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Sida Decentralised Evaluation

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Evaluation of UN Women Country Programme in Afghanistan

Final Report

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**Final Report
March 2018**

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DRF	Development Results Framework
	[Name protected]
	[Name protected]
MTR	Mid-term Review
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NPP	National Priority Programme
OAI	Office of Audit and Investigation
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
	[Name protected]

Executive Summary

The evaluation had two overarching purposes:

- To help Sida, Norway and Finland, as well as UN Women, to assess progress of the on-going UN Women country programme in Afghanistan to learn from what works well and less well and to inform decisions on how programme implementation may be adjusted and improved.
- To provide Sida, Norway and Finland, as well as UN Women, with an input to upcoming discussions concerning the preparation and possible support of a new programme phase.

The approach taken in the collection and analysis of the evidence was to seek to answer the specific evaluation questions under each of the evaluation criteria, which form the findings. The evidence was then drawn together to provide higher level answers to the overarching evaluation questions, which form the conclusions. Finally these conclusions were used as the basis for a number of recommendations for taking the programme forward.

Has UN Women's programme been relevant to the Afghan context and does it reflect the right balance of priorities?

UN Women's programme has been and remains broadly relevant to the context of Afghanistan, although the balance of priorities has been driven more by funding availability than by a strategic or long-term vision of what is needed to respond to this context. While there is some evidence of flexibility in the implementation of the programme, what does seem to be lacking is the capacity to be able to effectively analyse the context, particularly in terms of society and governance, and to build this analysis into programme implementation.

What outcomes has the programme achieved and have these contributed to wider gender equality results?

There has been some progress made in the achievement of outputs, but much less progress in the achievement of outcomes. While the difficult context in part helps to explain the limited successes in the programme, many of the issues affecting the implementation of the programme come from the management of the programme. All of these issues have had an impact on the delivery of the programme and particularly on UN Women's reputation in the country. It is of particular concern that many of these issues, such as government commitment and resource availability, were identified as risks in the development of the programme.

In terms of implementation the resources available were spread thinly across a complex programme, with a very wide range of outputs, and were overambitious in terms

of what could be achieved in a difficult context working with partners with limited capacity. The evaluation found considerable concerns about UN Women's lack of overall leadership, slow decision making and poor communications, all of which have severely affected important relationships with both civil society and with government.

While there has been monitoring, it has clearly been affected both by the deteriorating security situation and by the lack of staff capacity. While there have been efforts made in assessing progress in the the [Name protected], there is little evidence of significant efforts in other parts of the programme. Even where there have been efforts made at monitoring and evaluation, there is only limited evidence that the results have been used to develop and manage the programme more effectively.

Has the programme worked with the right partners and has it helped to build their capacity?

The main focus in UN Women's programme has been on working with government partners and, to a much more limited extent, with some CSOs. In both cases, there is only anecdotal evidence that capacity has been built, while there is external evidence of limited capacity in MoWA and CSOs, who have been UN Women's main partners. UN Women has engaged in a formal manner with the UNCT and has developed some partnerships with specific UN organisations, although there is considerable scope for the organisation to engage more effectively with other, larger partners. Overall, however, there has been a lack of balance in the support given.

The outcomes that have been achieved are still a long way from being sustainable. Where there is evidence, such as in the work on [Names protected], it shows that there is a need for continued donor support to sustain any achievements and that considerable work is needed to build greater ownership amongst both CSOs and government. In other parts of the programme, while there have not been similar evaluation efforts there is evidence to suggest that there is a similar lack of sustainability.

What contributions has the programme made to poverty reduction and to what extent?

It has been difficult to find evidence of the direct contributions that UN Women has made to poverty reduction and to gender equality results. The evidence that does exist for the [Name protected] shows that there is still a long way to go in ensuring that legislation is understood and implemented. There is also strong evidence of unintended effects of efforts to bring in legislation on [Name protected] and to provide protection for women who are affected by violence.

There was no other substantive evidence of the contribution to gender equality results or of unintended effects presented for other aspects of UN Women's programme. There was also no strong evidence that UN Women has put in place effective M&E and knowledge management systems to be able to assess and disseminate the outcomes and results of their support.

Ensuring Relevance and Working with the Right Partners

While the overall objectives of UN Women's programme in Afghanistan remain broadly relevant, there is a need to develop a more balanced approach and long-term vision for achieving these objectives. It is recommended that:

- A start is made by taking a more realistic and pragmatic view of what can be achieved in a difficult and insecure context and of what capacity (staff and finances) is needed to achieve this view.
- UN Women should back up the broad and relevant problem analysis with better political, governance and institutional analysis, focused on identifying where there is likely to be the potential for significant changes that will affect gender inequality.
- This analysis should start with the development of a longer-term approach to working with civil society and the women's movement, looking at ways of sustainably developing civil society's roles.

A More Effective Way of Working and of Recording Results

In order to take forward this more pragmatic and longer-term approach, it is recommended that:

- UN Women focus on ensuring continuity of leadership backed up with strong national capacity for implementation and monitoring.
- UN Women needs to take a more strategic realistic approach to what the organisation can deliver, with efforts that are focused more on building better relationships rather than being drawn into direct implementation or being a channel for funds.
- UN Women needs to take a much more comprehensive and consistent approach to monitoring and evaluation across all areas of the programme.

1 Introduction

1.1 SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The terms of reference (see Annex 1) set out two overarching purposes:

- To help Sida, Norway and Finland, as well as UN Women, to assess progress of the on-going UN Women country programme in Afghanistan to learn from what works well and less well and to inform decisions on how programme implementation may be adjusted and improved.
- To provide Sida, Norway and Finland, as well as UN Women, with an input to upcoming discussions concerning the preparation and possible support of a new programme phase.

The evaluation covers the period of the UN Women Afghanistan country programme 2014-2017 and, while looking primarily at support from Sida, Norway and Finland, considers the implementation of the programme as a whole. The overarching and specific evaluation questions were agreed in the inception phase and are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Overarching and Specific Evaluation Questions

Overarching Evaluation Questions	Specific Evaluation Questions
Relevance Has UN Women's programme been relevant to the Afghan context and does it reflect the right balance of priorities?	Relevance What is the programme's relevance to national priorities and to the priorities of UN Women and other donors? How was the programme prioritised and what inputs were made into that process? How flexible and responsive has the programme been to the changing context and to the emergence of new priorities?
Efficiency & Effectiveness What outcomes has the programme achieved and have these contributed to wider gender equality results?	Efficiency & Effectiveness How effectively has UN Women managed the programme and how has this contributed to the achievement of outputs and outcomes? How efficiently has UN Women used the resources that were available for the programme? What risks has the programme had to deal with and how effectively have they been managed?

	How effective is the monitoring of the programme, what outcomes has the programme achieved and what evidence is there to support them?
Sustainability Has the programme worked with the right partners and has it helped to build their capacity?	Sustainability How sustainable are the project outcomes and what evidence is there to support this?
Impact What contributions has the programme made to poverty reduction and to what extent?	Impact What contributions have been made to poverty reduction and wider gender equality results and to what extent? What evidence is there to support this? Have there been any unintended effects of the programmes?

1.2 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The approach taken to respond to the terms of reference aimed to be robust, constructive and pragmatic. A preliminary document review was carried out during the inception phase in order to understand the Theory of Change used in UN Women's programme in Afghanistan and to identify key issues for further exploration in the subsequent phases of the evaluation. As the evaluation was of the support provided by Sida, Norway and Finland to UN Women in Afghanistan, the evaluation draws on the monitoring and evaluation data and analyses already collected by the organisation and makes an assessment of both the effectiveness and efficiency of the systems and of the evidence produced and the ways in which this has been used in the programme.

UN Women's Strategic Plan for 2014-2017 set out six high level impact areas for the global programme. Country Offices then developed Strategic Notes, based on these six impact areas, as laid out in the overarching Development Results Framework (DRF), with a rationale for the UN Women programme in the country and sets of outcomes, outputs, targets and indicators relevant to the local context. The Strategic Note for Afghanistan explores the underlying and intermediate drivers of gender inequality in the country and uses this as a rationale for the approach and programmes to be taken by UN Women. This Theory of Change is represented in a model, developed by the evaluation team and based on the language and analysis in the Strategic Note, set out in Figure 1 below.

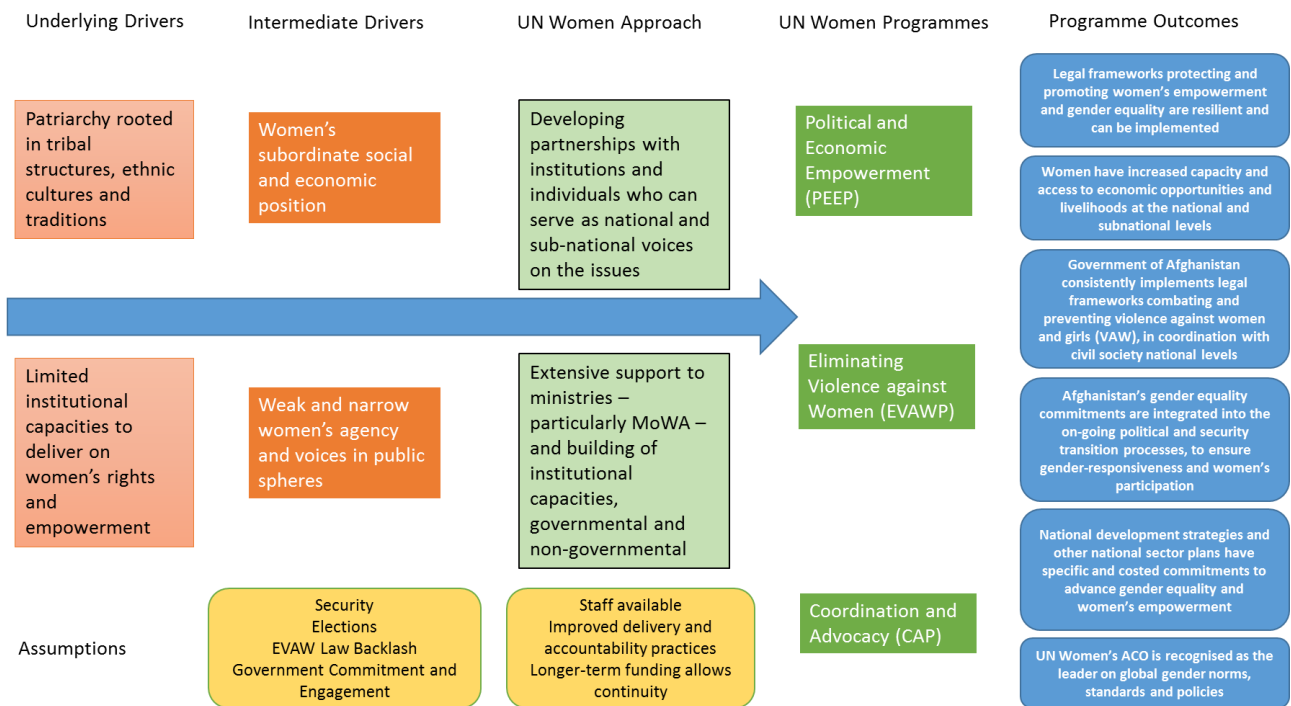


Figure 1 – UN Women Afghanistan Theory of Change Model

Two issues identified in the preliminary document review were:

- Whether and how the assumptions identified were used in the management of the programme, and
- The level of ambition of UN Women in Afghanistan in seeking to directly tackle the complex and deep-rooted drivers of gender inequality in the country.

