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Sida Decentralised Evaluation

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Evaluation of Support to the Implementation of Priority Activities in the National Action Plan for Gender Equality, Republic of Serbia

Final Report

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September 2014**

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The views and interpretations expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EU	European Union
GE	Gender equality
GED	Gender Equality Directorate
GEM	Gender Equality Mechanism
HRD	Human Resources Development
HRM	Human Resources Management
IMG	International Management Group
IR	Inception Report
MoLSP	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAP	National Action Plan
NDI	National Democratic Institute
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OO	Overall Objective
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PSLEGE	Provincial Secretariat for Employment, Economy and Gender Equality (Vojvodina)
SCTM	Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities
SEIO	Serbian European Integration Office
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Preface

This is an evaluation of the “Support to the Implementation of Priority Activities in the National Action Plan for Gender Equality, Republic of Serbia” commissioned by the Embassy of Sweden in Serbia and carried out by Indevelop (www.indevelop.se).

Field visits were undertaken in Serbia in May and June 2014. This report was finalised in July 2014 after feedback from the Embassy, IMG and the NAP team on the first draft report in July and on the final draft report in August.

Indevelop’s independent evaluation team consisted of:

- Johannes J.A. Blankert, Team Leader
- Ana Popovicki Capin, National Expert
- Annika Nilsson, Evaluation Methods Expert, member of Indevelop’s Core Team of Professional Evaluators

The Project Manager at Indevelop for this evaluation, Sarah Gharbi, has been responsible for compliance with Indevelop’s QA system throughout the process and quality assurance was performed by Ian Christoplos, Project Director for the Framework Agreement.

Executive Summary

Background and methods

Gender equality is one of the main focus areas of Swedish development cooperation, both as an aim in itself and as a cross cutting issue. Since 2010, Sweden has supported the implementation of the Serbian National Action Plan for Improving the Position of Women and Enhancing Gender Equality (NAP). The third phase of this support covers the period 2013-2015. As there were signs that progress was not satisfactory, the Embassy of Sweden in Belgrade commissioned Indevlop to conduct an evaluation of the performance of the project during the year 2013. This included an assessment of the processes and preparations leading up to the agreement for the third phase. The main purpose of the assignment is to review the effectiveness and efficiency of the present organisational set up and project design of Sweden's bilateral co-operation with the Ministry of Labour and its Gender Equality Directorate (GED) in Serbia.

The evaluation has mainly used qualitative methods to generate and analyse data as existing reports mainly focus on activities and outputs and provide limited analyses. Furthermore, most project performance indicators lack base-line values and monitoring data. The project design, although very detailed, has no clearly recognisable theory of change. This is also the case with the National Action Plan itself. All available documents, on the project and on the project environment were studied, and the evaluators engaged in interviews and discussions with around 30 representatives of organisations and institutions actively working in, or in any way affected by the project. A verification workshop took place at the Embassy of Sweden immediately after a first internal analysis of the information collected, and the feed-back received was processed in the draft evaluation report. This was followed by a written commenting procedure which has led to a great many comments on the draft report. The evaluators have responded to each individual comment and indicated how they were treated in the final report.

A specific external event affecting the future of the project has been that the new Serbian Government, after the elections of April 2014, has decided to abolish the GED. From the very start of the project, GED was to be the main vehicle for the implementation of the project (and the National Action Plan). The capacity development of GED was one of the four objectives of the Swedish support. At the time of writing the final evaluation report, it was still unclear how gender equality promotion will be institutionally embedded within the Serbian national authorities.

Findings

In terms of Relevance it was found that the selection of project activities was relevant to existing national and international policies and strategies, including EU accession, and also to the needs of women in Serbia, but that it has been isolated from other on-going processes, potential synergies have not been sought and that the relevance in relation to other GE initiatives is therefore limited. Also, because of the lack of synergies and the poor planning tool, the selected activities were not necessarily the most effective in relation to the outcomes aimed for.

Efficiency of the project has been below acceptable standards. Practically all activities suffered from delays and around one third were not executed at all or put on hold. However, where activities were executed they have led to good quality outputs. Various internal and external causes were found for the project's inefficiency. To begin with, the Ministry decided to take away project leadership from GED and charge a State Secretary with it. This led to conflicting agendas within the Ministry, increased politicisation, weak leadership and slow administrative (e.g. approval) procedures - and as a consequence a more pronounced control over the project by the International Management Group (IMG). The team of experts placed by the project in the Ministry (the NAP Team) found itself in a difficult position without sufficient direction and leadership. In this environment, the team could not work efficiently.

Effectiveness was assessed in terms of the extent to which project outputs had led to outcomes (emerging signs) or the likelihood of this happening. A total of 14 expected outcomes (with sub-outcomes) were analysed. Only a few were partly achieved, and most outcomes did not seem to have a chance to be achieved within the scope of the project. It was found that the main reasons for the limited progress of the project have been (a) lack of political will to prioritize gender and weak commitment to implement the Strategy and the Action Plan; (b) lack of strategic thinking – thin spread of activities over a wide range of areas without a clear theory of change; (c) lack of coordination and poor cooperation and communication between the parties involved; (d) lack of overall leadership of the project and lack of a monitoring system to inform the leadership and (e) lack of coordination with other stakeholders and lack of advocacy work to ensure political back up for the topics relevant to GE promotion.

Due to the lack of national ownership and political will, the sustainability of the project outcomes is likely to be very limited. There are however certain elements of the capacity development efforts that have provided sustainable outcomes, such as enhanced capacities of some individual training participants and capacities of local level governments, especially in gender budgeting.

Conclusions and recommendations

The evaluation concludes that the continued Swedish support to gender equality promotion in Serbia is highly relevant to the context, to the EU accession agenda and the new Swedish results strategy for the Balkan. It should be continued but in a better planned format and with another organisational set up. Donor coordination and local

ownership/commitment will be key factors for an improved set-up. For the immediate future, the following recommendations are important:

1. Freeze all activities planned for 2015, including new calls for proposals for the grant scheme, until the project content and organisational set-up have been redefined. Make clear arrangements for contracting and monitoring of applicants that have already submitted proposals for the small grant scheme (on-going) in the interim period and ensure that these are linked to the next project phase.
2. Allocate time and resources to the redefinition of the scope and organisation of the project, aiming at a re-start in January 2015.
3. Start a process of consultations with key actors in Serbia and other donors involved in GE promotion.
4. Task the NAP team with monitoring already on-going work to ensure that outputs are successfully linked to the work of other GE institutions (use of research, tools, etc.). Activities planned to inform about and make use of the research should be implemented.

The evaluation also presents a range of lessons learnt and recommendations for the longer term.

1 Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Serbia has a National Strategy for Improving the Position of Women and Enhancing Gender Equality, which covers the period 2010-2015. For its implementation, a National Action Plan (NAP) was produced covering the same period of time. The Strategy and Action Plan include six Strategic Areas/Overall Objectives (presented below). The Gender Equality Directorate (GED) of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy was given the responsibility for its implementation.

Sweden has supported the implementation of the NAP since 2010. The first phase, called the “Inception Programme”, ran from March 2010 until June 2011. The second phase entitled “One year Programme for the Implementation of Priority Activities in three areas of the NAP” was implemented from July 2011 until December 2012. The main objective of both these phases was to implement priority activities in three areas of the NAP - representation of women in public and political life, economic empowerment of women, and women and media. Funding was allocated for specific activities.

As the Ministry had insufficient governance systems (according to a pre-study), the Embassy contracted International Management Group (IMG) to be the “implementing agency”, with responsibility for monitoring the progress of the project, support its implementation and manage the finances.¹

Ahead of phase three, a consultant was selected by GED and contracted by IMG to develop a more comprehensive project proposal with a results framework to be presented to the Embassy. It was approved and has formed the basis for the project since 2013. The project still covers the same three areas as in the previous phases, with

¹ IMG was established in 1994 as an ad-hoc technical group to address the specific technical and infrastructure problems faced in Bosnia Herzegovina at the height of the conflict. It has since developed into a rather large international organisation, active in several countries, where it supports donors with technical implementation and financial management of development programmes (“the crucial link between Donor and Beneficiary”). EC, Nordic countries, Spain, Italy and Netherlands presently sit in the steering committee. They are also the main clients <http://www.img-int.org/Central/Public08/Default.aspx>

focus on three out of six Strategic Areas/Overall Objectives of the NAP, indicated in *italics* in the table below:

Strategic Areas (SA) and Overall Objectives (OO) of the National Strategy	
1	SA: <i>Increasing participation of women in the decision making processes and advancing gender equality</i> OO: <i>Exercising the rights of women to participate in decision making on equal terms with men</i>
2	SA: <i>Improving the economic status of women and achieving gender equality</i> OO: <i>Eradicating economic inequality between men and women, introducing equal opportunities policy and better use of women's development resources</i>
3	SA: <i>Achieving gender equality in education</i> OO: <i>Establishing gender equality and integrating a gender perspective in education</i>
4	SA: <i>Improving women's health and advancing gender equality in healthcare policy</i> OO: <i>Preserving and improving women's health and achieving gender equality in healthcare policy</i>
5	SA: <i>Preventing and combating violence against women and improving victim protection</i> OO: <i>Preventing and combating violence against women and improving victim protection</i>
6	SA: <i>Elimination of gender stereotypes in the media and promotion of gender equality</i> OO: <i>Establishing gender equality in the media, eliminating gender stereotypes and hate speech (misogyny)</i>

Not all sub-objectives ranked under these three overall objectives are part of the Swedish contribution. In addition, not all activities listed in the NAP under each of these sub-objectives are part of the Swedish contribution. The project proposal does not explain why certain sub-objectives and activities were selected. It therefore seems that the activity based approach from phase one and two continued with little modification within the new results framework.

