaration on Human Rights) and whether it followed adequate [gender equity] and [human rights] analysis" (UN Women, nd: website). For considering relevance of programmes for equity objectives, UNICEF defines relevance as "The extent to which the expected results of the intervention address the rights and needs of worst-off groups, reduce inequities, and are consistent with equity-focused development priorities at global, national or local level" (UNICEF, 2011: 35).

Efficiency

UN Women defines Efficiency as "a measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results", consistent with the OECD definition (OECD/DAC, 2010: 21).

Effectiveness

UN Women defines Effectiveness as "the extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected/likely to be achieved", consistent with the OECD definition (OECD/DAC, 2010: 20).

Impact

"Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended". (OECD, 2010: 24).

Evaluation Definitions

The TOR make reference to the evaluation being formative as well as thematic.

OECD/DAC defines **thematic evaluation** as "evaluation of a selection of development interventions, all of which address a specific development priority that cuts across countries, regions and sectors" (OECD/DAC, 2002: 36). The TOR refers to the evaluation covering the 'thematic area of women's political participation and leadership'. As a *thematic* evaluation, the ROAS WPP placed the programme area within the context of ROAS' strategic vision and approach, consider this at a regional level, and consider the role of UN Women in supporting change in WPP through the three main roles of UN Women's operations: normative, operational, and in terms of coordination.

UN Women defines **formative evaluation** as "an evaluation which is designed to provide some early insights into a programme … to inform management and staff about the components that are working and those that need to be changed in order to achieve the intended objectives" (UN Women, 2009: 1). This is consistent with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) definition of formative evaluation as "evaluation intended to improve performance, most often conducted during the implementation phase of projects or programmes" (OECD/DAC, 2002: 23). While the UN Women definition is specific to a programme, here the concept has been extended to a thematic level. As a *formative* evaluation, the ROAS WPP evaluation focuses on considering how well the programme area has proceeded to date (2013-2015) specifically to consider means for improving performance under the new ROAS Strategic Note for 2015-2017.

These two aspects of the evaluation are consistent with the intended use of the findings noted when discussing the evaluation purpose in the TOR (p17): "the findings will be used for strategic policy and programmatic decisions, organisational learning and accountability as well as for the identification of good practices to advance women's political participation in the decision making process at all levels". The TOR also noted that this would help inform programming in WPP more broadly, and the upcoming mid-term review of the ROAS Strategic Note.

The emphasis of the evaluation will be on considering the role of ROAS within WPP in the Arab States region, on learning from experiences to date, in particular what worked, what didn't and how and where to improve, and what needs to be done to refine a relevant, effective and efficient approach to WPP in the coming years.

Annex C: Main Evaluation Questions

Evaluation questions noted in the TOR are as followed, organised by evaluation criteria. In further discussions during the inception phase, it was noted that as this was a formative, thematic evaluation, it was too early to consider impacts. Instead, the discussion of impacts in this report focuses on early indications of results that point towards possible impacts. Questions were therefore included in field interviews in this regard.

Relevance

- To what extent is UN Women strategically positioned to enhance WPP at national and regional levels?
- To what extent does UN Women's approach complement and add value to that of its key partners.
- Has UN Women been able to generate a process to strengthen women leadership supporting women's strategic interests and promoting sustainable progress on WPP? Which strategies should be implemented to reinforce this?
- To what extent has UN Women ROAS established a relevant, realistic, strategic, innovative and clear approach (covering normative, operational and co-ordination roles) for its work in support of women's political participation?
- To what extent do the WPP activities undertaken by UN Women address the underlying causes of inequality and discrimination?
- To what extent is UN Women's work aligned with other agencies globally recognised concepts and objectives such as promoting parity and transformational leadership?
- How can UN Women's approach to WPP be enhanced to better contribute to current development priorities such [as] they post-2015 development framework and Beijing +20 discussions?

Effectiveness

- What is the progress towards results at regional and national levels that UN Women has contributed to so far?
- Are there opportunities for replication and scaling-up good practices and innovative approaches?
- Which level of intervention is more effective to influence in gender structural transformations, the local, sub-regional, national or international?
- What innovative factors, dynamics and mechanisms would contribute to the achievement of more sustainable results, e.g., with parliamentary women caucus, with political parties, with electoral commissions, with municipalities?
- To what extent has UN Women's approach to engaging with key partners (Arab League, UN System, CSOs, others) been effective?
- To what extent were human rights-based approaches and gender equality incorporated in the design and implementation of WPP interventions?
- What are enabling and limiting factors that contribute to the achievement of results and what actions need to be taken to overcome any barriers that limit progress?

Efficiency

- What operational mechanisms are needed to make UN Women's approach on WPP more efficient and effective?
- To what extent is learning from initiatives being implemented in the field under regional programmes feeding into the regional approach and vice-versa?
- Do current reporting guidance and practices reflect the medium term impact on UN Women's WPP work?
- Are human and financial resources in line with the political mandate of UN Women in WPP and the solid substantive input required to respond to demands identified in the field?
- Which strategies would be more efficient to promote south-south cooperation, enhancing mutual knowledge of initiatives and programmes promoting WPP?
- Have their existed obstacles at country level (political, bureaucratic) that have limited the progress on the commitment towards women's political empowerment?
- Were there any constraints (e.g., political, practical, and bureaucratic) to addressing human rights and gender equality efficiently during implementation? What level of effort was made to overcome these challenges?

Impact

- To what extent as a result of UN Women's intervention can we observe positive changes in the decisions adopted by women politicians?
- To what extent as a result of UN Women's intervention can we conclude that political parties (or other regional and national legislative bodies) are better off in terms of gender sensitive policies?

Sub-questions were elaborated for relevance, effectiveness and efficiency in the following three tables:

Table 4: Sub-Questions for Relevance

Normative and Operational	Co-ordination
Has 'upward' alignment to international protocols and agreements helped, or undermined, relevance to regional and national needs?	Has 'upward' alignment to international protocols and agreements 'taken place?
Has alignment been consistent with HRBA approach?	Has UN Women influenced political participation programming in the UN system in terms of gender equality?
Has UN Women programming in WPP been relevant to actual needs in the region?	To what extent has UN Women's WPP programming efforts improved WPP coherence in the UN system?
To what extent are human and financial resources aligned with UN Women's mandate	How well has UN Women ROAS aligned itself within its Strategic Plans with the UN Women global strategic plans, specifically with regard to output clusters?
Has UN Women programming been driven by evidence from the region?	Within the UN system, has UN Women ROAS been able to play a role in advancing HR&GE programming approaches?
Has UN Women placed itself appropriately in WPP programming in the region? How has it added value to the roles played by its partners?	How relevant has UN Women's approach to WPP enhancing the post-2015 development framework and Beijing +20 discussions?
Has UN Women programming in WPP been appropriately informed by the needs and interest of diverse groups, including disempowered groups?	
Has south south collaboration in the region proven relevant to advancing WPP?	
How well has UN Women ROAS aligned itself within its Strategic Plans with the UN Women global strategic plans, specifically with regard to main outputs?	

Table 5: Sub-Questions for Effectiveness

Normative and Operational	Co-ordination
Consider the 'no programme support' option for UN Women and WPP programming, in other words what would the situation have been without UN Women's engagement. What has been the 'value added' of UN Women's regional operations?	Has UN Women been able to create momentum in WPP that has yielded results beyond UN Women's work itself?
How well has UN Women managed to 'balance' crisis response with long-term programming in WPP?	How effective has UN Women been in contributing towards the desired impact 'women lead and participate in decision-making?
How well has UN Women performed in terms of taking advantage of opportunities arising to advance WPP?	What are the structural and operational strengths and weaknesses of UN Women's regional operations in ROAS?
To what extent has UN Women been able to consider, and respond to, the underlying causes of inequality and discrimination that affect WPP?	As UN Women's role has been defined and evolved in the ROAS region, has it been able to meet needs as they have emerged, including HR&GE?