The evaluation overall was guided by an evaluation matrix, setting out detailed evaluation questions, criteria for assessment and potential sources of evidence – see Annex 2. The Evaluation Matrix formed the primary means by which all of the data collected was analysed, providing a robust assessment of both data availability and quality, and identifying where there were any significant gaps.

The methodology consisted of three elements:

Document Review

The preliminary document review identified that there was a reasonable level of evidence for assessing progress in implementing programme outcomes and some evidence of contributions to results. At the same time, significant gaps in the reporting

were identified, particularly around the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability, including issues of raising and prioritising resources, the analysis and management of risk and the results of capacity building support. These issues were reflected in the evaluation matrix, and were used to structure interview questions and requests for further documentary evidence. The full list of documents reviewed is in Annex 3.

Field Visit

Data collection consisted of interviews and focus group discussions and visits to Mazar-i-Sharif and Samangan. Interviews were conducted with as wide a range of stakeholders as possible were guided by the four overarching evaluation questions, focusing on the specific questions in the evaluation matrix where these were relevant for specific stakeholders. Notes recording each of the interviews and discussions were made by the evaluation team, as the basis for collating evidence for the analysis stage. The full list of stakeholders interviewed is set out in Annex 4.

Document Collection and Interview Analysis

Documents collected during the field phase were compiled with the notes recording interviews and provincial visits for the analysis stage. Analysis was carried out using the Evaluation Matrix, with evidence from all sources being extracted against the specific evaluation questions and criteria. This evidence was used to develop overall response to the criteria in the matrix. Using these responses against the criteria, findings were developed for each of the specific evaluation questions and for the overarching questions. Where evidence was available, specific responses to the detailed evaluation questions in the terms of reference were developed. In developing the specific responses to the detailed evaluation questions the assumptions set out in the theory of change and issues identified in the preliminary document review were explored in further detail.

1.3 LIMITATIONS

The main limitations of the evaluation were:

- Security in Afghanistan impacted on the interviews and field visits that could be carried out, with particular limitations on the beneficiaries who could be interviewed.
- The evidence available for the evaluation was limited by the security situation, with much of the monitoring and evaluation evidence available, particularly in the last couple of years, being based on third party reporting rather than being directly verified. Efforts are made in the evaluation to identify where there is a more solid evidence base for findings.

2 Evaluation Findings

2.1 INTRODUCTION

UN Women's programme outcomes draw on the goals set out in the Global Strategic Plan for 2014-2017. The outcomes for the Afghanistan programme are further elaborated with specific outputs, which have formed the basis of UN Women's regular reporting to donors. The Goals, Outcomes and Outputs for the period of the evaluation are set out in Table 2.

Table 2 – UN Women Afghanistan Programme Outcomes and Outputs

Global Strategic Plan Goals & Programme Outcomes	Programme Outputs
Goal 1: Women lead and participate in decision making at all levels Outcome 1.1: Legal frameworks protecting and promoting women's empowerment and gender equality are resilient and can be implemented Outcome 1.2: Women effectively participate in and influence the 2014/2015 elections <i>(Due to the postponement of the elections, no outputs for Outcome 1.2 were implemented during the period of the evaluation)</i>	Output 1.1.1: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) has improved capacity to coordinate inclusion of and facilitate information sharing with decision makers, civil society, women activists and women members of parliament (MPs) on implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1325 Output 1.1.2: CEDAW is promoted among national and international stakeholders and decision makers as a uniting framework of accountability for the inclusion and empowerment of women and girls in all spheres of public life and national processes Output 1.1.3: Parliamentarians and Provincial Council Members have the necessary knowledge of gender equality and women's empowerment concepts, national commitments and mechanisms
Goal 2: Women, especially the poorest and most excluded, are economically empowered and benefit from development Outcome 2.1: Women have increased capacity and access to economic opportunities and livelihoods at the national and subnational levels	Output 2.1.1: National decision makers recognize and endorse the Women's Economic Security and Rights (WESR) Strategy and Action Plan as tools for implementing National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA)/ Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF) and developing new policies promoting women's economic empowerment

	Output 2.1.2: The Government of Afghanistan has viable models for promoting inclusive economic growth at the community level, through the provision of “safe market” environments Output 2.1.4: Women’s business development associations/ networks are able to provide outreach and support to new female entrepreneurs, including most vulnerable women (i.e. widows, female heads of households, internally displaced persons and returnees) in five provinces Output 2.1.5: The Independent Afghanistan Civil Service Reform Commission promotes and monitors gender balance within the civil service
Goal 3: Women and girls live a life free from violence Outcome 3.1: Government of Afghanistan consistently implements legal frameworks combating and preventing violence against women and girls (VAW), in coordination with civil society	Output 3.1.1: MoWA has increased capacity to monitor and coordinate operations of all [Names protected] at the national and subnational levels, in partnership with other relevant ministries and civil society organizations Output 3.1.2: UN Women-funded [Names protected] provide improved and standardized services in accordance with MoWA’s protocols, and in coordination with the Gender Based Violence (GBV) Referral System Output 3.1.3: National and provincial [Names protected] Commissions promote and monitor GBV victims’ access to justice and protection in accordance with the Government’s national and international commitments Output 3.1.4: National and international stakeholders improve coordination and engagement for advocacy and action to prevent GBV, with particular focus on engaging men, boys and youth Output 3.1.5: Judicial institutions and legal frameworks are responsive to the rights of women and girls in accordance with national and international commitments
Goal 4: Peace and security and humanitarian action are shaped by women’s leadership and participation Outcome 4.1: Afghanistan’s gender equality commitments are integrated into the on-going	Output 4.1.1: Women activists/CSOs have enhanced opportunities to participate in the peace processes Output 4.1.2: Gender equality advocates, youth, academia and community leaders have increased

political and security transition processes, to ensure gender-responsiveness and women's participation	capacity and opportunity to influence peace-building processes at the national and subnational levels Output 4.1.3: National and international stakeholders supported to conduct coordinated monitoring and advocacy on the Government's obligations to protect the rights and safety of women and girls, particularly in insecure environments
Goal 5: Governance and national planning fully reflect accountability for gender equality commitments and priorities Outcome 5.1: National development strategies and other national sector plans have specific and costed commitments to advance gender equality and women's empowerment Outcome 5.2.: Mechanisms for monitoring implementation of gender equality commitments regularly generate quality data, identify evidence on gaps and performance, and provide the basis for national advocacy.	Output 5.1.1: Existing coordination and monitoring mechanisms between MoWA, Ministry of Finance, other ministries and the Central Statistics Organization are strengthened to increase gender-responsive budgeting, planning, and reporting Output 5.1.2: MoWA is able to establish stronger partnerships with the Ministry of Finance and the international donor community to enhance gender-responsive budgeting in general and donors' on-budget contributions in particular, in support of the TMAF gender commitments Output 5.1.3: Strengthened partnership between CSO, MoWA and line ministries for the promotion of standard gender indicators, to facilitate monitoring of the Government's national and international gender commitments ([Names protected]) Output 5.2.1. Central Statistical Office will have strengthened capacity to coordinate and cooperate with government institutions to collect, analyse and disseminate gender statistics Output 5.2.2: Civil Society's capacity to monitor and advocate against progress on women's empowerment and report findings are strengthened
Goal 6: A comprehensive and dynamic set of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment in place and is applied through action by governments and other stakeholders at all levels. Outcome 6.1: UN Women's ACO is recognised as the leader on global gender norms, standards and policies.	Output 6.1.1: The ACO regularly provides quality information and analysis products to stakeholders Output 6.1.2: ACO proactively coordinates and promotes advocacy initiatives with international and national stakeholders

Given the number of assumptions identified and highlighted in the theory of change and the level of ambition for the programme, what is most notable is the range of interventions undertaken in the programme and the resulting range of beneficiaries and partners to be engaged with.

The approach taken in the analysis of the evidence and the presentation of the findings has been to seek to answer the specific evaluation questions under each of the evaluation criteria. These responses are presented in the section on Findings. On the basis of these responses, the evidence has then been drawn together to provide higher level answers to the overarching evaluation questions, looking at relevance, efficiency and effectiveness, sustainability and impact in turn. These responses are presented in the Conclusions section. The final section of the report sets out a number of Recommendations for going forward.

2.2 CONTEXT

While there has been an enormous level of donor support to Afghanistan, the situation for ordinary Afghans continues to deteriorate. The Taliban control almost 40% of the country and major urban areas are impacted by criminality and terrorist attacks. The Norwegian Refugee Council estimated nearly one million people internally displaced by violence and conflict in Afghanistan in 2015. Growing numbers live in informal settlements in major urban areas and are deprived of basic services and vulnerable to food insecurity, with women and children bearing the brunt¹.

Afghan women and girls in particular continue to face serious challenges and gender equality is still a distant dream. In January 2016 the United Nations Children's Fund estimated that 40 percent of all school-age children in Afghanistan do not attend school and according to Human Rights Watch in 2017² an estimated two-thirds of Afghan girls are not going to school in spite of the fact that millions of girls received some education since 2001. The situation with regard to health is also difficult to assess as statistics in this sector have proven to be less reliable than previously thought. In an audit report for USAID³, it was pointed out that, while USAID itself publicly reported a 22 year increase from 2002 to 2010 for life expectancy, a World Health Organization report showed only a 6-year increase for males and an 8-year increase for females in life expectancy in the same period.

¹ Norwegian Refugee Council (2015) Listening to Women and Girls Displaced to Urban Afghanistan

² Human Rights Watch (2017) 'I Won't Be a Doctor, and One Day You'll be Sick': Girls' Access to Education in Afghanistan

³ Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (2017) SIGAR 17-22 Audit Report –Afghanistan's Health Care Sector

In recent years the Afghan government has developed laws to protect women in private and public. These laws are meant set out clearly what is to be acceptable behaviour towards women and girls. In 2009, in response to the activities of women's rights advocates and in recognition of the legal protection required by women, former president Hamid Karzai issued an executive order decreeing into law the End Violence Against Women (EVAW) Law⁴, criminalising twenty-two crimes of violence against women. State programmes to prevent violence against women and to implement these laws followed. However, significant gaps exist between implementation of these laws and effective protection of women⁵. Based on experience with the EVAW Law, women recently questioned by the Institute of War and Reporting⁶ were not hopeful about the new Anti-Harassment Regulation which came into force in October 2015. The general sentiment is that using these laws to generate change in Afghan society is a long process which would span several generations. With security and legal sectors perceived to be corrupt and incompetent in a socio-political context of elite impunity, law enforcement is a serious challenge.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) was established in 2002, with a mandate to oversee the mainstreaming of gender and implementation of the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan within other ministries' policies and implementation. The Ministry has provincial departments, which are also supposed to provide referral services to women, particularly those seeking legal assistance related to domestic violence. While MoWA has received considerable support from a range of donors, there are continued concerns about its effectiveness, with one report⁷ quoting the conclusion that: MoWA has been subject to political compromising and forces that have overshadowed its mandate, such that its leadership has sometimes acted in ways that appear to endanger, rather than promote, women's rights.