In addition to the three objectives related to the NAP, the Swedish contribution had a fourth objective, "Enhancing the professional and institutional capacity of the Gender Equality Directorate". GED was established under the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in 2008, with a mandate to draft new laws and strategies aimed at improving the situation of women, implement ratified international instruments in this field and promote the policy of equal opportunities and conducting awareness raising campaigns. GED was also tasked with the implementation of the National Strategy through the NAP.

In addition to GED, there are a number of other Gender Equality Mechanisms (GEM) in Serbia which are supported by donors such as UNDP, National Democratic Institute (NDI), UN Women, OSCE, EU – often with funding from Norway and Sweden:

- The *Parliamentary Gender Equality Committee*, which examines laws and policies.
- The *Gender Equality Council*, established in 2004, which is an advisory body of the Serbian Government consisting of representatives of all relevant Ministries, and civil society and experts in the field of gender equality (GE) (universities, individual gender experts, etc.).

- The *Deputy Ombudsman* (Protector of Citizens) for GE which was organisationally divided into a GE Department and a GE Council, both within the Ombudsman Office. The Ombudsman is an independent institution in charge of monitoring all government institutions to ensure that they are implementing the legal framework. Also, the Ombudsman can propose draft Laws. The Ombudsman answers only directly to the Parliament.
- The *Commissioner for Equality*, who deals with anti-discrimination issues, including gender-based discrimination. This is also an independent institution answering directly to the Parliament.
- The *Provincial Secretariats for Labour, Economy and Gender Equality*, which are the oldest GEMs in Serbia. Their task is to mainstream gender equality into the Provincial governmental institutions and programmes (Vojvodina Province is a good example).
- The *Provincial Deputy Ombudsman for GE*, with the mandate to monitor provincial level institutions. The Provincial Ombudsman is active also at local municipality level, supporting local GEMs and national minority women, but also protocols for combating violence against women etc.
- *Local GEMs* are also established according to the GE Law (2009) in around two thirds of the Serbian municipalities. Their capacities have been strengthened by the above mentioned donors and lately mostly through the SCTM (Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities), with Swedish funding.
- In addition to the GEMs, there are a number of *civil society organisations and institutions* working on various GE issues at national and local level. Many of them have Swedish funding via, for example, Kvinna till Kvinna, Civil Right Defenders and Olof Palme International Centre.

It is within this context that the Swedish support to GED and the implementation of the NAP will be assessed.

1.2 PURPOSE

The present evaluation was triggered by the Annual Report 2013 of the project, the draft of which was issued and discussed in January 2014. It showed that considerable delays had been incurred with the implementation of activities planned for 2013. The Embassy of Sweden was eager to understand the underlying reasons for these delays in order to make informed decisions on how to improve the performance of the project.

The main purpose of the assignment has been to review the effectiveness and efficiency of the present organisational set up and project design of Sweden's bilateral co-operation with the Ministry of Labour and its GED in Serbia. The assessment is mainly focussing on the implementation of the project as planned for 2013, but also looks at conditions that prevailed at the start of the present cycle relating to the first two phases of the support (2010-2012).

1.3 APPROACH AND METHOD

The evaluation has mainly used qualitative methods to generate and analyse data. Quantitative analyses would have been desirable to use as well, but could not be used, for two reasons. Firstly, the evaluated project covers a period of merely a year, during which no comparable statistical or other data were gathered and/or published that show the position at the beginning and the end of the project.

Secondly, although the project proposal does include indicators of achievement, with none of them is there a base-line value and no monitoring of project indicators has taken place throughout the project period.

The following steps were part of the methodology:

1. As we could see that neither the National Action Plan nor the project proposal had a clear and logical theory of change, we started by reconstructing such logic, which could help us analyse the possible outcomes. This revised theory of change was presented in the inception report and accepted as a basis for the analysis.
2. We then studied all available reporting from the project and from other stakeholders involved in gender equality work in Serbia and undertook a thorough web-research to find information on trends during the past two years. Annex I shows a list of documentation and websites consulted.
3. We interviewed a total of 31 persons involved in, or affected by, the project implementation, including the responsible ex-State Secretary, the present NAP team, the ex-Programme Manager, the IMG staff and the ex-GED Director. We also interviewed a total of 8 external observers such as UN Women, OSCE, NDI, Embassy of Norway, Deputy Ombudsman, and Commissioner for Equality and EU. A full list of respondents can be found in Annex II.
4. The evaluation team then met for two days to analyse the information gathered and organise it to answer each of the 29 evaluation questions.
5. In the absence of systematic reporting on the indicators – and due to the short time span of the project, the effectiveness of the project was difficult to capture. We therefore analysed each output and discussed the likelihood of its contribution towards the expected outcomes. We also looked at general reports on change related to the three Strategic Areas and tried to investigate if the Swedish support had any connection with it.
6. Finally, we organised a verification workshop with the Embassy, IMG and the NAP team manager where we presented the preliminary findings and received valuable feedback, both on findings and possible ways forward.
7. A first draft report was shared for comments on 25 June; a final draft report was completed by 10 of July. Based on additional comments from the Embassy, a final report was prepared.

1.4 LIMITATIONS

The main challenges facing the evaluation team were:

The political changes that occurred as a result of the early elections in March 2014. During the evaluation period there were no Ministers, State Secretaries or focal points in place to assume responsibility for the gender equality issues or for the implementation of the NAP. GED was abolished and so far no new entity has been charged with responsibility for gender equality. Statements made by certain politicians in the leading party indicate that gender equality is not a top priority for them. The evaluators had to rely mainly on feedback from the former government representatives and staff. This makes it difficult to draw conclusions on sustainability and make recommendations for the future. We hope that this evaluation can serve as an instrument for the Embassy in its dialogue with the Ministry on the future of the Swedish support.

The floods and emergency that occurred during the evaluation period, which affected our possibilities to reach the targeted women politicians, organisations and journalists (e.g. we reached only representatives of local GEM, and local self-governments, but not journalists and not young female politicians).

Changes of staff in the Embassy of Sweden. We have not been able to interview the staff responsible for the decision leading up to the approval of the project, despite efforts. It would have been valuable to get more information about judgements made. Especially since in 2012, the political risks were deemed very high by other donors such as OSCE, UN Women, Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation, NDI and several other entities. They decided, after a few less successful approaches for cooperation, not to work with GED and, by extension, from the NAP Team.

Despite these limitations, we are confident that we have captured the most important aspects of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. With few exceptions, the views on the progress and performance of the project were echoed by almost all respondents, both from within the project and from outside observers.

2 Findings

2.1 RELEVANCE

This criterion refers to the planning and design phase and assesses the appropriateness of project objectives to the problems, needs and priorities of its target groups/beneficiaries, the considerations of contextual factors (such as other on-going initiatives and processes) and the consistency with EU and Swedish policies and strategies.

Evaluation questions related to relevance	
01	How appropriate was the selection of focus areas and activities in terms of furthering the overall and specific objectives of the National Strategy and addressing the problems experienced by women?
02	To what extent did the project design take into consideration Serbia's EU integration process?
03	To what extent did the project design allow for flexible response to changing internal and external conditions?
04	To what extent was the project consistent with Swedish development policy?

Relevance of selected focus areas

It is clear that the selection of focus areas was appropriate and relevant to the Serbian strategy and the NAP. Selection was made by the Embassy and GED/Ministry together, based on recommendations from the GED/Ministry. Of the other three areas, one (violence) was already being addressed with Norwegian support through UNDP, implemented by GED. Health was being partially addressed by the Ministry of Health directly, while education was problematic since it was difficult to engage the Ministry of Education to cooperate. The choice of focus areas was therefore, a negative choice but on the other hand, inherently relevant to the NAP. The activities selected for Swedish intervention are in line with those defined in the NAP, although not necessarily in the same order.

We conclude that the selection of activities was relevant to the NAP.

Relevance in relation to context

According the EC Progress report and reports to CEDAW in 2013, the highest priority areas in Serbia in relation to international standards relate to issues of gender based violence (GBV), the right to assembly (women's protests and Pride), discrimination of Roma women and women with disabilities, equality before the law, and war crimes committed against women. These issues have not been in focus for the project, but have gained attention from many other donors. The reports also indicate that GED is weak and specifically point at the lack of meaningful consultations and cooperation between GED, other institutions and women CSOs, and shortcomings related to the

lack of GED engagement in legislative reform (one of its key tasks). Supporting GED therefore seems to have been a relevant focus for the project, even if the prospects for effective mobilisation of GED to address priority issues were poor. Also, the lack of political and economic empowerment and traditional gender norms are mentioned in the reports and by respondents as key obstacles to gender equality – and these have indeed been in focus of the Swedish support.

We conclude therefore that the project is highly relevant to the concerns of women in Serbia, but that ineffective implementation has reduced the relevance.

Relevance in relation to other on-going initiatives

According to other donors and other Serbian institutions, the GED and NAP activities have been avoided by other GE actors after some negative experiences with the GED management in the period preceding the current project. Some on-going GE initiatives supported by other donors are strongly coordinated, but with no involvement of GED and the NAP team. For example, for the implementation of the UN Resolution 1325 – Women, Peace and Security, there is an informal donor coordination group that meets regularly: UNDP, UN Women, British Embassy, OSCE. There are similar coordination mechanisms on gender-based violence and in the area of non-discrimination. There have been no links between the GED and the office for non-discrimination (Protector of Citizens and Commissioner for Equality), despite the recent important work on new anti-discrimination legislation.