Normative and Operational	Co-ordination
Has UN Women been able to build on the efforts of national and local actors in an effective manner to advance WPP?	To what extent has UN Women been able to contribute to broader UN understanding of, and respond to, the underlying causes of inequality and discrimination that affect WPP?
How effective has UN Women been in advancing transformational leadership to effect WPP?	How effective has UN Women ROAS been in their role as 'knowledge generator and knowledge hub' as it has influenced and informed the UN system, and development partners more generally?
How effective has UN Women ROAS been in their role as 'knowledge generator and knowledge hub' as it has affected WPP in the region?	Has effective has operational support to country offices been in terms of WPP programming?
To what extent has learning been documented and shared in a manner that improves performance in WPP in areas where UN Women has been active?	

Table 6: Sub-Questions for Efficiency

Normative and Operational	Co-ordination
Consider the 'no programme support' option for UN Women and WPP programming, in other words what would the situation have been without UN Women's engagement. Would WPP programming have been implemented in a more efficient manner through other mechanisms?	Consider the 'no programme support' option for UN Women and WPP programming, in other words what would the situation have been without UN Women's engagement. Would WPP have been more cost effectively been implemented by another institution, in the UN or elsewhere?
What is the value added by UN Women ROAS' focus on WPP compared to alternative approaches?	How efficient has UN Women ROAS' operations been in responding to UN expectations associated with gender equality and women's empowerment?
How cost effective has UN Women ROAS' support for country level programming?	What have been the trade-offs in terms of cost effectiveness associated with responding to short-term crisis needs and achieving long-term objectives?
How efficient has UN Women ROAS' support for country level programming been in terms of implementation?	How efficient have UN Women ROAS' knowledge hub's operations been within the larger UN system?
How efficient have UN Women ROAS' knowledge hub's operations been in contributing to effective knowledge management in the region?	Given levels of funding to regional operations, could WPP programming has been implemented in a more efficient manner if additional funds had been made available?
One role of ROAS has been to support country office evaluations, and evaluation utility in these countries. How efficient and cost effective has ROAS been in this regard?	UN Women does not have a country office presence in some countries in the ROAS region. How efficient and cost effective has implementation been despite this non-presence? Where have inefficiencies arisen?

Annex D: Human Rights and Gender Responsive Evaluation

Human Rights

The United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG, 2011: 11) specifies that "human rights are the civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of one's nationality, place of residence, sex, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, colour, disability, religion, language etc. All human beings are entitled to these rights without discrimination. They are universal, inalienable, interdependent, indivisible, equal and non-discriminatory".

A *human rights-based approach* identifies <u>rights-holders</u> and their entitlements and corresponding <u>duty-bearers</u> and their obligations, and works towards strengthening the capacities of rights-holders to make their claims and of duty-bearers to meet their obligations.

Gender Equality

The United Nations Evaluation Group guidelines define gender equality as (UNEG, 2011: 13) follows: "Gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men, girls and boys. Equality does not mean women and men will become the same, but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. It implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognising the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a 'women's issue', but concerns and should fully engage men as well as women".

Application of HR & GE to Evaluation

The UNEG (2011: 13) report on integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluation states that "evaluations play a crucial role in examining to what extent UN interventions benefit right-holders … strengthen the capacity of duty bearers or other actors to fulfil obligations and responsibilities, strengthen accountability mechanisms, and monitor and advocate for compliance with international standards on [Human Rights and Gender Equality] HR & GE". Inclusion, participation, and fairness were noted as key elements of an HR and GE approach to evaluation.

Section 2, Table 2.3 of the UNEG report offers advice on alignment of DAC evaluation criteria with the practical application of human rights and gender equality principles, and is reproduced below:

Table 7: DAC Evaluation Criteria and Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality

DAC Criteria and Definition	Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality
Relevance	Assessing the HR & GE relevance of an intervention entails examining how the intervention is designed and implemented to align and contribute to HR & GE, as defined by international and regional conventions; and national policies and strategies; and the needs of rights holders and duty bearers both women and men, targeted by an intervention). Results of the intervention should also be relevant to the realization of HR & GE. Some examples of areas to assess include the: • Extent to which the intervention is aligned with international instruments (e.g. CEDAW, CRPD, CRC), standards and principles on HR & GE and contributes to their implementation; • Extent to which the intervention is aligned with and contributes to regional conventions and national policies and strategies on HR & GE; • Extent to which the intervention is informed by substantive and tailored human rights and gender analyses that identify underlying causes and barriers to HR & GE; • Extent to which the intervention is informed by needs and interests of diverse groups of stakeholders through in-depth consultation; • Relevance of stakeholder participation in the intervention.
Effectiveness	Analysis of an intervention's effectiveness involves assessing the way in which results were defined, monitored and achieved (or not) on HR & GE and that the processes that led to these results were aligned with HR & GE principles (e.g. inclusion, non-discrimination, accountability, etc.). In cases where HR & GE results were not explicitly stated in the planning document or results framework, assessing effectiveness in terms of HR & GE is still possible and necessary as all UN interventions

DAC Criteria and Definition	Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality
	will have some effect on HR & GE and should aim to contribute to their realization. Some issues to consider include the: • Extent to which the Theory of Change and results framework of the intervention integrated HR & GE; • Extent to which a human rights based approach and a gender mainstreaming strategy were incorporated in the design and implementation of the intervention; • Presence of key results on HR & GE.
Efficiency	The HR & GE dimensions of efficiency require a broader analysis of the benefits and related costs of integrating HR & GE in interventions. A key aspect that needs to be considered is that HR & GE involve long- term and complex change processes that require sustained support. While a direct relationship between resource investment and long term results should be carefully established, the assessment of efficiency should also consider short term process achievements (participation and inclusiveness, etc.) and medium- term results (developing an enabling environment, building capacity, etc.). Some aspects to consider include the: • Provision of adequate resources for integrating HR & GE in the intervention as an investment in short-term, medium-term and long-term benefits; • Costs of not providing resources for integrating HR & GE (e.g. enhanced benefits that could have been achieved for modest investment); • Extent to which the allocation of resources to targeted groups takes into account the need to prioritize those most marginalized.
Impact	Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. They go on to note that positive human rights and gender equality impact "can be defined as the actual and long-lasting realisation and enjoyment of HR&GE by rights holders and capacity of duty-bearers to respect, protect and fulfil HR&GE" (p28).

The evaluation itself is noted to be based on gender and human rights principles, as defined in UN Women's Evaluation Policy, while the TOR also note that "the analysis of the application of human rights and gender equality principles in WPP interventions will be an integral part of the final evaluation report" (page 19). This is consistent with the UN Women's Evaluation Policy's (UN Women, 2012: 9) reference to UN Women evaluation criteria "aligned with those of [United Nations Evaluation Group] UNEG, including criteria based on gender equality and international human rights principles.

Annex E: Theory of Change

The ToC comprises a series of hypotheses that are linked at 'goal' level and, at a lower level, between outputs and outcomes comprising a series of sub-hypotheses. These have been summarised as follows:

> 'If (1) structural barriers are weakened enhancing women's civic engagement, representation, leadership and mediation; if (2) a cadre of interested and competent women leaders, decision-makers, and mediators is formed; if (3) women are perceived equal partners in politics, decision-making and mediation; and if (4) women are supported in different institutions and by local communities, then (5) women will be politically empowered and realise their rights, because (6) women will be perceived as equal partners".