A report carried out for USAID broadly sets out the problems in CSOs, that: ⁸While Afghan women's civil society organizations have played an important role as political watchdogs, advocates, mobilizers, and thought-leaders on women's issues, they have also faced widespread problems of institutional weakness and lack of cohesion. An analysis of women's organisations⁹ highlights the specific problems faced, with: a

⁴ Embassy of Afghanistan, Washington DC (2016) Afghan government has passed a law that protects women against mistreatment and harassment at work or study

⁵ Centre for Gender and Refugee Studies (2016) Breaking Barriers - Challenges to Implementing Laws on Violence Against Women in Afghanistan and Tajikistan

⁶ Ministry of Women's Affairs (2014) First Report on the Elimination of Violence Against Women Law in Afghanistan Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

⁷ Afghanistan Gender Country Profile (2016) Sarah Parkinson et al, report commissioned by USAID

⁸ Afghanistan Gender Country Profile (2016) Sarah Parkinson et al, report commissioned by USAID

⁹ [Name protected] Women's Groups in Afghan Civil Society, research for Counterpart International

small group of dominant elite women with strong connections who take ownership of women's CSOs, and lead in an autocratic style. The same well-connected group of women's CSOs has received the majority of donor attention and funding, while smaller CSOs, especially those in the provinces, whose members might not speak English, are largely excluded.

2.3 RELEVANCE

What is the programme's relevance to national priorities and to the priorities of UN Women and other donors?

UN Women's programme outcomes are relevant and fit well with the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan, 2007-2017 and the strong gender equality commitments that were set with the adoption of the Essential Rights of Afghan Women in 2002 and the codification of women's rights in the Constitution of 2004, specifically Article 22. Considerable efforts were made by UN Women to consult with the government and civil society partners, as well as the donor community, in the development of the programme. UN Women's programme is also relevant to the UNDAF, 2015-2019, which has an overarching commitment to gender equality as a programming principle, and to UN Women's own global strategic plan (as set out in Table 2). The Mid-term Reviews (MTRs) carried out by UN Women in 2013 and 2017 both find that the goals, outcomes and indicators in the country office strategic notes are relevant and responsive to national priorities. Two evaluations of UN Women's work in ERAW ([Names protected], 2013 and [Names protected], 2015) similarly conclude that UN Women's interventions are relevant to the context in Afghanistan. The Development Results Framework for UN Women's 2014-2017 Strategic Note sets out a clearly articulated theory of change (see Figure 1 above) that aims at relevant, ambitious and long-term cultural change that should ensure the continued relevance of UN Women's planned interventions.

The majority of those interviewed (including government, civil society partners and donors) agreed that UN Women is a necessary organisation to ensure a continued focus on addressing gender inequality and so, therefore, should be supported in some way. As one interviewee put it: UN Women just by being in Afghanistan has an impact - it is a symbol for women. UN Women has worked to ensure that the programme supports the implementation of national gender equality priorities, such as those set out in the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan, whilst ensuring that these remain relevant to the organisation's global strategic goals. The areas that UN Women works on, such as violence against women, women's political representation and women's economic empowerment, are clearly relevant, linking closely to the government's own development priorities, to the UN Country Team's priorities, set out in the UNDAF, and aligning closely with the priorities of the main donors.

However, what is less clear is if approaches that UN Women has used are either strategic in the choices about where to work or practical in the ways in which they work. For example, strategic choices of where efforts within the programme should go seem to have been driven as much by where funding is available, as by any analysis of need

or capacity to deliver. There was no significant evidence that the broad contextual analysis had been deepened with detailed analyses of either specific outcome areas or of the capacity and needs of implementing partners, such as MoWA or CSOs. While there are examples where research has been carried out on themes such as women's rights, this research has been primarily used for the purposes of publication rather than specifically informing the development of interventions. There is evidence from a meta-analysis of UN Women evaluations¹⁰ that this is a problem globally, with the conclusion that: evaluations highlight a gap in the evaluation evidence-base in terms of a need for more rigorous examination of the institutional environment and policy economy that support implementation of policy commitments. Funding availability in some thematic areas has been limited, while donors' interests in areas such as EVAW and support during elections, seem to have been the main driving forces behind programmatic choices – these issues are examined further in Section 2.4.

Looking at practical choices, in some cases, decisions about how the programme has been implemented seem to have been determined by experience drawn from an international level rather than by experience in the field or a deep understanding of the context. There are examples where programmes have been overly complex for the purposes of implementation or where there have been failures to sufficiently adapt to the local context. This seems to be the case with the work on EVAW, where the focus has primarily been on legislation, implementation and protection, with too little attention given to wider awareness raising. The [Names protected] assessment has found significant evidence of both lack of awareness of legislation and of a backlash against the efforts at protection¹¹ – this is discussed in more detail in Section 2.6.

How was the programme prioritised and what inputs were made into that process?

The main evidence available suggests that prioritisation of the programme was primarily driven by funding availability, rather than any strategic thinking. As will be discussed in section 2.4 looking at efficiency, it seems that resources were allocated across the thematic areas of the programme, with the largest proportion of resources going to EVAW programming, supporting shelters for women affected by violence and [Names protected] in the provinces to oversee the implementation of the EVAW Law. The evidence from the annual planning processes shows that, although there has been a prioritisation process in deciding where resources should go, there remains a lack of pragmatism and an over-optimistic approach to this process.

¹⁰ What can we learn from UN-Women Evaluations? A meta-analysis of evaluations managed by UN-Women in 2016

¹¹ [Name protected]

Throughout the period of the evaluation the annual planning documents continued to show considerable resources as ‘still to be raised’ across the thematic areas and across the programme as a whole¹². Again, while there have been regular meetings with donors during these planning processes, it is not clear whether the issues raised in these meetings influenced the process of prioritisation.

Looked at from another perspective, there is a notable lack of balance in the programme, with work being predominantly focused on the relationship with government (aiming to work with new government partners, including the Ministry of Finance) and with relatively limited evidence of relationships with the UN family and particularly with civil society. In interviews, UN partners noted the limited engagement with UN Women, focused in the main on coordination efforts and relationships in Kabul rather than in the provinces. Interviewees expressed frustration at the lack of leadership in UN Women, the bureaucratic approach taken in their work and their lack of links to important parts of the government. One interviewee complained that leadership has been poor and has been found to be wanting: it will be junior national staff from UN Women who attend meetings and this is not satisfactory. On the one hand, UN Women appears to have regarded coordination with the UN family as a strictly formal activity (interviewees talked about UN Women organising and turning up to meetings and nothing else), while on the other, there has been a narrow focus of attention (for example, it did not seem to have occurred to UN Women that they should consider the work that the World Bank is doing in women’s economic empowerment). The lack of engagement would appear to be down to the lack of leadership in UN Women and the lack of capacity at the right levels within the organisation, that is international staff – this issue is discussed further in Section 2.4.

As will be discussed in more detail in Section 2.5 on Sustainability, the relationships with civil society have primarily been as a channel for funding and as contractors for specific purposes, rather than having a focus on developing a longer term strategic role.

How flexible and responsive has the programme been to the changing context and to the emergence of new priorities?

There is some, limited evidence that efforts have been made to ensure that the programme has been flexible and responsive to the changing context. The main example has been the work to ensure that gender issues are taken into account in the humanitarian response, with UN Women taking a lead role in establishing a Gender in Humanitarian Action Task Force as part of the UNCT Gender Working Group with membership of United Nations agencies, local and international NGOs, as a platform for gender related technical assistance to the Humanitarian Country Team. There is little evidence that, beyond coordination, much practical expertise has been available from UN Women: as it was put in one interview, gender coordination is about UN

¹² This showed up in all of the annual planning documents made available to the evaluation.

Women and others meeting and informing each other of activities, not a matter of changing policy. There is some evidence of the use of learning in the programme, such as the findings of the mid-term reviews of UN Women's own programme in 2013 and 2017¹³ being used in the development of the subsequent programmes. However, as will be explored in Section 2.6 on Impact, there is still a considerable way to go in terms of ensuring that interventions, such as in EVAW, are sufficiently adapted to the difficult context of Afghanistan.

2.4 EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

How effectively has UN Women managed the programme and how has this contributed to the achievement of outputs and outcomes?

There has been some progress made in the achievement of outputs and less in the achievement of outcomes. While the difficult context in part helps to explain the limited successes in the programme, there have been significant issues in the management of the programme that have contributed significantly to this lack of progress. It is of some concern that many of these issues, such as government commitment and resource availability, were identified as risks in the Strategic Note (see Figure 1). UN Women's own assessments of efficiency and effectiveness in the programme, recorded in the 2013 MTR carried out before the start of the programme and the 2017 MTR towards the end have been generous, while external assessments present a more realistic and less optimistic picture.

The MTRs for 2013 and 2017 both find that there has generally been progress against the outcomes in the programme and remark that this has been achieved in difficult circumstances, with declining security and a difficult working environment. The 2015 OAI Audit¹⁴ gives a satisfactory rating and concludes that the DRF is an efficient management tool. Similarly, the MTR for 2017 concludes that the programme had been able to make progress in implementing programme outcomes, with some important impact level results and evidence of prioritisation in the programme. The 2017 MTR particularly notes the importance of un-earmarked multi-year financial support in enabling a flexible approach to the changing situation in the country. These findings are confirmed by the [Name protected] Evaluation of 2015 and the [Name protected] MTR of 2016¹⁵, which generally conclude that UN Women has been responsive to changes needed to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the programme, by improving the utilisation of funds and the management of interventions.

¹³ Mid-term Review of Assistance to the UN Women Afghanistan Country Programme in the Planned period 2010-2013 (February 2013) [Name protected]; Mid-Term Review of UN Women's Strategic Note 2014-2017 (January 2017)

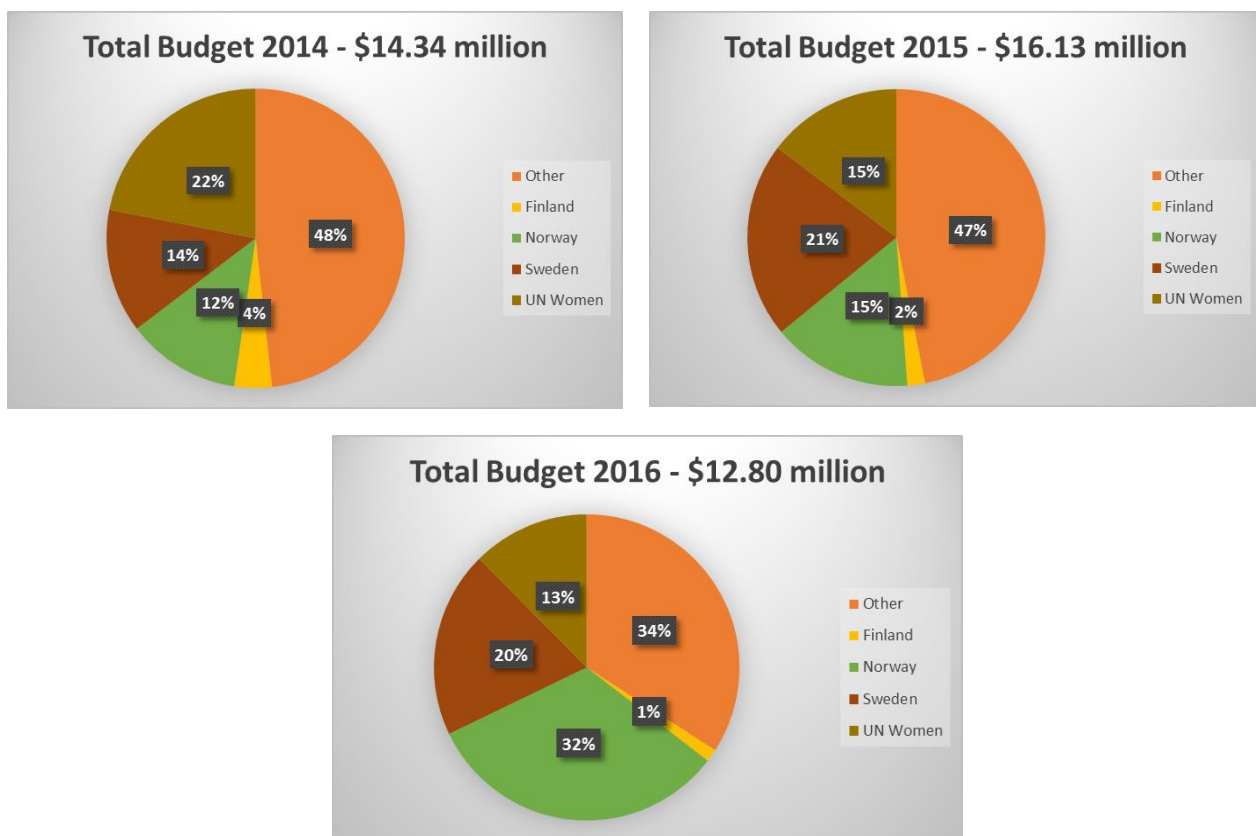
¹⁴ UNDP OAI (January 2015) Audit of UN Women Afghanistan Implementation of the ACO Development Results Framework 2014-2016