Another example of lack of synergy is the fact that two out of three² of the most important documents for GE in Serbia apart from NAP are not clearly linked to the NAP, namely:

- Antidiscrimination Strategy (not adopted yet), which has a separate chapter on discrimination of women
- Strategy for implementation of UN 1325 resolution – Women, peace and security

We conclude that the project has been isolated from other on-going processes, potential synergies have not been sought and that the relevance in relation to other GE initiatives is therefore limited.

Relevance to EU accession

Several elements of the project aim at assisting Serbia to establish structures, tools and behaviour that would bring Serbia closer to the European standards related to GE. The project proposal explicitly refers to these. Although the *acquis* does not include

² The third one is Violence against Women Strategy

any explicit demands related to GE, these issues are part of the Chapters 19 and 23 and are certainly part of the accession negotiations. On top of this, gender mainstreaming is a horizontal, cross-cutting theme throughout the acquis. During the evaluation, we found that local partners mainly work with the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men at Local Level as a tool. The National Strategy, the NAP as well as this support are broadly in line with this Charter.

We conclude that the support is implicitly relevant to EU accession, even though the acquis does not include any explicit demands related to GE.

Relevance in relation to Swedish policies and strategies

The new Swedish results strategy for the Western Balkans 2014- 2020 has three objectives:

1. Enhanced economic integration with the EU and development of market economy
2. Strengthened democracy, greater respect for human rights and a more fully developed state under the rule of law
3. A better environment, reduced climate impact and enhanced resilience to environmental impact and climate change

The Strategy specifically mentions that the support should contribute to protecting human rights in line with the commitments undertaken by Western Balkan countries in the Council of Europe. Initiatives that strengthen the rights of the Roma, vulnerable children, LGBTI persons (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Trans- and Intersex), ethnic and religious minorities, etc. and increase recognition of and respect for such groups should be given priority. Efforts to increase awareness of and combat discrimination and intolerance are important. Another important task of Swedish support is to help ensure that gender equality issues are given greater political priority and that initiatives strengthen women's and girls' empowerment and opportunities to enjoy their rights. Initiatives should contribute to altering gender-stereotyped attitudes and unequal gender roles. Men and boys need to be involved to achieve a more gender-equal society.

In relation to the new objectives for Swedish engagement, the project is assessed as relevant, but could become even more relevant with some adjustments. So far the project has focussed mainly on building capacity and awareness of the duty bearers and less on specific measures to address discrimination and enhance participation/empowerment of rights holders. Although some research on rural women and single mothers has been supported, the main challenges of Roma women, women with disabilities and LGBTI women have not been in focus. Efforts to address stereotypes in media have been made, but there is still limited engagement of men and boys.

In relation to the human rights principles guiding Swedish development cooperation, the project has not been relevant. It did not contribute to increased accountability and transparency of the government or ensure application of these principles in the supported processes. There was limited participation or cooperation with the CSOs

representing rights holders and with other GE mechanisms. The focus on non-discrimination was limited, with no links to on-going anti-discrimination legislative reforms.

2.2 EFFICIENCY

This criterion refers to inputs and activities, and how well they were converted into outputs.

Evaluation questions related to efficiency	
05	Were inputs from the NAP team and external subcontractors delivered timely and with adequate quality?
06	To what extent has each of the expected outputs as listed in the table above been achieved?
07	Did the overall organisational and administrative set up (Ministry, GED, NAP, IMG) support or hamper the efficient implementation of the project?
08	Were IMG's capacities, role and mandate to monitor and report on technical and managerial performance of Ministry/GED sufficient?
09	To what extent were quarterly and annual work plans fulfilled?
10	How adequately did the project team (Ministry/GED, NAP, IMG) react to internal and external risks materialising

Timing of activities and outputs

The main types of project activities are training sessions, roundtable conferences and public debates, research and surveys, and the production of promotional materials. The evaluation clearly finds that the selection of project activities, under each of four strategic areas, has been weak and not linked to the expected outcomes. GED/Ministry selected too many small and isolated activities to achieve a critical mass. When selecting project interventions, insufficient use was made of the know-how available with CSOs or other GE actors, while even the previous experiences of the NAP team were only partially taken into account.

The evaluators have analysed the achievement of outputs in terms of their timing and their quality. In total 29 activities were planned for 2013. It seems that in the first half of 2014 the project will be able to realise most of the activities planned for 2013, with a delay of around 6 months. 15 of the planned activities have been completed. Seven of the activities are currently on-going, to be completed by July 2014. Three activities

are basically on hold or in their early implementation phases, as well as additional 2 activities that were approved but not originally planned. 4 activities are postponed until after the evaluation (see table below³).

Implemented by July 2014
Five training sessions for HR of political parties, with 80 participants from 11 political parties, from 46 municipalities
Comparative Study of Equal Opportunities in Business has been completed and related round table for Business enterprises, was held on 6 th February 2014
Training for female politicians was held in November 2013.
Five GRB trainings for finance official from local-self Governments, was held in November 2013 for around 75 participants
Regional School for GE was held in December 2013
Monitoring of the representation of women at local level is completed and need to be published
Research in ICT technologies was completed and presented on 24 April 2014,
GED website together with on-line course has been updated on regular basis
Conference of 8 th March 14
Promotion material produced for media
NAP team was strengthened with two new members: Capacity Building Coordinator and PR Assistant
One international Event has been visited by Project Director and Project Manager
Skill building events. Project Director took English lessons and External and Consultant has been engaged to build RBM skills of NAP, Ministry and IMG staff
On-going activities
Survey carried out on larger business enterprises to measure readiness for introducing flexible and gender-sensitive working conditions
IPSOS is finalising research on the position of single parents
SECONS is finalising the survey on the position of women in business
A grant scheme for CSOs has been launched in February but selection has not been completed
Survey on day-care services has been initiated, methodology has been drafted by YUCOM and schools should provide feedback
IPSOS is finalising a survey on public opinion about GE
Evaluation
On hold
Research on position of women in rural areas is in process of selection of CSO
Monitoring of the employers obligations, according to GEL
Work Plan for 2014 has been designed but put on hold
Second training for female politicians (activity from 2014 cycle)

³ Some of the planned 29 activities have two parts and two new activities have been added. Therefore the sum of activities in the table is more than 29

Training on women land ownership (activity from 2014 cycle, additional activity, not originally planned, approved by Sida in March 2014)
--

Postponed

Public debates at local level for promotion of all researches and surveys

Two CB events for Gender Focal Points in line Ministries
--

Round table for HR and management executives
--

Training events for Club of Journalists. Two meetings were organized with Club of Journalists

No exchange visits have been organised
--

Performance of the NAP team and external consultants

The NAP team consists of gender experts contracted by IMG, but placed under the auspices of the Ministry to support its work with the implementation of the National Action Plan. The evaluators find it impossible to reliably assess the quality of the NAP team as a whole and of its individual members, since they have not been able at any moment in time to influence the project and plan their own work. The team has been negatively affected by:

- The power struggles and shifts of responsibilities for the project within the Ministry between GED and State Secretaries has left the team without consistent and committed leadership
- Too many small, diverse and unrelated activities included in the project proposal, making it very difficult to make an efficient and consistent plan
- Limited number of staff compared to the planned activities
- The inflexible administrative and procedural requirements of the implementing partner (IMG) and the poor dialogue climate between IMG and the NAP team

While the working environment has been extremely challenging, it is also clear that the NAP team lacks the experience and project cycle management knowledge to manage complex projects. This negatively influences efficiency (ad-hoc instead of planned actions) and weakens the position of the team in its cooperation and dialogue with IMG and the Ministry.

The NAP team is obliged to develop an Annual Work Plan and Quarterly Work Plans, which are to be approved by the Embassy and used as management tools by the Ministry and IMG. Each of the plans consists of a narrative part, a financial part, a timetable and related TORs for external consultants to be contracted in the next period. So far the work plans have underestimated the time needed for processes at the Ministry and at IMG. It could be questioned if the NAP team should be responsible for the preparation of work plans when they do not have any influence on the length of procedures within, and the timeliness of decision-making by, the Ministry and by IMG. It must be concluded that the work plans have served a formal purpose only. They could and should not be used for holding the NAP team accountable.

The organisational set-up of the NAP team has also been problematic. The team members are formally contracted by IMG but they are responsible for their performance and deliverables both to the Ministry and IMG. Thus, the team members have to balance between loyalties towards their employer IMG on one hand and their managers in the Ministry on the other hand (not always with the same priorities and judgements). Such consultancy arrangements are common practice in Serbia. Nevertheless, these arrangements negatively affect the efficiency, local ownership and sustainability of the projects (systems, structures and results). Preliminary information from the Ministry indicates that the NAP team is not part of the future government organisational arrangements for implementation of the GE policy.

In general, external trainers and consultants, once contracted⁴, have delivered their work on time and with good quality. Where delays were incurred, these were mainly due to administrative procedures at the Ministry and to some extent at IMG. There is a strong body of knowledge among CSOs and consultants and the project could continue to draw upon this knowledge. In several cases, some of the very experienced gender experts and trainers went beyond their mandates and tried on their own to address the lack of synergies between the NAP and other initiatives (e.g. trainers for young female politicians saw the need to take action beyond the activities in the project and created a trainers team at their own initiative to discuss training, long-term goals and the specific needs of young female politicians in Serbia). Since the trainers were involved in similar training initiatives, funded by other donors, they saw the need for coordination of efforts and joint development of methods. If the project had been properly planned in dialogue with other stakeholders in the sector, such synergies would have been part of the project design.