The first four are elaborated as outcomes, with output to outcome sub-hypotheses as follows:

1. Structural barriers - If (1) women's active civil engagement, representation and leadership are enabled through legal and policy frameworks then (2) women percentage as voters, candidates, representatives in political and governmental structures increases because (3) a more level playing field exists.
2. Cadre is formed - If (1) women are technically and personally empowered to take up roles in public and political spheres, then (2) more women will run/be nominated to political and governmental structures because (3) sufficient number of competent women exist.
3. Equal partners - If (1) entrenched gender stereotypes are altered leveraging gender equality and women's empowerment, (2) local communities will support women public and political engagement and representation because (3) women are accepted as equal partners in public and political spheres.
4. Women supported - If (1) women representatives, decision-makers and mediators are supported by local communities and institutions then (2) stakeholders' capacities to recognise women's needs and demands will increase because (3) women are equal partners.

The ToC goes on to note that these issues needed to occur at two levels: a) policy, advocating to enhance gender equality and women's empowerment through legislative and policy-level reforms, provision of technical assistance to engender institutions and support to the establishment of members of parliament caucuses; and 2) grassroots, capacity-building to women candidates, awareness raising activities to the media professional and the public on the important roles women play in the public and political arena and the establishment of women's networks/forums.

The visualisation of the Theory of Change for WPP programming in ROAS is as follows:

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Figure 2: ROAS Theory of Change on WPP

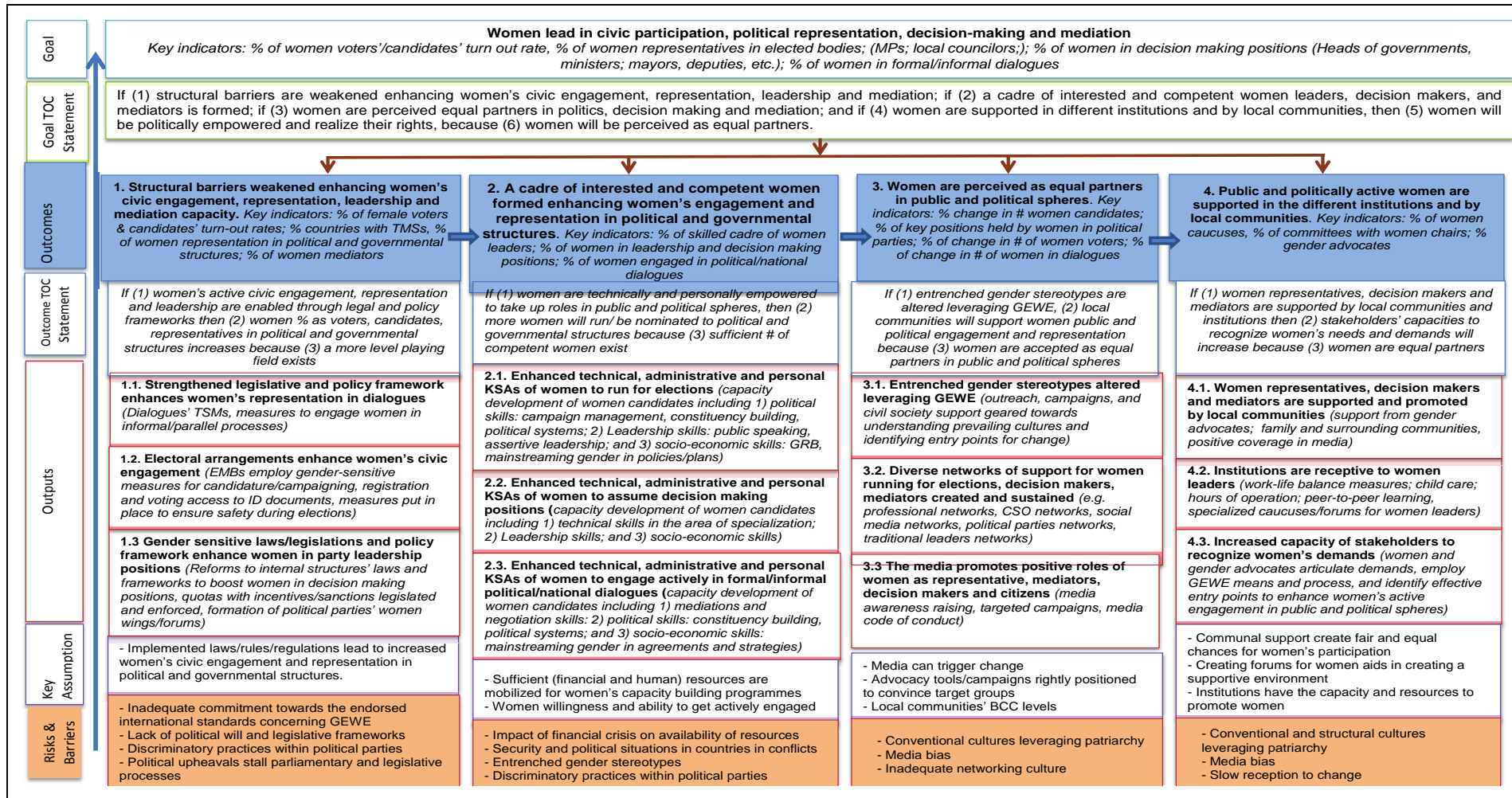|	
Goal	**Women lead in civic participation, political representation, decision-making and mediation** *Key indicators: % of women voters'/candidates' turn out rate, % of women representatives in elected bodies; (MPs; local councilors;); % of women in decision making positions (Heads of governments, ministers; mayors, deputies, etc.); % of women in formal/informal dialogues*
Goal TOC Statement	If (1) structural barriers are weakened enhancing women's civic engagement, representation, leadership and mediation; if (2) a cadre of interested and competent women leaders, decision makers, and mediators is formed; if (3) women are perceived equal partners in politics, decision making and mediation; and if (4) women are supported in different institutions and by local communities, then (5) women will be politically empowered and realize their rights, because (6) women will be perceived as equal partners.

Outcomes

1. Structural barriers weakened enhancing women's civic engagement, representation, leadership and mediation capacity. *Key indicators: % of female voters & candidates' turn-out rates; % countries with TMSs, % of women representation in political and governmental structures; % of women mediators*	2. A cadre of interested and competent women formed enhancing women's engagement and representation in political and governmental structures. *Key indicators: % of skilled cadre of women leaders; % of women in leadership and decision making positions; % of women engaged in political/national dialogues*	3. Women are perceived as equal partners in public and political spheres. *Key indicators: % change in # women candidates; % of key positions held by women in political parties; % of change in # of women voters; % of change in # of women in dialogues*	4. Public and politically active women are supported in the different institutions and by local communities. *Key indicators: % of women caucuses, % of committees with women chairs; % gender advocates*

Outcome TOC Statement

If (1) women's active civic engagement, representation and leadership are enabled through legal and policy frameworks then (2) women % as voters, candidates, representatives in political and governmental structures increases because (3) a more level playing field exists	*If (1) women are technically and personally empowered to take up roles in public and political spheres, then (2) more women will run/ be nominated to political and governmental structures because (3) sufficient # of competent women exist*	*If (1) entrenched gender stereotypes are altered leveraging GEWE, (2) local communities will support women public and political engagement and representation because (3) women are accepted as equal partners in public and political spheres*	*If (1) women representatives, decision makers and mediators are supported by local communities and institutions then (2) stakeholders' capacities to recognize women's needs and demands will increase because (3) women are equal partners*