¹⁵

[Name protected]; Mid-term Review of the [Names protected] in Afghanistan (March 2016)
Adam Smith Institute

However, the 2015 OAI Audit raised two issues which were explored further in the evaluation, highlighting (below):

- Unrealistic programme targets, combined with low delivery, which may result in the inability of UN Women to meet their objectives in the Country and may entail reputational risks.
- Delayed reporting to donors, which may have an adverse impact on the Office's relationship with its funding partners and may result in decreased resources being available to the Office, which could in turn jeopardize the achievement of programme outcomes.



Overall, it has been difficult to fully understand how UN Women has raised and allocated the resources for the programme for 2014 to 2017. However, an examination of the evidence available shows that they have been both overambitious and at the same time ineffective in the way that they have used the resources that there have been: overambitious in setting too many goals that are too high for such a complex context and seeking to raise unrealistic levels of funding; and ineffective in planning interventions that do not seem to take into account the limited capacities of staff and partners, both government and civil society. These two issues of overambition and ineffective planning are addressed in more detail in the responses to the following evaluation questions, on efficiency in the use of resources, risk management and monitoring of the programme respectively.

Through the period 2014 to 2016 funding from Sweden, Norway and Finland constituted 40% of the total budget. There have been a number of other significant donors

during this period, including Belgium, Australia, Korea and the Netherlands. At the same time, the proportion of the total budget funded by Sweden, Norway and Finland has increased over this period, from: 30% in 2014, 38% in 2015, to 53% in 2016. This is in part due to the fluctuating nature of donor funding in Afghanistan, although there are concerns about UN Women's own contribution to this – see the discussion of risks below.

How efficiently has UN Women used the resources that were available for the programme?

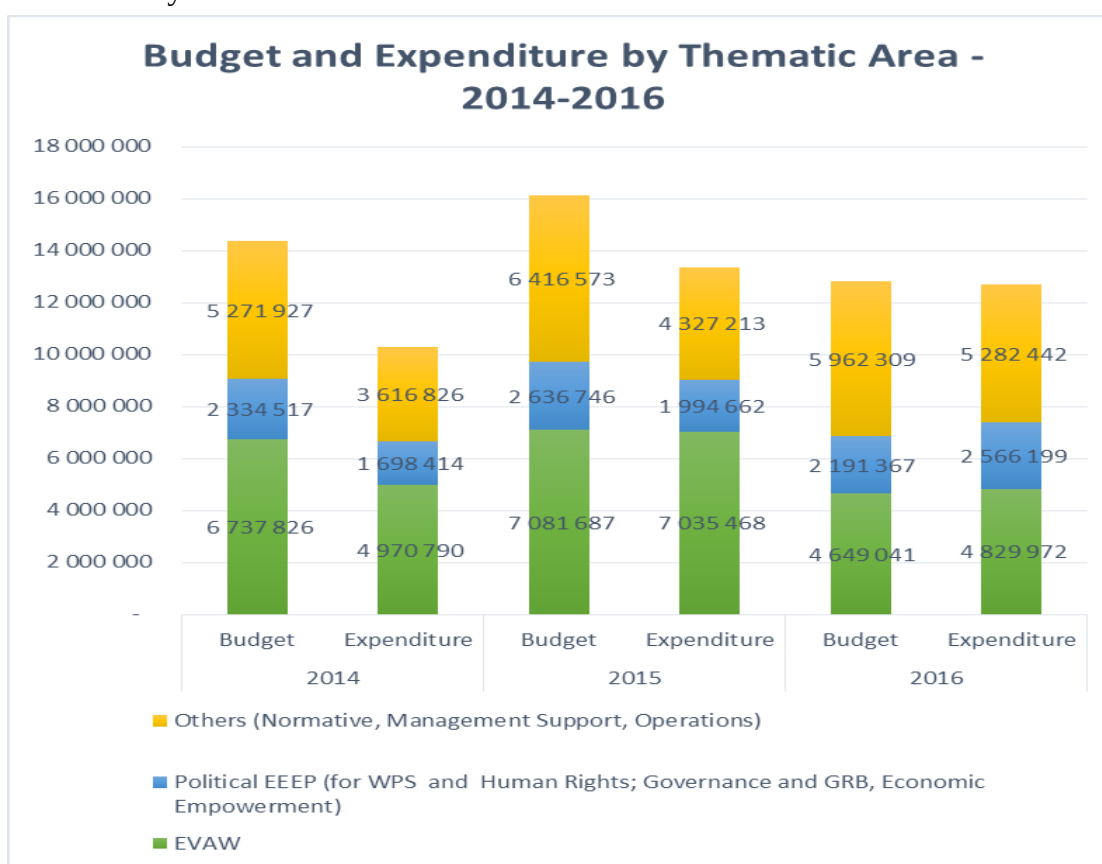
The evidence from the financial data provided appears to show that the resources available have been spread thinly across a complex programme, with a very wide range of outputs, and were overambitious in terms of what could be achieved, working in a difficult context with partners with limited capacity. The evidence from the budget and expenditure data for 2014 to 2016, shows a significant underspend for the programme as a whole and for each of the thematic areas for 2014 and 2015. Only in 2016 does expenditure more closely match what the budget proposed at the start of the year, as UN Women focused efforts on improving the management of the programme. This finding is similar to what has been found in a meta-analysis of UN Women's evaluations¹⁶ of programmes globally: most UN-Women evaluations identified challenges in relation to the timeliness of implementation and follow-up procedures.

¹⁶ What can we learn from UN-Women Evaluations? A meta-analysis of evaluations managed by UN-Women in 2016

This is backed up with evidence from UN Women's own annual progress reporting for the period, which shows reporting across a very diverse set of activities with little evidence of a coherent sense of what progress has been made against the programme outcomes as a whole. Data from interviews suggests that the lack of continuity in leadership and the loss of key staff meant that responsibility for maintaining oversight of the programme fell to only a very few international staff. As one interviewee remarked: UN Women have been reactive rather than proactive, relying heavily on on national staff and with little capacity for research.

What risks has the programme had to deal with and how effectively have they been managed?

There is also evidence that there has not been good risk analysis or management of the programme to deal effectively with risk. While UN Women Afghanistan does carry out a risk register, there was no evidence found of the regular and effective use of risk analysis in the documents available to the evaluation. There was also no evi-



dence that the risks and assumptions set out in the planning documents were followed up and no reporting on risks or risk management to donors, other than a general discussion of security risks. As is discussed above, it seems clear that the ambitions set out in the Strategic Note were not matched by the capacity of the staff to be able to implement the programme, with significant underspends in 2014 and 2015. These problems have been compounded with significant changes in both the leadership and staffing of the UN Women team, with the loss of experienced staff between 2015 and 2016 having a particular impact – see table below.

In interviews with a range of donors and partners interviewees expressed considerable concerns about UN Women's lack of overall leadership, slow decision making and poor communications, all of which have severely affected important relationships with both civil society and with government. There is evidence both from UN Women's own reporting and from the notes of meetings with donors that these were issues that were raised throughout the period of the programme¹⁷. In interviews with CSOs and in the visits to Balkh and Samangan concerns were raised about slow and bureaucratic processes, with payments being consistently late, and about funding decisions having been dragged out over months, with severe impacts on partner organisations.

Table 2 – Numbers of Staff by Contract Type 2014-2016

Type of Contract	2014	2015	2016
National Fixed Term Appointment/ Permanent Appointment	14	15	13
International Fixed Term appointment	5	7	5
Service Contract	49	52	49
Total	68	74	67

How effective is the monitoring of the programme, what outcomes has the programme achieved and what evidence is there to support them?

There are some good examples in the programme, such as the work on EVAW, where there have been regular evaluations and assessment. However, there was no evidence that there are systems in place or that there have been systematic approaches used to follow up on recommendations or to incorporate lessons learned into the development of programme implementation.

Looking more closely at the assessments and evaluations in EVAW, five exercises have been carried out over a five year period. The most comprehensive exercises were two assessment exercises carried out in 2013 and 2017 by Samuel Hall of the [Names protected]¹⁸, looking specifically at efforts made in the implementation of the EVAW Law, including [Names protected]. These two evaluations have a clear rationale and are based on a

¹⁷

Draft Minutes of Meeting, Norway, Sida, Finland and UN Women - 27 October 2016, Kabul; Draft Minutes of Meeting, Norway, Sweden, Finland and UN Women - 16 January 2017, Kabul

¹⁸ [Name protected] (2013) Samuel Hall; [Name protected]

strong primary evidence base, looking at a range of provinces and using a range of qualitative data collection methods. In addition, the 2017 evaluation was carried out specifically to follow up on the preliminary results of the 2013 evaluation. The evaluation of [Names protected] in 2015¹⁹ had a complementary rationale, looking at the special fund that provided small grants to CSOs that are implementing community-based initiatives, and had a similarly strong evidence base, including a survey of partners. Two of the more recent exercises, the [Names protected] MTR of 2016 and the [Names protected] of 2017²⁰, cover much of the same ground and yet have a much more limited evidence base.

Looked at overall, whilst the work in EVAW is an important part of the programme, it is not clear why all of these efforts have been focused in only one part of the programme and not in others, such as political participation or capacity building. Whilst there is some evidence (mainly from interviews) that the programme has been adjusted in response to the findings of these assessments and evaluations, there is much less evidence that the 2013 and 2017 MTRs of UN Women's Programme made effective use of the evidence available through these assessments and evaluations.