Performance of the Ministry

According to the agreement between the Swedish and Serbian Authorities, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy (MoLESP) is in charge of day-to-day operational management of the project. This includes narrative reporting to the embassy. By the turn of 2012/2013, the function of Programme Director was transferred from the Director of GED to one of the Ministry's State Secretaries and throughout 2013 this State Secretary took all political and strategic decisions relevant to the project. In December 2013, a new person was appointed State Secretary in charge of gender equality. Upon the recent (March 2014) Parliamentary elections, new changes

⁴ Related to engagement of external trainers and consultants, the period between advertising and contract signing is in general (too) long and can take up to four months. The involvement of several parties in the process with different priorities (Ministry/State Secretary, NAP team, IMG, Embassy) made the process inefficient. Some of these parties did not meet deadlines, others were not able to produce documents without errors, and again others gave priority to formal issues over the need for the project to produce outcomes.

were introduced, but so far (June 21 2014) no new State Secretary has been appointed. The repeated shifts of responsibility for the project at the Ministry have severely affected the ownership and the efficiency of the project. The Ministry has not managed to lead and monitor the project as agreed with the Embassy.

Performance of IMG

International Management Group (IMG) was engaged (based on previous good experience) to administer and monitor the Swedish financial contribution on behalf of the Embassy, since it was assessed that the Serbian government systems were too weak to manage the Swedish grant. IMG has over time developed an elaborate set of procedures, based on EU and Swedish regulations for accountability and tendering. It was assumed that guidance on content should be provided by the Ministry, while the NAP team would have sufficiently strong GE experts to implement project activities. IMG therefore has not engaged staff with specific competency on GE or the Serbian GE context.

In daily practice, IMG and the NAP Team discuss (mainly via e-mails) the structure and contents of (1) work plans, (2) terms of reference for trainers and other external experts, (3) progress reports and (4) expert reports. These discussions have been intensive and time consuming for both parties. The inflexibility of IMG procedures and the limited understanding of the GE context, have negatively affected efficiency of the project and have also affected the communication climate between IMG and the NAP team. A wide range of external actors (consultants, CSOs and government representatives) that have interacted with IMG, provide examples of how inflexible and formalistic requirements have affected the efficiency and effectiveness of the project.

Furthermore, the rules and procedures used for CSO applications for small grants are so strict and complicated that they effectively exclude many of the small CSOs (which are supposed to be targeted)⁵. At the start of the process in 2013, the rules and procedures were even stricter, leading to IMG being invited to a meeting with the State Secretary, where eventually some of the eligibility criteria were changed. The tender process has so far taken more than five months and proposals are still not appraised. Considering the otherwise very strict procedures, it is surprising that IMG does not use external assessors for the grant schemes. The concept notes and full applications are presently assessed by an evaluation team consisting of NAP and GED representatives and IMG staff (no-voting position).

⁵ IMG uses EU standards, which are known to be extremely cumbersome for CSOs

At the same time the IMG intervention and control has been appropriate in terms of counteracting mismanagement and corruption. We recognize that the Embassy appreciated the level of rigor applied by IMG and that in many cases, IMG's contributions in terms of comments, interventions, warnings etc. were indispensable. One example was the reaction to the changing (and insufficient) leadership of the project at the Ministry. IMG had to intervene and has gradually extended its engagement from contract and financial management to questions related to the content of the project (which was not intended in the contract). For the future, there is a need for IMG and the Embassy to reflect on the appropriate balance between control and risk taking in social change projects like these (see under risk management).

2.3 EFFECTIVENESS

In this chapter we analyse the achievements of the project and the factors contributing to successes and failures. We focus on outputs and their possible contributions towards outcome and impact objectives. Our findings are based on reports from the project and interviews with participants, staff and other GE stakeholders.

Evaluation questions related to effectiveness	
11	To what extent has each of the expected outcomes been achieved?
12	To what extent did the outputs delivered contribute to the expected outcomes?
13	Which factors (financial, political, institutional, human factor) possibly hampered the achievement of results?
14	Were GED's capacities, role and mandate to monitor and report on outputs and outcomes of the project sufficient?
15	To what extent did the work of the NAP team affect the achievement of long-term objectives of the project, positively or negatively?
16	To what extent has Swedish financial assistance to this project contributed to accession preparation?

The achievements in relation to objective 1 - Increased representation of women in public and political life

In 2010 Serbia adopted a Gender Equality Law, which stipulates a minimum 33 per cent quota for women in party candidate lists. As a result, the number of women in the Serbian Parliament is currently 33.73 per cent (84 out of 250)⁶. This is approximately the same representation of women as in the previous Parliament (33 per cent). At the last parliamentary elections held on 16 March 2014, in accordance with the legally stipulated gender quota, one third of the candidates were women. However,

⁶ <http://www.parlament.gov.rs/>

they were not very visible in the election campaign and the candidates did not specifically address women's issues in their programmes.⁷ Analysis of media campaign coverage from a gender perspective showed that women's visibility was limited both in broadcast and print media. Despite the 33 per cent gender quota for candidate lists, only 7 per cent of television coverage was devoted to women candidates, while 74 per cent was allocated to men, and 19 per cent to parties and coalitions.⁸ ***There are still few women in high positions in the government and their influence in public and political life at national level remains weak.***

Representation of women at local level is currently 32.3 per cent⁹ (election 2012) and there has been some increase compared to the previous local elections (28.6 per cent). The NAP team activities may have contributed to such improvements, but there are also a number of other initiatives supporting women's empowerment and political representation at local level. One of them is the Swedish support to via the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities¹⁰. ***The NAP team commissioned a baseline survey that can be used for future monitoring of representation of women in local government (a final report is available).***

Below the actual outcomes and outputs are analysed against the expected outcomes.

Expected outcome	Actual outcome and outputs
There is increased awareness and professional capacity on gender equality mechanisms and tools <i>among public servants in national and local self-government administrations</i>	At national level there is only limited evidence of increased awareness and capacity of public servants (some individuals only). However, the inter-ministerial GE Council has been equipped with skills and knowledge as a result of the project, which may help its functioning. At local level there is increased awareness among civil servants in a number of local governments, especially on gender budgeting. There is however no systematic reporting on the improvements noted in the targeted local governments. The City of Uzice is mentioned as a good example, where after project training for finance staff, resources were allocated to a local CSO (Women's Centre Uzice) for their programmes related to economic empowerment of women. Women's Centre Uzice is a strong advocacy and grass root organisation which had encouraged local decision makers to approve a budget allocation for many years, but it was only put on the politi-

⁷ OSCE/ODIHR Limited Election Observation Mission Report

⁸ *ibid*

⁹ <http://rr.skgo.org/>

¹⁰ National Statistic Office 2013

	cal agenda after the training. It is a missed opportunity that local GEMs were not directly involved in some of the project activities at local government level. This would have helped effectiveness, but also sustainability.
There are enhanced capabilities and mandate of the <i>network of Gender Equality Focal Points in the ministries</i>	Focal points do not effectively exist anymore, since after elections (2012 and 2014) most of the former Ministry staff has been replaced and some Ministries have been merged with others. The project did not directly address gender focal points in the governmental institutions, despite being one of the expected outcomes in the project proposal.
There is increased awareness and better practices of <i>political parties</i> on gender equality	GE awareness has increased among participants in trainings for Human Resource (HR) secretaries of political parties. Respondents report that GE has become an important topic for political parties at local level. The project activities contributed to this outcome by providing guidelines for political parties; a study visit to Norway; two trainings for young female members of party HR officials. With synergy created with other donors targeting GE at local level (SCTM, EU Progress, UN Women) some of the participants had the opportunity to become active in their local GEMs (e.g. in Tutin where the GEM applied for EU Progress small grant for improvement of GE in their municipality). Political parties are still very centralised and patriarchal. Affirmative actions and any kind of 'democratisation' of the parties are very challenging. Entry points mainly exist at local levels.
There is strengthened capacity of <i>civil society</i> to advance the gender equality agenda on the local level, including effective grant making to strategic initiatives	CSOs have been addressed directly through the grant scheme, but since grantees have not yet been selected, an assessment of their strengthening cannot be made. According to the Shadow report for CEDAW 2013, organisations already have capacity but not the means to influence " <i>despite decades of experience, expertise and autonomy of women's organisations they have been marginalised and excluded from key government policy making processes</i> " ¹¹ . This shows that the focus should be on supporting these organisations to challenge the hostile political environment and the patriarchal norms and structures.