Outputs

1.1. Strengthened legislative and policy framework enhances women's representation in dialogues *(Dialogues' TSMs, measures to engage women in informal/parallel processes)*	2.1. Enhanced technical, administrative and personal KSAs of women to run for elections *(capacity development of women candidates including 1) political skills: campaign management, constituency building, political systems; 2) Leadership skills: public speaking, assertive leadership; and 3) socio-economic skills: GRB, mainstreaming gender in policies/plans)*	3.1. Entrenched gender stereotypes altered leveraging GEWE *(outreach, campaigns, and civil society support geared towards understanding prevailing cultures and identifying entry points for change)*	4.1. Women representatives, decision makers and mediators are supported and promoted by local communities *(support from gender advocates; family and surrounding communities, positive coverage in media)*
1.2. Electoral arrangements enhance women's civic engagement *(EMBs employ gender-sensitive measures for candidate/campaigning, registration and voting access to ID documents, measures put in place to ensure safety during elections)*	2.2. Enhanced technical, administrative and personal KSAs of women to assume decision making positions *(capacity development of women candidates including 1) technical skills in the area of specialization; 2) Leadership skills; and 3) socio-economic skills)*	3.2. Diverse networks of support for women running for elections, decision makers, mediators created and sustained *(e.g. professional networks, CSO networks, social media networks, political parties networks, traditional leaders networks)*	4.2. Institutions are receptive to women leaders *(work-life balance measures; child care; hours of operation; peer-to-peer learning, specialized caucuses/forums for women leaders)*
1.3 Gender sensitive laws/legislations and policy framework enhance women in party leadership positions *(Reforms to internal structures' laws and frameworks to boost women in decision making positions, quotas with incentives/sanctions legislated and enforced, formation of political parties' women wings/forums)*	2.3. Enhanced technical, administrative and personal KSAs of women to engage actively in formal/informal political/national dialogues *(capacity development of women candidates including 1) mediations and negotiation skills: 2) political skills: constituency building, political systems; and 3) socio-economic skills: mainstreaming gender in agreements and strategies)*	3.3 The media promotes positive roles of women as representative, mediators, decision makers and citizens *(media awareness raising, targeted campaigns, media code of conduct)*	4.3. Increased capacity of stakeholders to recognize women's demands *(women and gender advocates articulate demands, employ GEWE means and process, and identify effective entry points to enhance women's active engagement in public and political spheres)*

Key Assumption

- Implemented laws/rules/regulations lead to increased women's civic engagement and representation in political and governmental structures.	- Sufficient (financial and human) resources are mobilized for women's capacity building programmes - Women willingness and ability to get actively engaged	- Media can trigger change - Advocacy tools/campaigns rightly positioned to convince target groups - Local communities' BCC levels	- Communal support create fair and equal chances for women's participation - Creating forums for women aids in creating a supportive environment - Institutions have the capacity and resources to promote women

Risks & Barriers

- Inadequate commitment towards the endorsed international standards concerning GEWE - Lack of political will and legislative frameworks - Discriminatory practices within political parties - Political upheavals stall parliamentary and legislative processes	- Impact of financial crisis on availability of resources - Security and political situations in countries in conflicts - Entrenched gender stereotypes - Discriminatory practices within political parties	- Conventional cultures leveraging patriarchy - Media bias - Inadequate networking culture	- Conventional and structural cultures leveraging patriarchy - Media bias - Slow reception to change

Annex F: ROAS WPP Development Results Framework

ROAS notes that WPP is a core thematic priority. In the 2015-2017 Development Results Framework (DRF; UN Women ROAS, 2015), as adapted from the 2014-2017 DRF, the following are specified regarding WPP:

Table 8: ROAS Development Results Framework Elements Relevant to WPP

Level	Measures and Indicators
Impact 1	Women lead and participate in decision-making at all levels in the political sphere.
Outcome 1.1	Constitutions, legal frameworks, and policies to advance women's right to participate in decision-making at different levels are reformed/adopted and implemented.
Outcome 1.1 Indicator	• Indicator 1.1a (Outcome) - Regional Centres of excellence/knowledge hub on women's political participation established (baseline 0, target 1)
Output 1.1.1	Enhanced capacity by the state to develop and implement reforms in constitutions, legal frameworks to advance women's political participation.
Output Indicators 1.1.1	• 1.1.1a (Output) - Number of countries/government officials requesting support from the centre of excellence (baseline 0, target 5) • 1.1.1b (Output) - Number of countries that have established and use mechanisms to monitor implementation of legislation and policies to advance WPP (baseline not specified, target not specified)
Output 1.1.2	Increased access to information and data on WPP to support advocacy by government and civil society.
Output Indicators 1.1.2	• 1.1.2a (Output) - Number of countries which collect nationally sex disaggregated data, based on lessons learned from the centre of excellence (baseline not specified, target 10) • 1.1.2b (Output) - Number of regional knowledge products developed or made accessible (baseline not specified, target 2)
Output 1.1.3	Increased regional co-ordination/collaboration on advancing WPP, including increased capacity of civil society to engage and advocate for WPP.
Output Indicators 1.1.3	- 1.1.3a (Output) - Number of co-ordinated actions at the regional level on advancing legislation and policies on WPP, including south-south exchanges (baseline not specified, target 1 per year)

This is further elaborated with reference to country level programming, with the WPP programming linked to this country level programming comprising the following:

Table 9: ROAS DRF Elements Relevant to WPP (2015-2017)

Level	Measures and Indicators
Impact	Increased participation of women in political processes in the region (including as decision-makers and leaders)
Outcome 1.1 and Indicator	Countries in the Arab States Region are incorporating and using relevant tools and knowledge to ensure constitutions, legal frameworks, and policies advance women's rights to participate in decision-making at national and local levels are reformed/adopted and implemented. Indicator 1.1a (outcome) - Number of countries where UN Women partners (governing bodies) supported by ROAS who have taken formal action to ensure Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment provisions to increase WPP and incorporated into national policies/strategies (baseline 0, target 2 by 2017) Indicator 1.1b (outcome) - Number of countries supported by UN Women in which national partners adopt reforms or reform constitutional, legal or policy frameworks (baseline 8 in 2014, target 12 by 2017).