There do not seem to have been similar efforts in monitoring and evaluation in other areas of the programme or across the programme as a whole. For example, anecdotal evidence, with examples, was put forward in interviews with UN Women staff about the increased capacity of partners, such as MoWA²¹, and the results of support to the Central Statistical Office. Similarly, UN Women has made considerable efforts to support the development of a national action plan for UNSCR 1325 with Ministry of Foreign Affairs, helping them to understand their responsibilities, clear data and report on progress. However, no evidence was presented or found of external assessments or evaluations of effectiveness and impact in important aspects of the programme, in areas such as: capacity building of partners including MoWA and CSOs; support to the Central Statistical Office in gender data collection and analysis; or, support provided to political candidates and representatives in parliament or for the involvement of women in the peace processes. Perhaps of greater concern is that there is no evidence of a similar concentration of efforts in other parts of the programme, particularly the long-term capacity building support that was given to MoWA, an issue that is addressed further in Section 2.5.

19

External Evaluation of [Names protected] 2008-2014 (April 2015) Robin Haarr, Jan Reynders & [Name protected]

20

Mid-term Review of [Name protected] (March 2016) Adam Smith Institute;
Evaluation of UN Women Afghanistan's Portfolio on EVAW, 2014-2016 (April 2017) Christine Arab & [Name protected]

²¹ For example, UN Women supported establishment of MoWA's Inter-Ministerial Committee for taking preparations and attending Afghanistan delegation in CSW sessions.

2.5 SUSTAINABILITY

How sustainable are the project outcomes and what evidence is there to support this?

All of the evidence available suggests that the outcomes that have been achieved are still a long way from being sustainable. The main evidence is from the ERAW parts of the programme, where all of the evaluations undertaken conclude that there is a need for continued donor support to sustain any achievements and that considerable work is needed to build greater ownership amongst both CSOs and government. In other parts of the programme, while there have not been similar evaluation efforts there is evidence from interviews to suggest that there is a similar lack of sustainability in areas such as capacity building of partners.

While there has been considerable investment in building the capacity of UN Women's main partner, the MoWA, concerns are raised in both the MTRs for 2013 and 2017 about the lack of results and the need for continued support. In a similar vein, the evaluation of the [Names protected] concluded that the sustainability of the interventions was dependent on building a greater sense of government commitment. Several other large donors, including USAID and the Asia Foundation, have provided considerable capacity building support to the MoWA over the period under evaluation. The main external evidence available comes from a report by AREU on Governance in Afghanistan published in 2014²² raises serious concerns about the capacity of MoWA, concluding that: MoWA and the ministerial Gender Units have not performed as expected due to lack of capacity or because the senior leadership working at various government agencies have dismissed their efforts, thereby weakening institutional commitment to gender-equality reform. A more recent donor commissioned gender analysis²³ comes to similarly damning conclusions: MoWA's ineffectiveness has been attributed to a number of factors: it has been side-lined by other ministries because of its mandate, which is widely seen as a Western imposition, gender is not prioritized by other ministries, and it is a small ministry with limited resources...MoWA has been subject to political compromising and forces that have overshadowed its mandate, such that its leadership has sometimes acted in ways that appear to endanger, rather than promote, women's rights. Again, this is an issue that was identified in the meta-analysis of UN Women evaluations²⁴. Another factor that was cited by evaluations for the relatively limited sustainability of programme benefits is the absence of a clear and well-planned exit strategy and the weak organizational capacities of some of the UN-Women partner organizations.

²² Governance in Afghanistan: An Introduction (2014) AREU

²³ Afghanistan Gender Country Profile (2016) Sarah Parkinson et al, report commissioned by USAID

²⁴ What can we learn from UN-Women Evaluations? A meta-analysis of evaluations managed by UN-Women in 2016

At the same time there is evidence from a number of interviews that the consistent support provided by UN Women (and other donors) to their key partner, MoWA, does seem to have resulted in some gradual and incremental changes - with MoWA particularly starting to show signs of having some capacity to take on tasks, such as CEDAW reporting and greater coordination with other government departments. There are also indications that the [Names protected] is moving in the right direction, with a focus on legislation being complemented with efforts to begin the process of implementation - for example, with the efforts on ERAW and Anti-Harassment Legislation being complemented with the [Names protected]. Again, evidence from interviews and the field visits shows that there is some way to go, with Commissions requesting resources in order to be able to carry out field visits.

In other parts of UN Women's programme of support, there is some evidence of the start of sustainability, such as in the support to the Central Statistical Office, through a partnership with MoWA. Support has been provided to the Central Statistical Office to ensure that sex-disaggregated data is available across government. UN Women's annual reporting shows that there was gender disaggregated data for eight new areas included in the statistical quarterly reports, while the Handbook on Women and Men in Afghanistan was published 2015 and the Third Survey of Women and Men in Decision-making 2016 was published at the start of 2017. In addition, the Central Statistics Organization launched the online Statistical Information Management System to strengthen timely data collection, analysis and dissemination, in part with UN Women's support.

Overall, the work with government partners has not been balanced with sufficient work with CSOs. Despite considerable investments being made by a range of donors, civil society generally remains institutionally weak, overly reliant on external funds. In general, UN Women has worked as a funder of CSOs (with the [Names protected]) and as a contractor, for example through funding the CEDAW shadow reporting process. There is, however, limited evidence that sufficient efforts have been made to build the capacity of CSOs and of women's organisations to be an effective counterpoint to government, to further discourses on key issues or to advocate effectively. Again, the AREU report on Governance in Afghanistan²⁵ raises serious concerns, which were echoed in interviews conducted during the evaluation, that: Today's women's movement is urban, overly intellectual for the majority of Afghan women and isolated from the country's mainstream socio-political conversations such as the peace and reconciliation process. Lack of capacity to prioritize and to focus on the major needs and priorities of Afghan women, not just the elites', has given rise to

²⁵ Governance in Afghanistan: An Introduction (2014) AREU

a women's movement that is not ready to share the burden of loss as Afghanistan attempts to transition toward peace.

2.6 IMPACT

What contributions have been made to poverty reduction and wider gender equality results and to what extent? What evidence is there to support this?

A number of recent donor evaluations²⁶ have reached two broad conclusions about progress towards gender equality results, that: the most significant gains in gender equality results have been in the social sectors, particularly improved access to and usage of health and education services; and that, there have been much more limited results achieved in women's human rights and women's roles in decision-making. In the main areas where UN Women have been working over the period of the evaluation, it is difficult to find evidence of significant changes.

There is limited evidence from either reporting or evaluations of UN Women's contributions to wider gender equality results, although there the evaluations of the EVAW programming some limited progress in some areas. Working in a difficult context (a very conservative, patriarchal society severely affected by conflict), the evaluations show that UN Women's efforts have made some very limited progress – for example, in raising awareness and starting to put legislation and the necessary institutions for implementation in place. At the same time, the more comprehensive evaluations of the [Names protected] show how far there is still to go, with examples of both gradual changes in attitudes and understanding and of what could be termed a back-lash, with very negative attitudes to efforts such as women's shelters.

The most significant investments made in M&E have been in the EVAW programme, with the most robust assessment being the Samuel Hill research on the [Names protected] carried out in 2013 and 2017. The findings are of some progress in terms of a start having been made in raising awareness and putting in place institutions. However, in terms of impact on women's lives, the findings are not encouraging, with variations between men and women, the young and older generations in awareness and perceptions about legislation and institutions and very negative perceptions about women's shelters.

The 2017 evaluation²⁷ finds that: even after more than a decade of assistance, most people who were interviewed are only just aware of the EVAW law, fewer understand it and even fewer accept it. All interviews indicated a general lack of in depth understanding of the purpose of the [Names protected], the path forward towards

²⁶

A Good Ally: Norway in Afghanistan 2001-2014 (2016); Review of Sida's Support to Afghanistan - Lessons and Conclusions from 7 Evaluations (2015); Summative Evaluation of Canada's Afghanistan Development Program 2004-2005 to 2012-2013 (2015); Evaluation of Danish development support to Afghanistan (2012)

²⁷ [Names protected] Samuel Hall

its implementation and relationships and interactions between various partners and modalities of the commissions.

There was no other substantive evidence of the contribution to gender equality results presented for other aspects of UN Women's programme.

Have there been any unintended effects of the programmes?

There is strong evidence of unintended effects of efforts to bring in legislation on EVAW and to provide protection for women who are affected by violence. There is evidence from a number of interviews of continued controversy and argument about the efforts to introduce the EVAW Law: including significant disagreements between women's organisations over the approaches taken to introducing the law and concerns over the introduction of the Anti-Harassment Law in 2016. There is also evidence from interviews of very negative attitudes to women's shelters. Examples were given where women who have used shelters have then been unable to maintain links with family or to move on, although some efforts are being made to address this in retrospect.

However, the strongest evidence comes from the 2017 Samuel Hill research on the [Names protected]. With regard to legislation the research found that while most women interviewed stated knowing that the EVAW law exists (that is to say, had a general understanding that this law existed to protect them from violence and abuse), there was very limited impact because of social stigma, norms and restrictions. Additionally, women reported severe flaws in the implementation of the law. Flaws related to implementation included uncertainty over the sensitive handling of their cases, corruption (fear / perception that the perpetrator's family could pay officials to decide in their favour) and as a result of corruption, the fear of backlash for bringing their domestic case in the public.

With regard to protection the research found that the most unanimous finding across every single person interviewed for this study is the negative perception associated with women's shelters. Shelters are considered by many as places where prostitution occurs, where women may be raped by the police and where women indulge in illicit activities. Many women interviewed strongly believe that once a woman goes to a shelter, even if she is guaranteed safety, she can never come back into society or join her family due to the stigma attached to these centres and misconceptions of shelters.

There was also no other substantive evidence of unintended effects presented for other aspects of UN Women's programme.

3 Conclusions

Has UN Women's programme been relevant to the Afghan context and does it reflect the right balance of priorities?

UN Women's programme has been and remains broadly relevant to the context of Afghanistan, although the balance of priorities has been driven more by funding availability than by a strategic or long-term vision of what is needed to respond to this context. The programme objectives are relevant and fit well with the national planning frameworks, as well as with the UN's national response and UN Women's own global strategic plan. While there is some evidence of flexibility in the implementation of the programme, what does seem to be lacking is the capacity to be able to effectively analyse the context, particularly in terms of society and governance, and to build this analysis into programme implementation.

What outcomes has the programme achieved and have these contributed to wider gender equality results?

There has been some progress made in the achievement of outputs, but much less progress in the achievement of outcomes. While the difficult context in part helps to explain the limited successes in the programme, many of the issues affecting the implementation of the programme come from the management of the programme, including: lack of continuity in leadership and lack of staff capacity; an overambition in what could be achieved and poor risk analysis and management; and, a limited focus on M&E that has affected the strategic focus in the programme. All of these issues have had an impact on the delivery of the programme and particularly on UN Women's reputation in the country with government, donors and partners.

There has been monitoring, but it has clearly been affected by the deteriorating security situation, but of more concern, by the lack of staff capacity. The main efforts have been put into assessing progress in the the EVAW programme, but there is little evidence of significant efforts elsewhere in the programme. However, even where there have been efforts made at monitoring and evaluation, there is limited evidence that the results have been used to develop and manage the programme more effectively. There is considerable scope to both use monitoring and evaluation of interventions more effectively in the implementation of interventions and to identify, record and disseminate examples of what has worked and areas where continued efforts are required, such as in capacity building with key partners in government and civil society.

Has the programme worked with the right partners and has it helped to build their capacity?