¹¹ According to the Shadow Report for CEDAW, 44 women CSOs signed the Letter to Gender Equality Directorate (2009) identified key moments of marginalization of CSOs are: 1. neglect of long-standing work and expertise of women's organizations in the issues of improvement of status of women and gender equality; 2. fictively participative process with no real possibility to make an influence; 3. disempowerment of women's organizations in regard to the state structures

There is increased self-confidence among <i>women in political positions</i> and improved capacity to carry out their expected roles and duties	There are many positive reactions from participants in training courses for political party HR officials. The project also addressed women in political positions directly (two trainings before the election), leading to enhanced self-confidence. However, many female politicians who are holding quota positions are still appointed to “fill the numbers” rather than to contribute.
There is increased numbers of <i>local government structures that apply gender sensitive budgeting</i> and harmonize their services with modern gender equality principles	Introducing Gender Based Budgeting (GRB) to the local self-government finance staff was perfectly timed, since Serbia needs to transform its public finances in 2015 from line budgets to programme based budgets. The project implemented a range on trainings on this in the previous phases. Some of the project outputs (e.g. research, surveys, benchmarks, etc.) have contributed to the basis for future policy development processes at local level. However, there is still a lack of resources in local government for policy implementations. A number of donors (UN Women, SCTM, NDI, OSCE) have also been active to strengthen GE policies at local level. They also supported local GEMs, decision makers and civil servants to use gender analyses and GRB as a tool for gender mainstreaming. Generally, GRB can be fully applied in Serbia only when the process of financial reform is finalised.
There is regular monitoring of progress in relation to representation of women in local self-governments <i>by CSOs</i> . There is regular sharing of the results of this monitoring	Monitoring the representation of women at local level is one of the direct project outputs. A first baseline study was conducted in early 2012 (phase two of the project) and a follow-up survey using the same methodology was carried out during the present project period. A final report is available but has not been published yet. The methodology has been designed and can become a useful and sustainable tool for monitoring at local level. The main challenge is to find a body that can take ownership of the tool. Possibly the Ombudsman or the Commissioner could be interested.

The achievements in relation to objective 2 - Improved economic status of women and reduced economic inequality between men and women, with new equal opportunities

According to National Statistic Office, the employment rate was 34.3 per cent in 2012 and 37.4 per cent for the first 3 months of 2014. Still, it is significantly higher for men than for women (41.5: 27.7 in 2012 and 44.9: 30.5 in 2014.). This means that the gap between men and women has widened instead of being reduced. The Shadow Report for CEDAW (2013) highlights that women with lower education are less active in the labour market, that unemployment rates are particularly high among women from socially marginalised groups, that women in rural areas mostly work as contributing family workers, have no property of their own, rarely are holders of agricultural farms and do not take part in decision making concerning agricultural production.

Women earn approximately 90 per cent of average male salaries; this gap cannot be explained by educational differences. Women are often abused at work, especially in small and medium size enterprises, while many employers avoid hiring women to traditionally male jobs.¹²

While the situation for women in the labour market has worsened since 2012, some policy level improvements are noted. In 2013, amendments to the Labour Law were enacted and a new Law on Exercise of Health Care Rights of Children, Pregnant Women and Nursing Mothers improving the position of pregnant women and nursing mothers¹³. Also, MoLESP, acting pursuant to a recommendation of the Protector of Citizens, pledged to issue all city/municipal administrations with instructions on the course of action to be taken in cases where employers evade their statutory obligation to pay compensation to employees during maternity leave, leave to care for a child or leave to take special care of a child.

None of these improvements in the legal system is a result of the Swedish supported project. The evaluators could find little evidence of the project's contributions to improved economic status of women. ***The project did however contribute substantially to research on the pre-conditions and obstacles for improved economic status (baseline studies about position of some groups of women, practices in business sector, day care etc.), which could be useful tools for future action.***

Below the actual outcomes and outputs are analysed against the expected outcomes.

Expected outcome	Actual outcome end outputs
There is increased <i>knowledge among decision makers</i> of the multiple aspects underlying gender-based inequality in Serbia, especially within the following areas a) the situation of single mothers, other family types, and informal employment-like situations faced by women b) the present position of women in business and on the role of	Good quality research on the specific position of women in business and the importance of ICT related knowledge for women has been commissioned and produced. A monitoring report of the representation of women at local level has also been produced. a – Research on the situation of single mothers, other family types, and informal employment-like situations faced by women is currently on-going. At the same time, another related study was initiated, and started by the Institute for Sociological Researches. ¹⁴ The NAP Team was aware of this and entered

¹² SHADOW OVER SERBIA, NGO Report for the 55th CEDAW Committee Session 2013

¹³ Annual Report of Protector of Citizens for 2013

¹⁴ http://www.f.bg.ac.rs/files/instituti/ISI/isi_2014_Jednoroditeljske_porodice_u_Srbiji.pdf

ICT related knowledge in women's labour market situation c) the readiness businesses for introducing flexible and gender-sensitive working conditions d) the position women in non-urban environment e) the public opinion on gender equality	into contact with IPSOS to avoid possible overlaps. In the end, both studies mutually reinforced each other. b - ICT study was delivered; recommendations were given to all relevant institutions, including the labour office. The NAP team has organised a conference to disseminate the information. There is no evidence that this has resulted in knowledge transfer to decision-makers. Additionally, the NAP team has also organised a workshop for girls in the use of ICT to empower them. c – Comparative study of 20 big businesses, public and private was delivered in February 2014; after that a roundtable conference took place with two foreign experts, attended by representatives of public and private businesses. The press was present, and the state secretary gave a television presentation. c – Survey about the willingness of big companies to introduce flexible and gender-sensitive working conditions is not yet completed. It was designed as baseline for follow up after policy-making processes in this area. d – The study on the position of women in non-urban environments has not started yet, due to delays occurred in the process of selection. e – New public opinion poll on gender equality is underway. This is a partial replication of a previous poll, conducted four years ago. If it is strategically marketed to media and CSOs it could be a valuable advocacy tool.
There is <i>increased awareness of business community</i> in Serbia about gender equality concepts and how gender equality can improve their business is enhanced	The Swedish supported project addressed the business sector with some valuable research, for example “Time use in Serbia” (not produced but <u>used</u> by the project) “Comparative study of Equal Opportunities in Businesses”, etc.) and recommendations, well organised roundtables and events. Apart from that the NAP team has managed to secure cooperation with the Foundation of Business Women. Thanks to synergies with other GE actors / efforts (UN Women, SCTM, etc.) some gender mainstreaming breakthrough in the business sector is visible and the Swedish supported project contributed to that.
There is <i>better availability of quality day care centres</i> for children, so that women can work and participate. Good models have been developed.	Research on the availability of daily care for school children has been finalised and feedback debates in schools are organised aiming to get more in-depth information about this social service. The research can be used as a basis for continued efforts in the area.

The achievements in relation to objective 3 - Reduced use of gender stereotypes in mass media and increased promotion of gender equality concepts to the wider public (especially at local level)

Systematic monitoring of gender stereotypes in the media (even if this monitoring exists) was not available to the evaluation team. However, gender experts, trainers and stakeholders interviewed during the evaluation process, clearly stated that gender stereotypes have not changed and that this is one of the most important areas that should be addressed. The media in Serbia are gender blind, in most cases do not use gender sensitive language, and women are presented as sexual objects or mostly as mothers taking care of the family, society or others.

Reports show that activities during the previous phase of the project contributed to increased visibility of GE issues in the media (the rate of GED appearance in media increased from 15 appearances in 2011 to 158 appearance in 2012 – no figures available for 2013). However, respondents indicate that current activities with journalists had limited results.

Efforts taken to influence the media are insufficiently systematic and insufficiently coordinated with other similar initiatives to lead to significant change.

Below the actual outcomes and outputs are analysed against the expected outcomes.

Expected outcomes	Actual outcomes and outputs
There is increased professional <i>capacity and willingness of journalists</i> to report on gender equality and women's rights issues	Phase two has provided some results, but there are no documented results in phase three.
There is sufficient <i>good quality promotion material and research</i> provided to journalists	Phase two has provided some results, but there are no documented results in phase three.
There have been quality, paid <i>advertisements with designed messages published</i> in media (TV, radio, papers, internet etc.)	Advertisements were inserted in December 2013, but there is no follow up of the perception of quality or impact of these. In addition, the GED web site has been updated and a GE online course has been uploaded and improved for users (civil servants). There is no monitoring or follow up of the users or the user satisfaction.
There is regular <i>reporting to media from civil society</i> on gender equality progress and obstacles. Stereotypes are publicly opposed by CSOs.	No progress has been reported.

The achievements in relation to objective 4: Increased capacity of the Gender Equality Directorate to implement and sustain its work

This objective has not been achieved. GED was abolished with a new Law on Government, adopted by new Serbian Government, after early Parliamentary Elections, held on March 16 2014. Apart from political reasons, there are also other factors that influenced the failure of this objective. Despite the Swedish support, GED missed the opportunity to develop itself as institution that was effective, relevant and accountable. It was also side-lined by its own Ministry for political reasons, and the project did not manage to meet this challenge sufficiently.

The NAP team was initially created as a means of support to GED, not as independent body, although it has developed in that direction after being rejected by the GED director and taken over by the State Secretary. During the present project phase, the NAP team has operated under the direct supervision of the Programme Manager who reports directly to the State Secretary. Within the current programme, the director of GED has had no responsibility or authority over the NAP team.

Below the actual outcomes and outputs are analysed against the expected outcomes.