Level	Measures and Indicators
Output 1.1.1	Targeted national institutions have enhanced capacity at national and sub-national levels to develop and implement constitutions, legal frameworks and policies that promote WPP.
Output Indicators 1.1.1	- 1.1.1a (Output) - Number of countries where UN Women has provided capacity-building to ensure gender perspectives are included in legal frameworks, constitutions and policies (baseline 8, target 12).
Output 1.1.2	National institutions have the capacity to produce sex-disaggregated data and statistics for gender sensitive policy-making and service delivery.
Output Indicators 1.1.2	- 1.1.2b (Output) Number of Electoral Management Bodies (EMB) in countries where UN Women works reporting sex-disaggregated data (baseline 2 [Morocco & Tunisia], target 4 [adding Lebanon and Egypt]).
Output 1.1.3	National institutions have improved access to knowledge products and tools to formulate and implement gender sensitive policies
Output Indicators 1.1.3	- 1.1.3a (Output) - Number of countries in which knowledge provided by UN Women ROAS is available to support development of gender responsive policies (baseline 0, target all 17 ROAS countries by 2017) - 1.1.3b (Output) - Number of countries in which knowledge of gender responsive policies was provided by UN Women ROAS - (baseline 0, target all 17 ROAS countries by 2017)
Outcome 1.2 and Indicator	Gender responsive measures (mechanisms, processes and services) promote women's leadership and participation in politics Indicator 1.2a (outcome) - Number of countries with gender equality committees in parliament (baseline 0 in 2014, target 3)
Output 1.2.1	Strengthened capacities of Parliaments in targeted countries to adopt policies, legislation and procedures that promote gender equality and women's empowerment.
Output Indicators 1.2.1	- 1.2.1a (Output) - Number of parliaments supported by UN Women ROAS that introduce measures to promote gender equality and women's empowerment (baseline 0 in 2014, target 1 [Arab Parliament])
Output 1.2.2	Strengthened capacities at all levels to promote women's participation in electoral processes both as candidates and voters.
Output Indicators 1.2.2a	- 1.1.2b (Output) Number of countries supported by UN Women that have increased the capacity of women candidates and party members to participate in political life (baseline 7 [Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Palestine] at end of 2014, target 10 [adding UAE, Libya, Yemen]).
Output 1.2.3	Co-ordinated UN action through adoption of policies and guidance on TSM and electoral support on women's leadership and political participation.
Output Indicators 1.2.3	- 1.2.3a (Output) - Number of country teams supported by UN Women ROAS with UN electoral assistance reporting sex disaggregated data/gender responsive voter registration/voter education/TSMs (baseline 0, target 3 [Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan]). - 1.1.3b (Output) - Number of countries in which knowledge of gender responsive policies was provided by UN Women ROAS (baseline 0, target all 17 ROAS countries by 2017).
Outcome 1.3 and Indicator	Gender equality advocates from the Arab States Region influence policies and frameworks to increase women's leadership and political participation through on-going participation in national dialogue. Indicator 1.3a (outcome) - Number of countries with national dialogues and policies influenced by gender equality advocates (baseline 1, target 2).
Output 1.3.1	Capacity of gender equality advocates strengthened to promote women's leadership and political participation.

Level	Measures and Indicators
Output Indicators 1.3.1	- 1.3.1a (Output) - Number of networks of academics, elected women and other opinion makers advocate for women's political participation supported by UN Women (baseline 1 [Egypt], target 5 [add Yemen, Libya, Lebanon, Tunisia])
Output 1.3.2	Strengthened dialogue mechanisms and enhanced policy space to enable gender equality advocates and civil society to promote political participation.
Output Indicators 1.3.1	- 1.3.1a (Output) - Number of countries supported by UN Women where gender equality advocates and civil society have participated in national dialogues on political participation (baseline 1 [Egypt], target 3 [add Yemen, Libya]).

Annex G: Review of GERAAS Criteria and Commentary

As noted in the main report, GERAAS documentation was reviewed on regular occasions as design, implementation, analysis and write-up proceeded. The GERAAS criteria are better aligned with the evaluation of a single programme, rather than a thematic area, but have been adapted to better fit this thematic evaluation. The following offers a summary of the design and conduct of the evaluation, and how the evaluators have responded to the quality assessment terms.

Quality Assessment	Evaluation Response
Parameter 1: Object and Context of the Evaluation	
1.1. The logic model and/or the expected results chain of the object is clearly described.	DRF discussed in main text, including the change from 2014 to 2015, with the 2015 expectations included in Annex E. Theory of Change summarised and included in Annex D, and summarised in the main report. Main report discusses issues arising from how results are elaborated and tracked/not tracked.
1.2.The context includes factors that have a direct bearing on the object of the evaluation: social, political, economic, demographic and institutional. This also includes explanation of the contextual gender equality and human rights issues, roles, attitudes and relations.	As this is a thematic evaluation, the range of issues that could be discussed would make the evaluation report itself unwieldy, and would significantly exceed the page limitation. The materials were nevertheless carefully reviewed in preparation for the evaluation, and a synthesis document prepared and annexed to the Inception Report. Key documents in this regard comprised the strategic notes prepared by ROAS. Concerning the second sentence, GE&HR issues are summarised in the main report and elaborated in Annex C. Annex C includes a listing of how the evaluation approached GE&HR.
1.3. The scale and complexity of the object of the evaluation are clearly described (the number of components the geographical context and boundaries, the purpose, goal and organisation or management of the object, and the total resources from all sources including human and budgets).	This is summarised in Section 1 of this report, and is described in more detail in the strategic notes prepared by ROAS. Here again, too much detail would overwhelm the evaluation report, given that this is a thematic evaluation. Regarding resources, thematic work carried out under WPP includes two major programme initiatives and part of a third, but each of these initiatives also contains elements that fall outside of WPP. Core aspects of co-ordination, the knowledge hub, technical support to country-level programming, and evaluation support all run across human resource budgets within ROAS that are shared across other intervention arenas, and are therefore problematic to view in isolation.
1.4. The key stakeholders involved in the object implementation, including the implementing agency(s) and partners, other stakeholders and their roles.	For the three rapid case studies, this information is included in the case study reports.
1.5. The report identifies the implementation status of the object, including its phase of implementation and any significant changes (e.g., plans, strategies, logical frameworks) that have occurred over time and explains the implications of those changes for the evaluation.	Discussed under each evaluation criteria in this report. It should be noted that the various elements of WPP programming are at different points in implementation, but the task is not to elaborate each of them, rather it is to consider at thematic level whether these actions are contributing to change in WPP.
Parameter 2: Purpose, Objectives and Scope	
2.1 Purpose of evaluation is clearly defined, including why the evaluation was needed at that point in time, who needed the information, what information is needed and how the information will be used.	Evaluation purpose and scope stated in Section 1. Regarding why the evaluation was needed at this point in time, no evaluability assessment was conducted by ROAS prior to commissioning the evaluation. The who/what/how questions were asked of ROAS in an early skype discussion to ensure that the Consultants understood the need. Based on that discussion, the 'who' is ROAS itself, the 'what' is a broad-based assessment of activities carried out under WPP programming considered at thematic level, and the 'how' is to consider lessons learned from programming to date that can inform new programming from 2017 onwards. This last point relates in part to the completion of the core Spring Forward Programme at the end of 2016.
2.2 Evaluation objectives: A clear explanation of the evaluation objectives including main evaluation questions is provided.	Objectives included in Section 1. Evaluation questions included in Annex B.