The main focus in UN Women's programme has been on working with government partners and, to a much more limited extent, with some CSOs, either through channelling funds or on a contractual basis. In both cases, there is only anecdotal evidence that capacity has been built and some external evidence that about continued capacity constraints in MoWA and in women's organisations, who have been UN Women's main partners. At the same time, there is some limited evidence that the capacity of some partners, such as the Central Statistical Office, has been built. UN Women has engaged in a formal manner with the UNCT and has developed some partnerships with specific UN organisations, such as the ILO. There is considerable demand for UN Women to engage with its gender coordination role more effectively and scope for the organisation to engage more effectively with other, larger partners, such as the World Bank.

Overall, however, there is a need for a more balanced and longer-term vision for taking the programme forward, which is not driven solely by funding availability. There is also a need to better take into account the capacity of the UN Women team in deciding which priorities should be focused on in the programme. In particular, there is a need for a greater focus on working as part of the UNCT and particularly on a longer-term vision of the role of and relationship with civil society and women's organisations. There is considerable scope for working more effectively in partnership with other organisations, such as the World Bank and in coordination with international NGOs, as a means in which to multiply the effects of what UN Women can achieve.

What contributions has the programme made to poverty reduction and to what extent?

It is difficult to find evidence of the direct contributions that UN Women has made to poverty reduction and to gender equality results. The evidence that does exist for the EVAW programme (from evaluations and research commissioned by UN Women) shows that there is still a long way to go in ensuring that legislation is understood and implemented and that other wider implications are followed up. There is also strong evidence of unintended effects of efforts to bring in legislation on EVAW and to provide protection for women who are affected by violence. There was no other substantive evidence of the contribution to gender equality results or of unintended effects presented for other aspects of UN Women's programme. There was also no strong evidence that UN Women has put in place effective M&E and knowledge management systems to be able to assess and disseminate the outcomes and results of their support.

4 Recommendations

The recommendations derive directly from the Findings and Conclusions and are aimed primarily at means by which UN Women can improve the Relevance, Efficiency and Effectiveness of the programme.

Ensuring Relevance and Working with the Right Partners

While the overall objectives of UN Women's programme in Afghanistan remain broadly relevant, there is a need to develop a more balanced approach and long-term vision for achieving these objectives. The broad problem analysis has already identified the need to directly address the patriarchal society and the resulting discriminatory culture and institutions in the country. However, an approach is needed that is based on more detailed analysis of the needs and capacities of partners, of the risks in a very insecure context and of the potential opportunities of working with a range of partners. It is, therefore, recommended that:

A start should be made by taking a more realistic and pragmatic view of what can be achieved in a difficult and insecure context and of what capacity (staff and finances) is needed to achieve this view, through:

1. Breaking down the long-term approach to the problem analysis into five year steps, in line with the global strategic goals. Greater efforts should be made to link the outputs and outcomes of the programme to this broader problem analysis, through the use of theories of change.
2. Taking a more realistic and pragmatic perspective in order to recognise important issues such as continued (and potentially increasing) insecurity and a continued lack of capacity and financial sustainability in both government and civil society. This should be done through regular risk analysis and better risk management, as an important element of implementation.
3. UN Women's response to these issues should aim to build on the examples of what has been achieved, in their role as a facilitator and in working behind the scenes to support partners, such as Central Statistical Office. This clearly needs to start with reviews and evaluations of other elements of the programme, focused on lesson learning.

UN Women should back up the broad and relevant problem analysis that identified the patriarchal society and a discriminatory culture and institutions, with better political, governance and institutional analysis. It is recommended that this work should:

4. Draw on the work of other donor partners and local research organisations for political, governance and institutional analysis relevant to the programme. This analysis should focus on identifying where there is likely to be the potential for significant changes that will affect gender inequality and what institutions and capacity

need to be in place to make these changes happen, such as the World Bank and more direct engagement in the humanitarian responses.

5. The analysis should start with the development a longer-term approach to working with civil society and the women's movement. This approach needs to move on from merely providing funding to looking at ways of developing civil society's roles in the long term. These include roles such as leading debate and change in society around key gender inequality issues, holding government to account for the implementation of legislation and gender equality plans, and piloting new approaches to tackling issues of gender inequality.

A More Effective Way of Working and of Recording Results

In order to take forward this more pragmatic and longer-term approach, it is recommended that:

UN Women focus on ensuring continuity of leadership backed up with strong national capacity for implementation and monitoring. This needs to be done through:

6. Putting a priority on having good leadership, to be able to develop the more pragmatic and realistic view described above. While it is recognised that this will be difficult to achieve it is crucial, both to recover the UN Women's reputation in Afghanistan and to take forward what is the organisation's biggest country programme.
7. In order to ensure that the current national staff stay on, it will be important to learn lessons about why previous staff left and respond to the issues identified effectively. National staff have the potential to provide both continuity in the programme and to form important relationships with government and civil society.

In taking forward a more pragmatic and realistic approach, UN Women needs to take a more realistic approach to what the organisation can deliver. It is, therefore, recommended that:

8. Efforts are focused more on building better relationships rather than being drawn into direct implementation or being a channel for funds. Through building better relationships there are a range of opportunities, such as working with government to ensure that gender equality is taken into account in national programmes and working with major donors, such as the World Bank and the EU. UN Women potentially has a key role to play in influencing these partners to ensure that gender is effectively taken into account.
9. Given the limitations of the funding available and the difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff for the programme, UN Women needs to be ruthless in the way in which it prioritises within the programme. Two initial important starting points are: ensuring that the Afghanistan Country Office has an effective and focused leader for the next three years; and, building the capacity and experience of the team of national staff that are currently in place, giving them opportunities and responsibility in order to keep them on board. Based on these starting points, there is a need to prioritise within the programme, analysing and evaluating to identify what has worked as a foundation and being ruthless in pruning what has not worked.

Finally, it is recommended that a much more comprehensive and consistent approach is taken to monitoring and evaluation across all areas of the programme:

10. This should start with consolidating the monitoring and evaluation work that has already been done in the ERAW programme, where there is a range of evidence that can be drawn on, both to develop the programme and in more effectively telling the story of what UN Women's support has and has not achieved.
11. Much greater efforts also need to be made in monitoring and evaluation in key areas of the programme where there is currently no solid evidence base, including capacity building support to MoWA, the support provided during elections and to female political representatives and support to the production and use of sex-disaggregated data.

Annex 1 – Terms of Reference

Terms of reference for evaluation of UN Women Country programme in Afghanistan

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 Information about the main donors to UN Women in Afghanistan - Sida, Norway and Finland

Sida, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, is a government authority with the goal to contribute to enabling poor people to improve their living conditions. Sida's work in Afghanistan is instructed by the Swedish Government's Results Strategy for Sweden's International Development Cooperation with Afghanistan, 2014-2019, where focus is on empowerment, education, employment, economic integration and enterprise. Increased gender equality and opportunities for women and girls to enjoy their human rights and actively participate in the development of society are to pervade all results areas. Sida's Unit for Afghanistan is placed at Sida Headquarters in Stockholm. In addition, Sida has five sent out staff at the Embassy in Kabul. Sida's unit for Afghanistan is responsible for implementing the Swedish result strategy for international development cooperation with Afghanistan (2014-2019).

The strategy comprises a total of SEK 4.87 billion covering the whole period. From 2015, Sweden has a feminist foreign policy in place, and from 2016 Sweden has a national action plan for 2016-2020 with Afghanistan as a focus country.

Focus for Swedish gender equality work in Afghanistan is prevention of Gender Based Violence, Sexual and reproductive health and rights, women's political and economic participation, education, and women, peace & security. For gender equality, Sweden works with targeted interventions, with dialogue and mainstreaming of all areas and interventions as well as with political dialogue. For best impact, Sweden allies with likeminded donors such as Nordic+. Sweden and Norway are main donors of UN Women Afghanistan and stand for almost 50% of UN Women's budget. Sida and Norway provide programme support and coordinate follow up since 2014. Since 2009, Sweden has provided ca 20 million SEK per year to UN Women in Afghanistan.

On a global level and including country level support, Sweden is the largest contributor to UN Women. For Afghanistan, Sweden has provided funds from 2009 with ca 20 million a year (ca 25% of the programme). Norway's main goal for development cooperation with Afghanistan is to contribute to the stabilization and development of the country. The priority areas are education, governance and economic-/rural development, and gender equality and women's rights are cross-cutting concerns.

The support to the UN Women's country program is relevant to the current Norwegian political priorities and for Norway's co-operation with Afghanistan. Gender equality is a priority for Norway and Afghanistan is a focus country for NAP 1325. Norway is one of the two biggest donors (along with Sweden) to the UN Women Country Programme 2014-2017 (NOK 85 000 000).

Finland was the 8th biggest donor to UN Women Country Office in Afghanistan (COA) in 2016, however the core contribution of USD 15,167,931 in 2015 was among the top donations to UN Women. Finland supported UN Women COA in 2016 with USD 173,083.83, with the focus of supporting the design and implementation of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security UNSCR 1325, and continues to support UN Women in 2017-2019 with the total amount of EUR 600,000.

1.2 Partner country

Afghanistan

1.3 Cooperation partner

UN Women in Afghanistan

1.4 Intervention/Programme description – UN Women in Afghanistan

The overall goal is to strengthen gender equality in Afghanistan, which will give improved opportunities of economic growth and sustainable peace in the future. The country programme is delivered through three pillars: 1) Political and Economic Empowerment, 2) Elimination of Violence against Women and 3) Coordination and Advocacy.

Political and Economic Empowerment for women is reached through policy framework and capacity support to women in politics, in civil service and peace processes. Women's political and economic increased participation is supported by frameworks in place, the government's increased capacity to implement those (NAPWA, CEDAW, 1325, EVAW-law, Women's Economic Security and Rights Strategy etc.), and the civil society, politicians and gender advocates strengthened capacity to advocate for their implementation and gender equality in general. Women's political participation is strengthened by supporting women in elections and in peace processes and to raise awareness on national, subnational and local levels. Women's economic opportunities are created through "safe markets", mentor programs, women business associations as well as through the Afghan Civil Service Reform Commission. To decrease violence against women, the programme supports organisations that work with protection/prevention of GBV, to create provincial response and coordination mechanisms, in the form of inter-ministerial commissions, [Names protected] and through the inclusion of men and boys in the work. Gender Equality work in Afghanistan will also be strengthened through national capacity building on gender budgeting, statistics, planning and reporting, through coordination among UN agencies, donors and line-ministries, as well as provision of gender exper-

tise to high level conferences between the Afghan Government and the donor community. UN Women also aims at strengthen and coordinate the civil society in holding the government accountable for its commitments in regards to improving the situation for women and girls.

UN Women's key roles:

- To support inter-governmental bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms.
- To help Member States to implement these standards, standing ready to provide suitable technical and financial support to those countries that request it, and to forge effective partnerships with civil society.
- To lead and coordinate the UN system's work on gender equality as well as promote accountability, including through regular monitoring of system-wide progress.)

Dialogue from the donor side has focused on men/boy's involvement, 1325 and strengthened institutional capacity to implement commitments for gender equality, including MoWA in provinces. In the agreement for 2009-2014, Sweden contributed to earmarked support for an expert on results based approach, to improve reports and more strategic planning at UN Women in Afghanistan. Norway and Sida have also conducted a Mid Term Review 2013 in addition to UN Women's own audits, evaluations and Mid Term Review.