Expected outcomes	Actual outcomes and outputs
GED has adequate human resources (numbers, competencies, leadership) to fulfil its task and role	GED never had sufficient resources or leadership. At best, there has been 5 civil servants plus director plus administrative assistant, which is significantly less compared to the number of civil servants within other state GE institutions within Serbia (Ombudsman, Commissioner, Office for Human and Minority Rights, etc.) and compared to similar executive mechanisms in the region of Western Balkans (all of these had more civil servants in numbers than GED ever did). There was little the NAP team could do to enhance these capacities, as they were not accepted by GED. GED is now abolished and the outcome has not been achieved.
GED has adequate systems and structures	There is no systematic monitoring or evaluation of NAP implementation by GED, and consequently there was no data on the contribution of the Swedish supported project in that process. At the beginning of the Inception phase, with Swedish support, a computerised monitoring system was put in place in 2011, to measure progress in the implementation of the NAP. Staff of ministerial focal points were trained in its use, but after the elections held 2012, a new political coalition assumed power and the gender focal points within the institutions were subsequently replaced and no monitoring took place.
GED has ability to mobilize resources, plan strategically, identify opportunities and build/use networks	From its very start, GED has suffered from lack of finance and human resources (mainly capacities and skills - not the number of civil servants). The Swedish supported project

to enhance its agenda	aimed at addressing both gaps. But instead of incorporating the NAP team in the regular scope of work of GED, the NAP team was engaged in conducting some activities <i>instead of</i> GED (e.g. two members of the NAP team were continuously engaged as administrative support staff of GED in absence of appointed person within GED.) GED failed to mobilise resources (and donors started to avoid GED) and to create synergies and networks with other GE actors. This further reduced their capacities to develop and implement (monitor and evaluate) the GE strategy, the NAP and the necessary legislative reforms.
GED has adequate political backing, a clear mandate and a budget from the government	GED civil servants became recognised, especially at the local level as ‘the face of GE’ since they had a formal mandate. So, the GED team was invited to various events as guest speakers, etc. In that sense the visibility of GE as topic has increased within the government, thanks to GED work (local GEMs were established, GE departments within National Statistic Office have been established, National Employment Service and some other institutions have initiated in-house gender mainstreaming processes). Indirectly, these are achievements which can be attributed to the Swedish support since many of the activities of GED staff would not have taken place without previous action from the project. However, the new Serbian Government has not yet appointed any new mechanism to take on the responsibility for GE after GED. At the moment, the NAP team does not have anybody or any institution to work with and to report to. All efforts to create, through the project, more political backing, a clear mandate and budgetary support have not had the desired results (although there is a small budgetary allocation) .

Effectiveness conclusion

It can be concluded that very few outcomes have been achieved. This is partly due to the fact that the project is new. The main reasons for the limited progress of the project are, however:

- Inefficient organisational setup of the project, with many parties involved (Embassy/IMG/ /Ministry/NAP and GED), which did not communicate well due to poor design (trying to spread thinly activities over a wide range of areas) without a clear theory of change and without a project-related M&E plan that can be used as tools for continuous improvement of implementation
- external political complications and personal conflicts within the Ministry (change of leaders due to the results of the national elections 2014 and local elections held in 2012)

- lack of overall leadership of the project and lack of a monitoring system to inform the leadership
- lack of coordination with other stakeholders and lack of advocacy work to ensure political back up for the topics relevant to GE promotion

Despite this difficult context the project has produced some interesting and useful outputs that have the potential to contribute to changes in policies and practices in the future. Examples are the GE tools developed for journalists (during phase two), the good quality research and studies undertaken, the gender mainstreaming that has been initiated in certain government departments, the increased awareness and introduction of gender budgeting in some municipalities. A precondition for sustainability and continued development in these areas is that there is ownership and institutional anchorage of these outputs.

2.4 SUSTAINABILITY

The evaluation team has assessed the existence of sustainable outcomes, institutional structures and financial and political possibilities to continue the project after external support has ended.

Evaluation questions related to sustainability	
17	Are the identified outcomes sustainable?
18	To what extent did NAP manage to inspire/ensure ownership by responsible government authorities, businesses and media actors for the programme, its outcomes and its continuation?
19	To what extent did the project succeed to generate/leverage government and donor contributions to the sector?
20	To what extent did the project succeed in mobilising additional national and sub-national government human resources for GE promotion?
21	To what extent have GED employees contributed to the project activities?
22	To what extent have GED employees gained knowledge, skills and competences through the project?
23	How likely is it that current GED employees will be retained for the same work?

Sustainability of outcomes

As mentioned above, there are still very few outcomes of the project. At this point, the outcomes deemed as sustainable are the capacities built of some individuals at national and local government levels. It is discouraging that many of these persons no longer hold key positions in the GE mechanisms. Also, the institutional framework of the Gender Equality Council, established in April 2012 and mandated to head the inter-ministerial coordination, may be a lasting result of the Swedish support along with the gender budgeting developed in some municipalities. In earlier phases of the project, GED was stimulated by the project to contribute to the establishment of local GEMs and of GE departments within the National Employment Service and the National Statistical Office. These institutional changes, although fragile, contribute to likely sustainability of some of the project results. Finally, it is anticipated that the quality research carried out, if strategically communicated and used in advocacy, can lead to policy changes in the future.

Local ownership and sustainability of GED

The project did not manage to ensure ownership by the national government, businesses and media actors. In fact, the organisation of the project did not encourage national ownership as design, management, implementation and control of the project were left by GED to external consultants without sufficient consultations and cooperation with key GE actors (donors, formal GE mechanisms and CSOs) – although some individuals in the NAP team and some consultants made impressive efforts.

GED as a structure was obviously not sustainable as it was first side-lined and then abolished. GED failed to develop its role as a relevant and effective actor, mainly because it did not engage with the required legislative reforms and because it did not

seek synergies and cooperation with other actors working for the same goal. Although some GED staff did increase their GE competencies through participation in project activities, this has not led to sustainability or ownership of the project. It is likely that a few staff members can be retained for GE work in the future. Most of the expertise however, is still with external consultants.

The NAP team, which was engaged to support and develop capacity of GED and eventually be incorporated as permanent members of staff, could not fulfil this intention. Instead the team was used as a resource firstly by the GED and later on by the Ministry State Secretary, also for activities that were not clearly linked to the NAP implementation. The team became gap fillers rather than capacity builders, which was detrimental to sustainability of the project outcomes. Presently there is no government body or office responsible for implementation of the National Strategy and the NAP. It is not even clear if these documents still have political backing.

2.5 RISK MANAGEMENT

An extensive description of internal and external risks is included in the project proposal. Several of them have indeed materialised, such as the late approval from the Ministry of Labour to commence the project, the replacements of programme directors, the lack of interest among external experts to bid for project assignments and possibly also the delays in hiring NAP staff/interns and the discontinuation of focal points in ministries. In addition other external political risks materialised.

It should be acknowledged, that the IMG procedures and controls have indeed mitigated some internal risks, such as mismanagement of project funds. IMG did take appropriate action to intervene in a situation where staff replacement was needed. In general terms however, the focus on detailed formal controls overshadowed the primary internal and external risks encountered by the project. The project design was dysfunctional in terms of providing a structure for responding to these higher level risks.

The divided responsibilities (between the Ministry, IMG, NAP-team, GED and Embassy), has negatively affected the project. According to the agreement with the Embassy, the Ministry should take the overall responsibility for the project, but did not fulfil its role in this respect. The agreement with the Embassy states that the Ministry “is responsible for monitoring progress and performance of the programme and the achievement of its expected outputs and outcomes, as measured by the Results Framework”. However, the Ministry (with support of the NAP team) has so far focussed the reporting on activities and outputs only. There has been limited reflection on the relevance and effectiveness of the selected activities and no monitoring of outcomes.

The agreement further outlines that IMG is responsible “to monitor the programme and support its planning and implementation in accordance with the programme

fiche”. However, IMG has mainly focussed their monitoring on the formal adherence to procurement regulations, contractual obligations, and financial management and delivery of outputs. None of the parties have sufficiently and proactively supported and monitored the overall developments of the programme and its intentions.

Monitoring of complex social change projects require quite different tools than infrastructural programmes. Social change projects (such as GE promotion) require a high degree of flexibility in selection of approaches and strategies, while keeping the desired outcomes in focus. Social change projects require tools for actor focused planning, monitoring and evaluation and indicators for monitoring of capacity development¹⁵. No such approaches are visible in the project design or monitoring.

It is also noted that no action was taken by the Embassy to renegotiate the agreement with the Ministry ahead of phase 3, despite the fact that the problems in the Ministry were already visible. The only measure taken was to transfer the responsibility from GED to the State Secretary (despite intentions to strengthen GED according to the project proposal, objective 4). It is also reported that throughout 2013 representatives of the Ministry were involved in a series of meetings with the Embassy, IMG and the NAP team concerning the project, trying to resolve issues related to roles, responsibilities, administrative procedures and communication lines - obviously without success.

¹⁵ Dealing with complexity through Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation (PME) – Praxis Paper 26, INTRAC January 2012; A Three-fold Theory of Social Change and Implications for Practice, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, CDRA 2007; Guide to Evaluating Capacity Development Results, A collection of guidance notes to help development practitioners and evaluators assess capacity development efforts, World Bank 2012; Literature Review on Capacity Development, Sida/Danida/Norad, 2014, Ian Christoplos et al.

3 Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1 CONCLUSIONS

The evaluators conclude that the project was relevant to the context, the EU accession, the Serbian GE strategy and the Swedish development goals at the beginning of the first phase of the project (2010). It became less relevant over time as it did not adapt to changes in the situation and the context. The principles of accountability, transparency, participation and non-discrimination have not been sufficiently applied in project design and processes.