Quality Assessment	Evaluation Response
2.3 Evaluation scope: The scope of the evaluation is described including justification of what the evaluation covers and does not cover.	Scope indicated in Section 1. Resource constraints associated with the financing of the evaluation has meant that the scope has been limited beyond what was originally planned. This has constrained in particular the extent of fieldwork, and has meant that meetings at ROAS itself were not possible.
2.4 Evaluation criteria: The report describes and provides an explanation of the chosen evaluation criteria, performance standards, or other criteria used by the evaluators.	Evaluation criteria were specified in the Terms of Reference. The issue of measuring Impacts was discussed and explained further in the Inception Report, as the Consultants did not feel that it was possible to give more than indications about the potential for positive impacts with the evaluation being conducted at a thematic level, and given the resource constraints.
2.5 Gender and human rights:Evaluation objectives and scope include questions that address issues of gender and human rights.	Included in research questions, tools, and reporting.
Parameter 3: Methodology	
3.1 The report presents a transparent description of the methodology applied to the evaluation and clearly explains how the evaluation was specifically designed to address the evaluation criteria, yield answers to the evaluation questions, and achieve evaluation purposes and objectives.	Included in Section 1, with research questions and tools included in annexes. Further information has been included in the Inception Report. Here again it is important to point out that the resources available for the evaluation were quite limited, and below the level the Consultants estimated would be required. The level of effort was cut based on an understanding that the evaluation would proceed as far as it could, to a depth limited by these resource constraints.
3.2. Data collection: The report describes the data collection methods and analysis, the rationale for selecting them, and their limitations. Reference indicators and benchmarks are included where relevant.	Included in Section 1 and annexes. Also included in the Inception Report. Regarding the second sentence, 'reference indicators and benchmarks' are derived from the DRF for WPP, but much of what has been done does not fit well with the DRF. This is discussed under the evaluation criteria relevance and effectiveness, and implications noted for efficiency.
3.3. Data sources: The report describes the data sources, the rationale for their selection, and their limitations. The report includes discussion of how the mix of data sources was used to obtain a diversity of perspectives, ensure data accuracy and overcome data limits.	Programme documents were provided by ROAS and by the country officers where rapid case studies were carried out. Additional documents were made available by different team members. Field interviews were arranged by ROAS and the country offices. In a number of respects it was not possible to overcome data limitations. However, the existence of these data limitations forms part of the evaluation assessment.
3.4. Sample frame: The report describes the sampling frame - area and population to be represented, rationale for selection, mechanics of selection, numbers selected out of potential subjects, and limitations to the sample.	The process of who to interview was driven by ROAS. The number of interviews conducted was indicated in Section 1 by location and level. The number selected out of potential subjects is unknown. Interview utility was undermined by the lack of on-site interviews in Cairo and Libya, and no country visits to other locations. Limitations to the sample were due to constraints due to the accelerated timeline of the evaluation, and resource constraints.
3.5.Stakeholder consultation: The evaluation report gives a complete description of the stakeholder.	Interviewees are included in annexes to the country reports.
3.6. Data quality: The report presents evidence that adequate measures were taken to ensure data quality, including evidence supporting the reliability and validity of data collection tools (e.g., interview protocols, observation tools, etc.).	Data quality was enhanced by the construct of tools that guided field interviews. Secondary materials were systematically reviewed and marked for consideration in the evaluation, with key elements inserted into an internal draft report and thereafter reviewed and incorporated into the evaluation report itself. As part of the Inception Phase, findings from secondary materials were processed into a framework organised around the key evaluation questions, and included as an annex to the Inception Report. This information was further processed into this evaluation report. This systematic approach helped ensure that key issues were not missed. Further, upon completion of the country visits, main findings were organised around the Theory of Change for WPP. Upon completion of all interviews for a country case study, findings were organised by questions in the field tools. These materials have been made available, without identifies and after guarantees that the materials would not be shared, to UN Women's Independent Office for Evaluation. Data quality was limited by the level of effort available for the conduct of the evaluation. Numerous information gaps remained despite

Quality Assessment	Evaluation Response
	fieldwork, many of which would have best been filled through at least a doubling of fieldwork, and extended interviews at ROAS in Cairo.
3.7. Gender and human rights considerations: The methods employed are appropriate for analysing gender and rights issues identified in the evaluation scope.	Specifically considered in the field tools. Limited by the narrow range of interviews, and by the absence of relevant information in some documents.
3.8. Ethics: The evaluation report includes a discussion of the extent to which the evaluation design included ethical safeguards and mechanisms and measures that were implemented to ensure that the evaluation process conformed with relevant ethical standards including but not limited to informed consent of participants, privacy and confidentiality considerations.	The field tools included first gaining clearance for the interview, and notification that the results would be kept confidential. When asked by ROAS to share the original write-ups of interviews, the Consultants refused, indicating that the participants were promised confidentiality, and that such confidentiality must be maintained. It was subsequently clarified by ROAS that the findings would be shared only with the UN Women Independent Office for Evaluation, and not with ROAS or anyone else. Under these conditions, and after taking out identifiers in the write-ups, these materials were made available to the Office for Evaluation. Any sharing from there is outside the control of the Consultants.
Parameter 4: Findings	
4.1. Findings respond directly to the evaluation criteria and questions detailed in the scope and objectives section of the report are based on evidence derived from data collection and analysis methods described in the methodology section of the report.	To the extent that evidence is available, the narrative was developed and findings evaluated. Where gaps did not allow conclusions, this has been noted in the report. As a thematic evaluation, the absence of evidence is a key finding, particularly in a situation where ROAS aims at developing a knowledge hub. It has therefore been included as one aspect of the findings of the evaluation. Limitations are especially relevant to the case study reports. The case studies themselves were meant solely to inform the thematic evaluation of a regional initiative, and are not stand alone evaluations of how programmes have been implemented in the case study countries. For this reason, the findings as presented in the case study reports need to be viewed recognising the purposes of the case studies themselves.
4.2.Reported findings reflect systematic and appropriate analysis and interpretation of the data.	As with 4.1.
4.3. Reported findings address the evaluation criteria and questions defined in the evaluation scope.	Presented in this report. The issue of 'impact' was noted above.
4.4. Findings are objectively reported based on the evidence.	To the extent that data provided evidence, this was carefully considered and processed into the report. With of the dearth of field visits, and because of the lack of on-site extended meetings with ROAS, there could have been a tendency to 'stretch' the findings to try and respond to all research questions in full. Instead, where questions could only be partially answered or not answered at all, this was noted in the evaluation report. With one aspect of the evaluation being formative, recommendations have been made suggesting how these problems can be avoided in future, through improved results monitoring and through adequate support to evaluation.
4.5. Gaps and limitations in the data and/or unanticipated findings are reported and discussed.	As discussed above.
4.6. Reasons for accomplishments and failures, especially continuing constraints, are identified as much as possible.	As discussed above.
Parameter 5: Conclusions and Lessons Learned	
5.1. Conclusions present reasonable judgments based on findings and substantiated by evidence, and provide insights pertinent to the object and purpose of the evaluation.	Conclusions have been derived where evidence is available. Where evidence is lacking, this is noted, and the inability to draw relevant conclusions noted.
5.2. The conclusions reflect reasonable evaluative judgments relating to key evaluation questions.	Care has been taken to draw conclusions based on available evidence. Further clarifications are expected after the Reference Group reviews the draft report. This has been constrained by the absence of a site visit to ROAS due to budget constraints. Ideally it would have been best to discuss these issues with ROAS personnel, and with the Reference Group.

Quality Assessment	Evaluation Response
5.3. Conclusions are well substantiated by the evidence presented and are logically connected to evaluation findings.	As with 5.2.
5.4. Stated conclusions provide insights into the identification and/or solutions of important problems or issues pertinent to the prospective decisions and actions of evaluation users.	The main target is ROAS, and conclusions are focused at that level.
5.5 Lessons learned: When presented, lessons drawn represent contributions to general knowledge. They may refine or add to commonly accepted understanding, but should not be merely a repetition of common knowledge. Lessons presented suggest how they can be applied to different contexts and/or different sectors.	At a thematic level and focused on a relatively new organisation, the evaluation has had an opportunity to consider implications for WPP that may have relevance for new programming and for regions outside of ROAS.
Parameter 6: Recommendations	
6.1. Recommendations are supported by evidence and conclusions, and were developed with the involvement of relevant stakeholders.	Recommendations are derived from conclusions. The draft report goes through a review process involving ROAS and a Reference Group.
6.2. The report describes the process followed in developing the recommendations including consultation with stakeholders.	Included with recommendations.
6.3. Recommendations are relevant to the object and purposes of the evaluation.	Each recommendation was considered against the research questions, and in considering what is required from a thematic evaluation.
6.4. Recommendations clearly identify the target group for each recommendation.	At a thematic level, recommendations are focused on ROAS.
6.5. Recommendations are clearly stated with priorities for actions made clear.	Recommendations are made, actors specified, and priority recommendations specified.
6.6. Recommendations are actionable and reflect an understanding of the commissioning organisation and potential constraints to follow-up.	As above.
Parameter 7: Gender and Human Rights	
7.1. GEEW is integrated in the evaluation scope of analysis and indicators are designed in a way that ensures GEEW-related data will be collected.	Elaborated in the Inception Report, and noted in Section 1 and annexes to this report.
7.2. Evaluation criteria and evaluation questions specifically address how GEEW has been integrated into the design, planning, implementation of the intervention and the results achieved.	Elaborated in the Inception Report, and noted in Section 1 and annexes to this report.
7.3. A gender-responsive evaluation methodology, methods and tools, and data analysis techniques are selected.	Elaborated in the Inception Report, and noted in Section 1 and annexes to this report.