2 Scope of assignment

2.1 General information

Norway, Sweden and Finland (hereinafter called "the donors") meet each other on a general basis in Kabul and are part of both formal and informal forums for gender. During 2016, the donors met with the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) and with UN Women in Kabul. It was found that the national women's machinery ought to be strengthened, that MoWA and has a number of weaknesses to address, are not invited to participate in strategic events for gender, and has a poor image. Though the problem is not new, one could have expected that institutional capacity at MoWA, Department of Women's Affairs (DoWAs) (MoWA on a provincial level) and other ministries would had advanced more with the help of UN Women and others.

The conclusion was that we as the donors need to focus more on how to support the MoWA and strengthen the government's capacity to implement the gender agenda in Afghanistan without having the possibility to provide direct support to the ministry. There have been work done by other actors, for instance Asian Foundation and UNDP, to strengthen MoWA's capacity, and it is important for the donors to understand how UN Women and the Ministry intend to build on work already done. It is also important for the donors to understand the Ministry views UN Women's approach (including Technical Advisors) and how UN Women's capacity building work

is in line with the Ministry's own plans.

We, the donors, that focus on 1325 and gender equality in Afghanistan, and is working in close partnership with UN Women would like to evaluate UN Women's programme to find how we best can support the institutional capacity to implement gender commitments in Afghanistan that generate real results for Afghan women and men. The donors from Sweden, Norway and Finland have staff for Afghanistan working both from a Kabul (embassy) and from a headquarters level.

The main frameworks for the gender agenda in Afghanistan includes the National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security (NAP 1325), the National Action Plan for Women's Economic Empowerment (NAP for WEE) and laws for Elimination of Violence against Women (EVAW) and anti-harassment.

2.2 Evaluation Purpose: Intended use and intended users

The purpose or intended use of the evaluation is to help

- Help Sida, Norway and Finland as well as UN Women to assess progress of the on-going UN Women country programme in Afghanistan to learn from what works well and less well and inform decisions on how programme implementation may be adjusted and improved
- provide Sida, Norway and Finland as well as UN Women with an input to upcoming discussions concerning the preparation and possible support of a new programme phase

The primary intended users of the evaluation are:

- the programme management team of UN Women's country programme in Afghanistan and New York,
- Sida's unit for Afghanistan, Sida's focal point for UN Women, Norway and Finland

The evaluation is to be designed, conducted and reported to meet the needs of the intended users and tenderers shall elaborate on how this will be ensured during the evaluation process.

2.3 Evaluation Object and Scope

The aim of the evaluation is to assess the relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of the UN Women country programme 2014-2017 in each impact area. This includes assessing UN Women's ability to reach quality results over time, to coordinate with the government and other actors in the field, including donors, but at the same time build ownership on the Afghan side.

The aim is also to get a deeper understanding of UN Women's work (which is indirectly the donor countries' contribution) to improve gender equality in Afghanistan in terms of UN Women's added value. How has the programme adapted to a changed environment to work with gender equality in Afghanistan, in terms of will and resources of donors and the Afghan government, coordinating with other actors and interventions, and other changes originated from Afghans themselves?

An aim is also to get an understanding of how and to what extent the UN Women programme applies a human rights-based approach, conflict sensitivity and how effectively it contributes to improved gender equality. To what extent is a vibrant and representative women's movement supported through UN Women? To what extent does UN Women's programme reach out nationwide and to the people most in need? How have target group's needs and voices been collected and used in the design of UN Women's programme?

For above mentioned aims, the assessment will (i) document results, outcome and experience of UN Women's programme activities in Afghanistan; (ii) discuss and define to what extent programme activities have contributed to sustainability, have built capacity among governmental institutions and have applied a rights and conflict perspective (iii) discuss and define how and to what extent programme activities have contributed to greater gender equality (iv) discuss and define to what extent UN Women has coordinated with government and other actors in the field (v) summarize lessons learned and provide additional recommendations for programme design and management going forward, (vii) how did UN Women prioritize and reprioritize its programme to have the greatest impact?

Stakeholders: Stakeholders should include civil society, beneficiaries, donors and ministries on central and provincial level. An elaborative work plan shall be developed by the evaluating team including necessary interaction with relevant stakeholders.

The evaluators should, during the course of their work, carry out a sufficient number of interviews and interaction with relevant stakeholders such as donors and thematic experts, UN Women staff and management functions, representatives of national authorities such as ministries, representatives of local authorities at district and provincial level, representatives of local communities as well as a representative sample of beneficiaries randomly selected as well as representatives from the civil society/ women's movement as well as youth.

The evaluating team will strive to create equal opportunities for both men and women to participate in interviews. Conflict sensitivity must be taken into consideration in the planning. Interviewees should represent both Kabul and province/district level.

The evaluation will consist of the following:

1. A desk study - as a first step to compile and *critically* analyse the findings and recommendations from already existing evaluations (both external and internal), reviews, programme documents, strategic plans and reports from 2013 and onwards, including result matrixes. Main focus should, but does not have to be limited to, should be on UN Women's Programme Document/s 2014-17 and progress reports for mentioned period provided to Sida and Norway, the latest UN Women's Mid Term Review and EVAW Evaluation (documents to be provided by UN Women in Kabul).
2. An inception report - based on the desk study and these terms of reference,

outlining the task and an initial assessment of relevant issues.

3. Field visit - as a complement to the desk study including interviews with relevant stakeholders. These interviews should capture the views of UN Women staff in Kabul and in Dai Kundi, representatives of national and provincial, implementing NGO-partners, representatives from the women's and youth movement, local communities, direct beneficiaries, HQ staff, embassy staff, and other UN Women donors in Afghanistan. After the field visit a meeting will be held with the donors in Kabul to present preliminary results.
4. Findings and results from the desk study and the field visits should be synthesized in a final report focusing on the assessment of effectiveness and sustainability of the implementation of objectives and priorities of the programme and on the assessment of possible changes to be made in order to improve the effective and sustainable implementation of the programme. Recommendations to the donors and to UN Women should be included in the report.
5. A seminar should be held in Kabul in the end of the field visit (venue could be decided together with the embassies involved), outlining the findings, conclusions and recommendations from the evaluation to all stakeholders interested.

2.4 Main Evaluation Questions

The main evaluation questions should be the following:

1. **Progress with follow-up of previous assessments:** What weaknesses and strengths have been identified in previous assessments and how have these been followed up by UN Women?

Relevance:

2. What is the overall relevance of the programme in the Afghan context? To what extent is the programme and theory of change aligned with the priorities of the government and real needs of people of Afghanistan as defined in NPP's, ANPDF, NAP 1325, and NAP WEE? Is the programme aligned with the three Nordic donors' strategies and gender equality priorities for Afghanistan? This includes women as peace builders, UNSCR 1325, women as economic actors, as decision makers, SRHR, GBV, involving men/boys.
3. Does the balance between the different pillars of UN Women's Country Programme reflect the national needs? How has priorities been selected? And is there a good balance between the different roles of UN Women, such as normative, facilitating/coordinating and operative? Have any of these roles been prioritized?

4. In what way and to what extent has donors (in general) influenced UN Women's agenda and programme in Afghanistan?

Effectiveness, impact, coverage:

5. What results are achieved according to the agreed result framework? To what extent are the results in accordance with national policies and priorities of Afghanistan, Sweden, Norway, Finland and of UN Women? To what extent has UN Women built capacity of a national architecture for gender equality in Afghanistan? What are the main outcome of the programme so far? To what extent has the programme been able to deliver on its intended objectives and to improved gender quality in an effective and efficient manner? Has UN Women contributed to attitudinal change in Afghanistan? Which of UN Women's programme objectives/components did not realise as planned and why? To what extent has the programme operated in a conflict sensitive manner? What impact does the security situation have on the program implementation and sustainability? Was the level of ambition at a reasonable level?
6. To what extent has the programme contributed to *poverty reduction*, with the wider definition of poverty as lack of power, voice, choice, security and resources as well as methods to analyse *conflict sensitivity*? What is the geographic outreach and participation of rural poor? To what extent has people living in poverty in rural areas benefitted from UN Women's programme? Does UN Women implement the rights perspective based on the principles of *participation and non-discrimination*?
7. New priorities for UN Women centrally are to be an actor in the humanitarian field and to prevent *extremism*. How did this apply at the country level, in Afghanistan?

Sustainability, capacity building, ownership:

8. To what extent have programme activities during the agreement period contributed to sustainability, including built capacity among governmental institutions at district, provincial and national level? How has UN Women's Country Programme contributed to strengthening national institutions capacity to perform their core functions such as:
 - Development of gender policies and laws reflecting international gender norms and standards.
 - Implementation of gender policies and laws, including gender mainstreaming at all levels (national, provincial and local).
 - Monitor implementation of national policies and laws.

- Awareness raising, communication and advocacy.

The issue of capacity building could be related to all the three pillars of the programme.

9. How did UN Women's support to and cooperation with counterparts (mainly civil society organisation – CSOs) work in terms of capacity building, consultation processes, transparency, ownership, transfer of money and follow up? How are civil society partners chosen? Among the civil society that have partnership with UN Women, what are the balance between CSOs that are a) operative providing services and b) advocacy and watchdog functions?
10. How is UN Women generally perceived by government and women's movement representatives as an actor for change of gender equality in Afghanistan? How are Afghan women consulted in UN Women's programme?
11. **Choice of partners and their roles:** Who have been UN Women's partners (Afghan, international and other UN agencies) and what have been their roles? How do the partners perceive the role(s) played by UN Women? Has UN Women been strategic in terms of choosing partners and are there any partners that are not included, but should have been (e.g. influential governmental partners such as Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs)?

Coordination:

12. How did the ACO follow up their core role to lead and coordinate the UN System's work on gender equality as well as promote accountability, including through regular monitoring of system-wide progress – when implementing the ACO country programme

The evaluation should have a critical, constructive and learning approach. It should aim at providing lessons learnt, good practices as well as actionable recommendations, including recommendations on improvements as to how UN Women's programming and organisational set-up in Afghanistan, given the context, resources available and other.

2.3 Budget

The budget for the review is maximum **SEK 1 200 000**. Upon signing of the contract with the consultant, time and budget for the evaluation will be approved by Sida. Since Sida does not provide security arrangement for the consultant, Sida is aware of high budget for security for this assignment.

2.4 Schedule and deliverables

The table below lists key deliverables for the evaluation process. Dates/deadlines are flexible and can be discussed to fit consultants' plan. However final deadline cannot be later than 1 January 2018.

Deliverables	Participants	Deadlines
1. Start-up meeting in Stockholm with Embassy in Kabul on video link with a first draft of inception report as basis for discussion	Marianne von Malmborg (Sida/Afg), Sida/Upps/Evaluation, Margit Vaarala (Emb)	1-4 augusti
2. Draft inception report to send out for comments		20 augusti
3. Inception meeting Stockholm with video link to Embassy	Marianne von Malmborg (Sida/Afg), Sida/Upps/Evaluation, Margit Vaarala and Mirja Peterson (Emb), Norway, Finland	30 augusti
4. Comments from intended users to evaluators	Sida, Norway, Finland, UN Women	15 sept
5. Final inception report		30 sept
6. Debriefing workshop in Afghanistan	Sida, Norway, Finland, UN Women	end Nov
7. Draft evaluation report		30 Nov
8. Comments from intended users to evaluators		15 Dec
9. Final evaluation report		1 January 2018
10. Evaluation brief	Sida, Norway, Finland, UN Women	January 2018

The inception report shall include:

- A model for analysis of UN Women's theory of change
- Further elaboration of questions and an overall design of the evaluation showing how they will be answered,
- An account of baseline data identified,
- A basic analysis of stakeholders, influencing and/or affected by the UN Women programme directly or indirectly,

- An account of how stakeholders will participate in the evaluation (who, how, when, why),
- Possible key issues to be further looked into in the evaluation,
- A detailed work plan including a time schedule agreed upon by the donors,
- A budget.