The project was organised in an inefficient manner. Most activities planned for the third phase were delayed. The project lacked sufficient political backing; it lacked policy level leadership and monitoring; and it lacked synergies with other on-going GE processes and initiatives. Responsibilities and mandates were divided among many institutions and individuals (Embassy, IMG, NAP-team, GED director, Ministry State Secretary). Nobody took an overall responsibility for the project and its progress, although formally the Ministry was supposed to do so. Dialogue was strained between parties due to political differences (within the Ministry), different priorities in project management¹⁶ and formalistic control mechanisms and communication methods. The organisation of the project, its leadership problems, the cumbersome administrative procedures led to delays, missed opportunities and a negative image of the project among GE experts and organisations.¹⁷

The project has not yet been effective in terms of reaching the expected outcomes, although some outputs have the potential to contribute to change in a longer perspective if strategically used. The main reasons for the limited effectiveness are the design and organisation of the project. Neither the National Action Plan nor the project results framework (which copied parts of it) are based on a proper problem analysis and a systematic theory of change. The activities undertaken were not always strategically selected and designed to contribute to certain outcomes. The research, for example, was not used as a means to provide evidence and input to change processes. The project also attempted to cover too many areas with scattered, often tiny, activities, in-

¹⁶ E.g. how to balance the need to be flexible to achieve GE results with the need to adhere to the approved plans and formal guidelines

¹⁷ Verified by almost all respondents in the interviews

stead of seeking synergies with other actors to create a critical mass for change. The Ministry, being well placed to take a leading role in legal reforms and coordination in the GE field, failed to take on these roles and instead implemented activities that were similar to many other projects.

Due to the lack of national ownership and political will, the sustainability of the project outcomes is likely to be very limited. There are however certain elements of the capacity building efforts that have provided sustainable outcomes, such as enhanced capacities of some individual training participants and capacities of local level governments, especially in gender budgeting.

The main reasons for the limited progress of the project have been (a) lack of political will to prioritize gender and weak commitment to implement the Strategy and the Action Plan; (b) lack of strategic thinking – thin spread of activities over a wide range of areas without a clear theory of change; (c) lack of coordination and poor cooperation and communication between the parties involved; (d) lack of overall leadership of the project and lack of a monitoring system to inform the leadership and (e) lack of coordination with other stakeholders and lack of advocacy work to ensure political back up for the topics relevant to GE promotion.

3.2 LESSONS LEARNT

The most important lessons learnt from the implementation of the project during the past few years are as follows¹⁸:

- There must be policy level leadership (in the government, CSO or other institution) that takes responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of a project or programme which aims at long term social change and legal reform. This policy level leadership must demonstrate a strong commitment to and knowledge of GE and gender mainstreaming and be provided a clear mandate to take decisions, lead the staff and adjust and adapt plans to a changing context.
- Explicit measures must be taken to ensure accountability, transparency, participation and non-discrimination standards in processes of all parties involved (the Embassy, the implementing partner/intermediary and the agreement partner CSO or government agency). In line with the Swedish Policy for Global Development, Sweden can take the lead to promote rights based and gender sensitive practices (including labour practices for staff directly engaged in projects), within the framework of existing local legislation.

¹⁸ Lessons learnt refer to experiences of this project that are relevant also for other projects in the future

- Procedures and measures that minimise and manage internal and external risks should be discussed, reviewed and agreed between the parties. There should be a balance between rigour/control and flexibility/risk. There should be focus on effectiveness and not only on fulfilment of contractual obligations.
- Any project/programme must have an adequate and realistic theory of change, a realistic results framework and scope. The ownership of the project proposal and the results framework must lay with the responsible leadership in the partnering institution/organisation, meaning that they have been part of its development.
- Staff employed by one agency, but seconded to work under another agency, should have their rights and responsibilities in relation to both agencies clearly defined in terms of duties, reporting, complaints, formal employment issues (documentation needed for child care, passport, tax etc.), grounds for termination of the contract and so on.
- Implementing agencies/intermediaries should be supported by a Project Steering Committee (where the Embassy and experts on the subject matter sit) that can support the intermediary to judge and balance risk, assess contextual developments, and advice on overall assessments and priorities. The steering committee can also function as a complaints and mediation mechanism.

3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluation questions related to future project modalities	
24	How likely is it that either the Ministry of Labour or any other Government institution will retain or even expand its formal mandate and budget for GE promotion?
25	What should be the focus of activities in year 2 and 3 of the project?
26	What would be the ideal institutional embedding of the project?
27	What should be changed in composition, roles, tasks and responsibilities of the NAP team and IMG?
28	What should be the minimum contribution of the Serbian authorities to the project, in terms of political support, capacities, decision-making, institutional counterpart?
29	In case the present formal and institutional setup must be discontinued, how should Sweden channel the support (e.g. via other donors such as EU, UN, Norway), directly to government bodies, institutions and organisations or via a national coordinating body?

The formal mandate of the Ministry of Labour is defined by the Law on Ministries, adopted 26 April 2014. Within the abovementioned law the Ministry of Labour clearly has the mandate to work on GE promotion. However, the institutional set-up for the work on these issues is still unclear at this stage. Therefore the evaluation team cannot recommend any specific focus or institutional embedding of future efforts. We can however guide the Embassy in terms of the continued process and the principles to be used in determining the future direction.

Gender equality is a key element of the Swedish strategy for the Western Balkans 2014-2020 and the task ahead is to find the best way to support Serbia in these efforts. The newly elected Serbian government (2014) has not yet shown that GE is a priority for them, and indications suggest the contrary. Sweden should re-strategize and focus more on independent institutions, local government structures and CSO initiatives.

Recommendations for immediate actions

The evaluators conclude that the Embassy urgently needs to review the focus and content of its support to GE processes in Serbia and renegotiate its agreements with the Ministry and with IMG. This requires a number of immediate actions which are listed under 1-4 below.

1. Freeze all activities planned for 2015, including new calls for proposals for the grant scheme, until the project content and organisational set up have been redefined.
2. Make clear arrangements for contracting and monitoring of applicants that have already submitted proposals for the small grant scheme (on-going) in the interim period and ensure that these are linked to the next project phase.
3. Allocate time and resources to the redefinition of the scope and organisation of the project, aiming at a re-start in January 2015. Start a process of consultations with key actors in Serbia, other donors involved in GE promotion and technical experts e.g.
 - a. Key GE actors in Serbia such as the Ministry, The Commissioner for Equality, The Office for Human and Minority Rights, the Protector of Citizens, the SCTM and the CSO networks - to explore the priorities and capacities of these stakeholders
 - b. Other donors such as the EU, UN Women, OSCE and Norway, but also other relevant organisations such as CARE, NDI, EU - to explore if joint efforts would be an option
 - c. Experts in putting research into action (e.g. ODI¹⁹), media experts (such as BIRN²⁰ and FOJO²¹) and Swedish businesses in Serbia – to explore if these could be resources in the future project implementation
4. Task the NAP team with monitoring already on-going work to ensure that outputs are successfully linked to the work of other GE institutions (use of research,

¹⁹ <http://www.odi.org/about>

²⁰ <http://birn.eu.com/en/network/birn-serbia-home>

²¹ <http://www.fojo.se/index.php/about-fojo-international>

tools, etc.). Activities planned to inform about and make use of the research should be implemented.

Recommendations for the design of a future programme

Although it is not appropriate here to go into the details of a new project design, the evaluators have collected sufficient information to be able to provide the Embassy with a set of guidelines for partner selection, project scope and content, project organisation and maximisation of synergies. These guidelines are provided below in the form of recommendations; the numbering does not necessarily correspond with the level of priority to be given to each recommendation.

Selection of partners

1. Focus the Swedish support on selected existing, functional national and provincial GE mechanisms (such as the GE Council, the Commissioner for Equality, the Ombudsman, Women's Parliamentary Network, Province Secretariat for Labour, Economy and Gender Equality and local government commissions).
2. If and when the government shows political willingness and sets aside some minimal human and financial resources to meet the demands and suggestions made by the GE community as a response to the abolishment of GED (i.e., for a new and more powerful mechanism), Sweden could consider supporting it. A precondition, however, should be engagement from other donors.
3. Consider broadening the scope of potential partners for the grant scheme to include independent national GE mechanisms, civil society organisations, local GEMs and the business sector (there are 110 Nordic companies in Serbia).
4. Enhance the capacity of partners to develop realistic and practical planning, monitoring and evaluation frameworks built on up-to date praxis for CSOs and public administration respectively. Support management systems development of partners, rather than investing in heavy control mechanisms.

Focus, Scope, Content

5. Focus on fewer themes and objectives that are guided by priorities expressed by Serbian women, EU and Swedish priorities.
6. Look for emerging opportunities, such as the on-going Serbia budget reform, where gender based budgeting would fit well, and the investments made in the project earlier could be built on.
7. If a media-related component is selected for the future, ensure that it includes an appropriate system of monitoring of gender stereotypes in the media. Consider to involve technical expertise (e.g. FOJO)
8. Ensure that future grants are also available to small, relatively inexperienced CSOs (in order to expand the body of CSOs dealing with giving voice to women) by removing encumbering eligibility criteria on financial strength and former experience and by simplifying application procedures.

Organisation, Management, Procedures

9. Either launch a new tender for the technical implementation of the project or re-negotiate the mandate and procedural approach of IMG to ensure that lessons learnt above are considered.
10. Renegotiate the job-descriptions of the NAP team members and ensure that NAP team obtains clear guidance on all content-related issues, directly from the Embassy and by establishing a strong Project Steering Committee with representatives of external stakeholders.
11. Use the future Project Steering Committee as an advisory team to the embassy during the interim period when the project is being reassessed.
12. For grant schemes, strongly simplify application procedures and implementation requirements. Use professional, external assessors to evaluate concept notes and full applications.
13. Review procedures for risk management and increase preparedness for external risks (by working with different scenarios) and focus management of internal risks (e.g. corruption and nepotism) more on capacity building and development of accountability systems of partners.