Annex H: List of People Consulted

Organization	Role/Position	n. of persons
Palestine		
UN Women	UN Women CO National Programme Coordinator	1 F
European Union	Donor	1 F
General Union for Palestinian Women (GUPW)	Implementing Partner	5 F
CEDAW Coalition Members	Beneficiary NGO	5 F
UN Women	M&E officer, Palestine CO	1 M
Central Electoral Committee (CEC)	Chief Electoral Officer - Beneficiary NGO	1 M
Local Council Members	Beneficiaries	3 F
Women Affairs Technical Committee (WATC) - Project Team	Implementing partner	2 F
Ministry of Women Affairs	Implementing partner	1 M
Fund for Gender Equality	Beneficiaries	5 F
CAUCUS Group	Beneficiaries	3 F 1 M
Unions Representatives and Gender Units	Beneficiaries	5 F
UN Women	Special Representative Palestine CO	1 F
UN Women	Staff from Spring Forward Programme and M&E Officer	1M 1 F
Regional Parliamentarians	Beneficiaries	3 F
Media Professionals and Local Committee Member in Gaza (skype)	Beneficiaries	2 F 1 M
UN Women	CO staff	2 F 1 M
Morocco		
UN Women MCO	Representative	1F
UN Women MCO	Programme Coordinator/Manager, Citizenship, Leadership and Participation	1F
UN Women MCO	Programme Coordinator, Parliamentarians for Gender Equality	1F
UN Women MCO	Programme Coordinator, Women for Women, Men for Women	1F
UN Women MCO	UN Women Center of Excellence UNW Programme Associate	1F
Ministry of Interior -General Directorate of Local Governments (DGLG)	Governor, Director of Training Directorate and Legal Affairs	1M
Ministry of Interior	Charge de mission, Maison de Wali Sectretariat General	1F
Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development-Directorate of Women	Secretariat General	1F
Gender Unit (DGLG)	Head of Gender Unit, la Direction de la Formation	1F
Ministry of Interior, DGLG	Gender Focal Point	1F
Direction du Patrimoine	Gender Focal Point	1F
DGCL Communication Center	Suppléante Genre	1M
Direction de la planification et des équipements	Gender Focal Point	1M
Local Finance Directorate	Gender Focal Point	1M
Direction de la planification et des équipements/	Gender Focal Point	1M
Thematic Working group Parliamentarians for Gender Parity	Member of Parliament	1F
Thematic Working group Parliamentarians for Gender Parity	President	1F

Thematic Working group Parliamentarians for Gender Parity	Member of Parliament/ RNI	1F
Arab Network for Parliamentarians	Vice President	1F
l'Union des Femmes	President	1F
Chamber of Representatives, Parliament	Deputy Parliamentarian	1F
Chamber of Representatives, Parliament	Member of Parliament	1M
Chamber of Representatives, Parliament	Member of Parliament	1F
Movement for Parity and Democracy	Coordinator	1F
The Network for Locally Elected Women of Africa CGLU/REFELA/	Chief of Staff and Director of Operations	1M
The Network for Locally Elected Women of Africa CGLU/REFELA/	Membership Drive Officer	1F
Independent	Gender expert on WPP and networking	1F
UNDP	Programme Councillor	1F
Libya		
Women Activist (Independent)	Beneficiary	1 F
Women Activist (Independent)	Beneficiary	1 F
Women Activist (Independent)	Beneficiary	1 F
Women Activist (Independent)	Beneficiary	1 F
Women Activist (Independent)	Beneficiary	1 F
Women Activist (Independent)	Beneficiary	1 F
Women Activist (Independent)	Beneficiary	1 F
Women Activist (Independent)	Beneficiary	1 F
Women Activist (Independent)	Beneficiary	1 F
Women Activist (Independent)	Beneficiary	1 F
UNSMIL – Libya	Principal Political Officer	1 M
UN Women ROAS	Senior Political Participation Advisor	1 F
UN Women ROAS	Programme Manager	1 F
Swedish Institute – Alexandria	Programme Manager	1 F
Others Interviews from the Arab States Region		
UN Women Algeria	Coordiantrice Nationale des Programmes-Pays	1 F
ONU Femmes Maghreb	Chargée de Programme National	1 F
UN Women Yemen	Head of Office	1 F
Women's Pact for Security and Peace	Beneficiary	1 F
Women's Pact for Security and Peace	Beneficiary	1 F
UN Women Iraq	CO staff	1 M
League of Arab States	Ambassador	1 F
UN Women ROAS	Evaluation Specialist	1 F
UN Women ROAS	Senior Political Participation Advisor	1 F
UN Women ROAS	Spring Forward Programme Manager	1 F
UNDP	Regional Officer	1F
RADEAT - Algeria	Member of the executive committee	1F

Annex I: Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Questions	Mandate Areas	Evaluation Criteria	Data Collection methods	Data sources	Limitations
1.1. Has UN Women effectively developed and used the WPP Theory of Change to inform programming? 1.1.2. How has UN Women effective used the ToC to guide WPP programming more broadly within the UN system?	Normative and Operational Coordination	Cross cutting	Document Review	Annual work plans, strategic notes, Strategic Plan, theory of change ROAS interviews	ToC only developed recently, but elements covered before. Need clarity from ROAS on how they have used it
2.1. How has UN Women been able to leverage its own reputation, and its experience in WPP, to advance WPP within the broader objectives of political participation programming in the region (both within the UN system and with development partners)? 2.1.1. How has UN Women been able to leverage its own reputation, and its experience in WPP, to advance WPP within the broader objectives of political participation programming by civil society and political parties within the region? 2.1. 2. How well has UN Women performed in terms of taking advantage of opportunities arising to advance WPP?	Coordination Normative and Operational	Cross cutting	Document Review, KIIs, FGDs	Annual reports, results monitoring reports, strategic notes. Country level reports Field instruments sections on relevance and effectiveness	
3.1 How has UN Women's WPP programming been able to mitigate constraints at country levels?	Normative and Operational	Cross cutting	Document Review KIIs, FGDs	Country provided materials Interviews with UNW country officers and partner organizations	Limited number of interviews in a limited number of countries
4.1. How relevant has UN Women's approach to WPP enhancing the post-2015 development framework and Beijing +20 discussions? 4.1.1. Has 'upward' alignment to international protocols and agreements' taken place? 4.1.2. Has 'upward' alignment to international protocols and agreements helped, or undermined, relevance to regional and national needs? 4.1.3. Has alignment been consistent with HRBA approach?	Coordination Normative and Operational	Relevance and Alignment	Document Review KIIs	UN Women strategic notes, annual reports Field instrument section on relevance	Reliant almost entirely on UN Women interviewees
5.1. To what extent has UN Women been able to contribute to broader UN understanding of, and response to, the underlying causes of inequality and discrimination that affect WPP? 5.1. 2. Within the UN system, has UN Women ROAS been able to play a role in advancing HR&GE programming approaches?	Coordination	Effectiveness Relevance and Alignment	Document Review KIIs	Annual reports, strategic notes Field instrument section on effectiveness and specific questions on gender programming. Interviews with ROAS	Very limited evidence available