The evaluation report must include a presentation of the process in drawing up the evaluation design and choosing methodology. It shall also list all contributors to the evaluation (excepting those that have opted for anonymity).

An over-all de-briefing of findings to date is expected to be delivered at one the embassies concerned at the end of the in-field part of the evaluation. Related inputs from embassy staff, HQ staff as well as UN Women representatives participating in this evaluation, should be collected.

During the field visit the consultant has to give relevant feedback to and discuss the initial observations/findings with UN Women Afghanistan. Before leaving Afghanistan the consultants shall carry out a debriefing with UN Women's office in Kabul and the donors, involving officers both at embassies and HQs.

The final report must be presented in a way that enables publication without further editing. When the final report has been submitted the consultants will present the report at a seminar at Sida for all stakeholders interested. The final report can also be presented at a seminar at one of the embassies in Kabul.

The evaluation report shall be written in English with the executive summary and recommendations translated into Dari and Pashtu. The format and outline of the report shall therefore follow, as closely as is feasible, the guidelines in Sida Evaluation Manual – a Standardised Format. (<http://www.sida.se/English/how-we-work/evaluations1/>)

The evaluation reports should adhere to the OECD/DAC Glossary on Evaluation and Results-Based Management, and the format should correspond to the benchmark structure presented in Sida's Evaluation Manual Annex B.

The final report should not exceed 40 pages excluding annexes.

The consultancy contract will entered into with Sida. Sida's Standard Conditions for Short and Long Term Consulting Studies 2002 shall apply.

2.5 Profile of the Supplier and requirements for personnel

The evaluation team shall be constructed to have a solid set of qualifications of monitoring and evaluation, gender, UNSCR 1325, democratic governance, human rights as well as a good understanding of the Afghan context and development in conflict and post conflict environments.

The Consultant shall use a participatory approach. In order to carry out separate interviews with women, at least one of the female team members must be Afghan and/or fluent in Dari or Pashtu. The consultant team shall have exhibited skills in interviewing and analysing qualitative data gathered through interviews. Capability of conflict sensitivity is a must.

The competencies of the individual team members should be complimentary, and can include both level 1 and level 2 consultants, according to the framework agreement. The Evaluation Team shall have a team leader who is a core team member. It shall be stated in the proposal the person who will be the team leader.

The evaluation team must be independent of the evaluated activities and no stake in the outcome of the report

For team members that are not core members, A Curriculum Vitae shall contain full description of the team members' theoretical qualifications and professional work experience.

The team should have a good understanding of the Afghan context and at least The proposal must include:

- a) A description in the form of Curriculum Vitae for the evaluation team members.

The CV must contain a full description of the person's or persons' theoretical qualifications and professional work experience.

- b) The working methods employed in order to complete the assignment and secure the quality of the completed work; use a participatory approach and include local consultants;
- c) State the total cost of the assignment, specified as fee per hour for each category of personnel, any reimbursable costs, any other costs and any discounts (all types of costs in SEK and exclusive of VAT);
- d) A proposal for time and working schedules according to the assignment, including suggestions and criteria for selecting programmes sites to be examined.

Contact person for the evaluation:

Sida in Stockholm – Marianne von Malmberg (marianne.von.malmberg@sida.se)

Other people for reference are:

The Embassy of Sweden in Kabul – Mirja Peterson (mirja.peterson@gov.se)

The Embassy of Norway in Kabul – Anne-Marie Skjöld (anne.marie.skjold@mfa.no)

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Oslo – Aneela Khan (aneela.khan@mfa.no)

The Embassy of Finland in Kabul – Niina Tenhio (niina.tenhio@formin.fi)

UN Women, Kabul, Rebecca Tavares, acting Country Representative, (Rebecca.tavares@unwomen.com)

Annex 2 - Evaluation Matrix

Specific Evaluation Questions	Indicators to be used in Evaluation	Methods	Sources	Availability and Reliability of Data /comments
Relevance				
What is the programme's relevance to national priorities and to the priorities of UN Women and other donors?	Linkages between strategic targets, goals and indicators in national plans and donor and UN Women strategies	Document Analysis Semi-structured Interviews	National planning documents UN Women Afghanistan Strategic Note Donor Strategies	The Mid-term reviews in 2013 and 2017 covered this issue in some detail, as does the UN Women Afghanistan Strategic Note
How was the programme prioritised and what inputs were made into that process?	Evidence of changes in priorities in the programme (staff and resources) and of processes leading to changes	Document Analysis Semi-structured Interviews	UN Women reporting and notes of internal processes UN Women and donor meeting notes	Some evidence of prioritisation has been identified in the initial document review, to be followed up through interviews
How flexible and responsive has the programme been to the changing context and to the emergence of new priorities?	Evidence of analysis of the changing context and of changes to the programme in response	Document Analysis Semi-structured Interviews	UN Women reporting and notes of internal processes UN Women and donor meeting notes	Some evidence of responsiveness has been identified in the initial document review, to be followed up through interviews
Impact				
What contributions have been made to poverty reduction?	Comparisons of evidence of contributions to outcomes and results from reporting	Document Analysis Open-ended & Semi-structured Interviews	UN Women reporting Donor and CSO evaluations	The document review has identified a significant gap between UN Women regular

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tion and wider gender equality results and to what extent? What evidence is there to support this? Have there been any unintended effects of the programmes?	with evidence of changes from national statistics and surveys	FGD with Beneficiaries	Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey National Surveys	reporting and the reporting of results. It will be difficult to identify clear evidence of contributions to wider results.
Efficiency and Effectiveness				
How effectively has UN Women managed the programme and how has this contributed to the achievement of outputs and outcomes?	Comparisons between programmes of investment of resources with achievement of outputs and outcomes	Document Analysis Semi-structured Interviews	UN Women budgets and reporting UN Women databases for programmes	There will be the need to rely in the main on internal reporting and on evidence from interviews, which will be difficult to triangulate
How efficiently has UN Women used the resources that were available for the programme?	Comparisons between programmes of investment of resources with achievement of outputs and outcomes	Document Analysis Semi-structured Interviews	UN Women budgets and reporting UN Women databases for programmes	There will be the need to collect detailed evidence of programme budgets, which was not available in the document review.
What risks has the programme had to deal with and how effectively have they been managed?	Evidence of the existence and use of risk management processes in the programmes	Document Analysis Semi-structured Interviews	UN Women reporting	Again, there will be the need to rely in the main on internal reporting and on evidence from interviews, which will be difficult to triangulate
How effective is the monitoring of the programme, what outcomes has the programme achieved and what	Evidence supporting activities, outputs and outcomes	Document Analysis Open-ended & Semi-structured Interviews FGD with Beneficiaries	UN Women reporting UN Women databases for programmes	The worsening security situation means a reliance on third-party reporting, which is difficult to check

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evidence is there to support them?				
Sustainability				
How sustainable are the project outcomes and what evidence is there to support this?	Evidence of the continuation and uptake of project and programme outcomes	Document Analysis Semi-structured Interviews	UN Women reporting CSO Partner reporting	The worsening security situation means a reliance on third-party reporting, which is difficult to check

Annex 3 – Documents Reviewed

UN Women Documents

[Names protected]

Evaluations

[Names protected]

Research

[Names protected]

Other Donor Evaluations

A Good Ally: Norway in Afghanistan 2001-2014 (2016)

Review of Sida's Support to Afghanistan - Lessons and Conclusions from 7 Evaluations (2015)
 Summative Evaluation of Canada's Afghanistan Development Program 2004-2005 to 2012-2013 (2015)
 Governance in Afghanistan: An Introduction (2014)
 Evaluation of Danish development support to Afghanistan (2012)
 Women and Men in Afghanistan 2016 (July 2017) Central Statistics Organization

Sida Documents

Mid-term Review of Assistance to the UN Women Afghanistan Country Programme in the Planned period 2010-2013 (25/02/13)
 Sida Plan Appraisal Final (31/01/14)
 Sida Appraisal of UN Women Intervention, Final (11/11/14)
 Sida Conclusion on Performance UN Women (30/11/16)

Meeting Notes

Meeting to discuss Norway and Sida's Appraisals of UN Women Intervention – 9 March 2014, Kabul
 Meeting on New Agreement between UN Women and Sida, Norway and Finland – 19 June 2014, New York
 Draft Minutes of Meeting, Norway, Sida, Finland and UN Women - 27 October 2016, Kabul
 Draft Minutes of Meeting, Norway, Sweden, Finland and UN Women - 16 January 2017, Kabul

Audits

Moore Stephens LLP (January 2015) Financial Audit of UN Women
 Moore Stephens LLP (January 2015) Financial audit of the project: [Names protected]
 Moore Stephens LLP (January 2015) Financial audit of the project: ACO ECAW Netherlands
 UNDP OAI (January 2015) Audit of UN Women Afghanistan Implementation of the ACO Development Results Framework 2014-2016
 UNDP OAI (December 2015) Audit of UN Women Country Office in Afghanistan
 UNDP OAI (January 2016) Audit of UN Women Afghan Women Protection Programme
 UNDP OAI (January 2016) Audit of UN Women Institutional Capacity Development Unit Advocacy Project
 UNDP OAI (January 2016) Audit of UN Women Afghanistan Country Office Elimination of Violence Against Women Project

Other Documents

[Names protected]

Annex 4 – Stakeholders Interviewed

Donors

Mirja Peterson, Counsellor, Embassy of Sweden

Aneela Khan, Adviser, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Herman Baskar, Counsellor, Royal Norwegian Embassy

Lari Peltonen, Counsellor, Embassy of Finland

Niina Tenhio, Counsellor, Embassy of Finland

Semin Qasmi, Senior Program Manager, Australian Embassy, Kabul

Tobias Thyberg, Ambassador, Embassy of Sweden

Mette Sunnergren, Minister Counsellor/Head of Development Cooperation, Embassy of Sweden

UN

[Names protected]

Government

[Names protected]

Civil Society

[Names protected]



Evaluation of UN Women Country Programme in Afghanistan

This evaluation had two overarching purposes: to help Sida, Norway and Finland, as well as UN Women, to assess progress of the on-going UN Women country programme in Afghanistan to learn from what works well and less well. UN Women's programme has been and remains broadly relevant to the context of Afghanistan, although the balance of priorities has been driven more by funding availability than by a strategic or long-term vision. There has been some progress made in the achievement of outputs, but much less progress in the achievement of outcomes. While the difficult context in part helps to explain the limited successes in the programme, many of the issues affecting the implementation of the programme come from the management of the programme. The main focus in UN Women's programme has been on working with government partners and, to a much more limited extent, with some CSOs. In both cases, there is only anecdotal evidence that capacity has been built. It has been difficult to find evidence of the direct contributions that UN Women has made to poverty reduction and to gender equality results.

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