5.1.3. Has UN Women influenced political participation programming in the UN system in terms of gender equality?					
6.1. Has UN Women programming in WPP been relevant to actual needs in the region? 6.1.1. Has UN Women programming been driven by evidence from the region? 6.1.2. Has UN Women programming in WPP been appropriately informed by the needs and interest of diverse groups, including disempowered groups?	Normative and Operational	Relevance and Alignment	Document Review KIIs	Strategic notes, considered based on interview results. Annual reports Interviews with ROAS, country offices	Limited number of interviews in a limited number of countries
7.1. Has UN Women placed itself appropriately in WPP programming in the region? How has it added value to the roles played by its partners? 7.1.1. Has UN Women been able to build on the efforts of national and local actors in an effective manner to advance WPP?	Normative and Operational	Relevance and Alignment Effectiveness	Document Review KIIs FGDs	Annual reports Interviews with partner organizations on effectiveness. Interviews with UN Women country officers on how used. Interviews with ROAS on strategy	
8.1. How well has UN Women ROAS aligned itself within its Strategic Plans with the UN Women global strategic plans, specifically with regard to main outputs? 8.2. How well has UN Women ROAS aligned itself within its Strategic Plans with the UN Women global strategic plans, specifically with regard to output clusters? 8.3. How well has UN Women managed to 'balance' crisis response with long-term programming in WPP? 8.4. To what extent has UN Women been able to consider, and respond to, the underlying causes of inequality and discrimination that affect WPP?	Normative and Operational Coordination	Relevance and Alignment Effectiveness	Document Review	Annual reviews, strategic notes, annual work plans, international materials from UN Women Interviews with ROAS. Interviews with UN Women country officers	Reliant almost entirely on UN Women interviewees
9.1. Are human and financial resources in line with the political mandate of UN Women in WPP and the solid substantive input required to respond to demands identified in the field?	Normative and Operational	Relevance and Alignment	Document Review	Annual reviews, strategic notes, international materials from UN Women Interviews with ROAS	Limited data
10.1. How effective has UN Women been in advancing transformational leadership to effect WPP?	Normative and Operational	Effectiveness	KIIs	Interviews with UN Women country staff on effectiveness of actions and relevance of focus Interviews with ROAS Interviews with partner organizations on effectiveness of actions and relevance of focus	
11.1. Has south-south collaboration in the region proven relevant to advancing WPP?	Normative and Operational	Relevance and Alignment	Document Review KIIs FGDs	Annual reviews, strategic notes, local evaluations	

				KIIs with ROAS and UN Women country personnel KIIs and FGDs with partner organizations	
12.1. How effective has UN Women ROAS been in their role as 'knowledge generator and knowledge hub' as it has influenced and informed the UN system, and development partners more generally? 12.1.1 How effective has UN Women ROAS been in their role as 'knowledge generator and knowledge hub' as it has affected WPP in the region? 11.1.2. How efficient have UN Women ROAS' knowledge hub's operations been within the larger UN system? 11.1.3. How efficient have UN Women ROAS' knowledge hub's operations been in contributing to effective knowledge management in the region? 11.2.3.To what extent has learning been documented and shared in a manner that improves performance in WPP in areas where UN Women has been active?	Coordination Normative and Operational	Effectiveness Efficiency	Document Review KIIs	Review of reporting on progress in terms of knowledge products KIIs with ROAS and UN Women field personnel KIIs with partner organizations who would be potential users of knowledge products	Limited knowledge products
12.1. How effective has operational support to country offices been in terms of WPP programming? 12.2. What are the structural and operational strengths and weaknesses of UN Women's regional operations in ROAS?	Coordination, Operational	Effectiveness	KIIs	KIIs with UN Women country offices Interviews with ROAS	Based on 2 onsite and 1 offsite case studies Reliant almost entirely on UN Women interviewees
13.1. As UN Women's role has been defined and evolved in the ROAS region, has it been able to meet needs as they have emerged, including HR & GE?	Coordination	Effectiveness	Document review	Annual reports, results reporting Interviews with ROAS	Reliant almost entirely on UN Women interviewees
14.1. Has UN Women been able to create momentum in WPP that has yielded results beyond UN Women's work itself?	Coordination	Effectiveness	KIIs FGDs	Interviews with UN Women country officers Interviews with partner organisations Interviews with civil society (beyond partners)	
15. How effective has UN Women been in contributing towards the desired impact 'women lead and participate in decision-making?	Coordination	Effectiveness	KIIs FGDs	Interviews with UN Women country officers Interviews with partner organisations Interviews with civil society (beyond partners)	
16. How effective has the system of gender advocates and support for gender advocacy organisations been in advancing WPP?	Coordination	Effectiveness	KIIs FGDs	Interviews with UN Women country officers	Little evidence

				Interviews with partner organisations Interviews with civil society (beyond partners)	
17.1. What would the situation have been without UN Women's engagement? Would WPP programming have been implemented in a more efficient manner through other mechanisms? 17.1.1. What has been the value added by UN Women ROAS' focus on WPP compared to alternative approaches?	Normative and Operational	Relevance Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness	Document review	Annual reports KIIs with UN Women country officers Interviews with ROAS	Concerns about the reliability of findings from the field
18.1. How cost effective has UN Women ROAS' support for country level programming been? 18.2. How efficient has UN Women ROAS' support for country level programming been in terms of implementation? 18.3. Given levels of funding to regional operations, could WPP programming has been implemented in a more efficient manner if additional funds had been made available?	Normative and Operational	Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness	Document Review KIIs	Annual reports, workplan reporting, results reporting KIIs with UN Women country officers Interviews with ROAS	Very limited data
19.1. One role of ROAS has been to support country office evaluations, and evaluation utility in these countries. How efficient and cost effective has ROAS been in this regard?	Normative and Operational	Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness	KIIs	KIIs with UN Women country officers Interviews with ROAS	Very limited data
20.1. What is the value added by UN Women ROAS' focus on WPP to the UN overall? 20.2. Would WPP have been more cost effectively been implemented by another institution, in the UN or elsewhere?	Coordination Normative and Operational	Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness	Document Review KIIs	Annual reports, workplan reporting, results reporting Interviews with ROAS, partner organisations	Very limited evidence
21.1. How efficient has UN Women ROAS' operations been in responding to UN expectations associated with gender equality and women's empowerment?	Coordination	Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness	Document Review KIIs	Annual reports, workplan reporting, results reporting Interviews with ROAS, partner organisations	Very limited evidence
22.1. What have been the trade-offs in terms of cost effectiveness associated with responding to short-term crisis needs and achieving long-term objectives?	Coordination	Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness	Document Review KIIs	Annual reports, workplan reporting, results reporting Interviews with ROAS, partner organisations	Very limited evidence
23.1. UN Women does not have a country office presence in some countries in the ROAS region. How efficient and cost effective has implementation been despite this non-presence? Where have inefficiencies arisen?	Coordination	Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness	Document Review KIIs	Annual reports, workplan reporting, results reporting KIIs in countries without UN Women presence Interviews with ROAS	Very limited evidence

Annex L: Terms of Reference