Synergies, cooperation, partnerships

14. Take deliberate action and invest in partnership building to ensure local ownership and synergies with other donors
15. Take a leading role among donors, possibly by reviving the “gender synergy group” to engage in dialogue with the government on the future GE mechanism.
16. Ensure synergies with and added value to the initiatives of other donor and CSOs (especially EU, OSCE, UN Women/Norway, SKL /Standing Conference, Kvinna till Kvinna, CARE, NDI) and investigate the feasibility of joint funding mechanisms.

4 Annexes

4.1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Background

Promotion of gender equality in Serbia is recognized as one of the priority areas of Sweden's bilateral cooperation, as defined in the Strategy for Development Cooperation with Serbia, January 2009-December 2012. Sweden has for many years supported women's rights and gender equality in this country: it started with cooperation with women's NGOs through our framework agreement with Kvinna till Kvinna and after the adoption of the National Strategy for Improving the Position of Women and Enhancing Gender Equality 2009-2015 (the Strategy) and the related National Action Plan (NAP) 2010-2015 conditions were created for extending our cooperation to relevant government institutions.

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) has provided support to the Gender Equality Directorate (GED) of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy since March 2010. GED is the first executive mechanism responsible for monitoring of the implementation of NAP. Resources that GED has at its disposal to implement this task are rather limited, both in terms of staff and finances. GED depends on the Ministry, both logistically and financially. As for the budget for the implementation of NAP, it is virtually non-existent so GED and the Ministry would not be able to implement great part of planned activities without Swedish support.

The first phase of cooperation started as an "Inception Programme" in March 2010 and lasted until June 2011 (known as Phase 1 of Swedish support). This phase was followed by "One year Programme for the Implementation of Priority Activities in the three areas of NAP" that lasted from July 2011 until December 2012. Main objective of these two contributions was to implement priority activities in the following three areas of NAP: representation of women in public and political life, economic empowerment and women and media. In the second half of the implementation period for the Phase 2, intensive consultations were held between Gender Equality Directorate (GED) and Sida in order to plan more long-term cooperation and support in the implementation of NAP. GED proposed that the new phase should build upon the work and achievements of the first two phases, and focus on the same three cooperation areas (listed above). Serbian partner has also prepared a detailed list of priority activities and suggested that the implementation period for the new contribution should last three years in order to contribute to more substantial progress and sustainable results.

Starting from achievements of the first two phases and list of priority activities prepared by GED, a series of consultative sessions has been organized by GED during the design phase for the Phase 3. This process, that was facilitated by an external consultant engaged to assist in drafting the Project Document, was concluded in autumn 2012 when a new proposal was presented to Sida.

The proposal envisages that Phase 3 shall focus on implementing specific measures in the three NAP areas: 1) representation of women in public and political life, 2) economic empowerment of women and 3) women and media.

The *specific objectives* of the project are:

- 1) Increased participation of women in public and political life in accordance with the Strategy and the NAP.
- 2) Improved economic status of women and reduced economic inequality between men and women, with new equal opportunities.
- 3) Upholding of gender stereotypes by mass media reduced and gender equality concepts promoted to the wider public.

In addition to these objectives, the Phase 3 was designed to work on enhancing the institutional and professional capacity of GED in order to work efficiently towards project objectives – this is the fourth objective of the contribution.

Within the project objectives, following **key activities** within four cooperation areas are envisaged:

1. Representation of women in public and political life

- a) Training for young female politicians and human resources executives of political parties on the local level
- b) Advancing regional co-operation among gender equality enforcement bodies
- c) Research on the position of women in non-urban environments
- d) Capacity-building for gender equality focal points in line ministries
- e) Grants to local CSOs for advancing gender equality agenda on local self-government level
- f) Monitoring the representation of women in local self-governments.

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2. Women's economic empowerment

- a) Training for finance officials from local self-governments on gender-sensitive budgeting
- b) Developing and promoting a concept of modern day-care service for elementary schools
- c) Public debates to promote harmonization of local services with gender equality principles
- d) Round-tables for business enterprises on various gender equality issues
- e) Survey of larger business enterprises
- f) Scientific research: single motherhood and other employment-like situations

- g) Grants to local CSOs for advancing gender equality agenda on local self-government level
- h) Survey: position of women in business in Serbia
- i) Research: ICT related knowledge and women's labour market situation

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3. *Women and media*

- a) Public opinion survey on gender equality
- b) Inserts on gender equality in printed media
- c) Advancing professional capacity of the Club of Journalists, promoters of gender equality
- d) Annual conference on the occasion of March 8th
- e) Designing and printing GED promotional materials
- f) Grants to local CSOs for advancing gender equality on local self-government level

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4. *Capacity building of GED*

- a) Summer school on gender equality
- b) Monitoring the implementation of plans of special measures by employers
- c) Evaluation of Phase 3 activities
- d) Developing plans for 2nd and 3rd year of the project
- e) Improving Serbia's visibility and advancing international cooperation
- f) Professional exchange between GED and its peers in other countries
- g) Professional capacity building trainings for GED staff
- h) Procuring necessary equipment
- i) Supporting the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy in implementing NAP via GED.

The overall budget for this three-year contribution amounts **39 MSEK**.

The implementation of the phase 3 started in January 2013. In January 2014 the first annual progress report was submitted to Sida. The Report concluded that during the first year, there were significant delays in project implementation. Delays occurred due to various reasons: from procedural reasons (Ministry taking over) to prolonged period of preparing plans and ToRs, lack of good applications/bids to tenders and insufficient involvement of some stakeholders. The report also concluded that budget utilization was very low, indicating that some project activities were over-budgeted.

The first Annual Report refers to the activity plan that is part of the Project Document and that present detailed and concrete plan only for the first project year. Detailed plan of activities for year two and three should be proposed based on achievements and experiences from the first year. The evaluation was planned to take place after the implementation of the year one and in connection with the annual report and among other purposes contribute to development of action plans for the remaining period. The project document envisaged that consultant for the evaluation would be procured by IMG and financed from the project budget. It is important to stress that neither evaluation nor project review was undertaken after previous two phases of Swedish support. Instead of this, the plan was to conduct ex-post evaluation of Swedish support to GED and the implementation of NAP.

After reviewing the report and having thorough discussions with the Ministry, NAP team and IMG on progress achieved in 2013, Sida proposed an external evaluation to be commissioned by the donor and conducted by consultant procured by Sida. Starting from the strategic importance of this project for all partners and having in mind achievements and relevant experiences from the first year, a decision was made to conduct an external evaluation that would look into cost-efficiency of the project but also provide recommendations on how to redesign the project in order to make it more strategic, effective and better focused.

It is important to mention that the evaluation will overall with the process of forming a new government in Serbia, after the elections held on March 16th, 2014. Although results of the elections did not come as surprise (the biggest party from the previous coalition won 48% of votes and is expected to form a government), it is yet to be seen how will the new cabinet be formed and what personnel solutions this may bring. Due to the election campaign, expected lower level of activities during the period of forming a new government and the upcoming evaluation, all parties in the project agreed that the Ministry and NAP team should present draft activity plan for the period until end of June that would reflect these 'extraordinary' circumstances.

2. Evaluation Purpose and Objective

Purpose of the evaluation is to safeguard the use of Swedish Government funding and ensure efficient implementation of the project. The Assignment is expected to assess capacities of the Ministry and GED for management of Swedish contribution during following two years.

Main objectives of the evaluation are the following:

- Provide an in-depth assessment of the achievements of the project results.
- Analyse project design, relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.
- Evaluate sustainability of activities implemented so far and give recommendations regarding activities to be incorporated in the new action plan that would lead to sustainable project results.
- Propose amendments to the project document and project budget. These amendments should take into account both strategic priorities defined by the Ministry and GED and existing capacities for their implementation.

3. Scope and Delimitations

The evaluation mission shall collect and analyse reports and documents with the main focus on project documentation and reports produced by project beneficiaries. The consultant is expected to visit Belgrade to discuss the project with the representatives of the Ministry, GED, IMG and Sida. Meetings and interviews may cover other stakeholders such as other donors and international organizations (EU, UN and Norway), Serbian organizations and institutions (other line ministries and agencies, Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities). The information gathered and analysed shall cover:

- Relevance of the project vis-à-vis the needs and priorities defined in the Strategy and NAP.
- Relevance of the project vis-à-vis Serbia's EU integration process.
- Organizational aspects and institutional development within GED and the Ministry.
- Achievements as compared to overall and annual targets.
- Transfer of knowledge and development of competence within GED.
- Efficiency and cost effectiveness – are there more cost effective methods of achieving the same results? Could the same results be produced with smaller amounts of inputs/resources or could the same input/resources produce a larger output?
- The sustainability of project outputs and outcomes, both from an organizational and financial perspective.
- The performance of the implementing agency (IMG) and the NAP team with regards to achieving long-term objectives of the project.
- The degree to which extent the project has taken into consideration possible external and internal risks. What efforts are being made to minimize the effect of unforeseen risks that have arisen during implementation?

4. Organisation, Management and Stakeholders

Drafting of the proposal for the Phase 3 overlapped with the formation of the new government (after elections held in May 2012). During this period of uncertainty (related to number of ministries and government agencies as well as their mandates) different options were considered for GED and included in the risk assessment for the new project. In the end, nothing of that has happened, GED remained to be linked to the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy as one of ministry's 'directorates' but with the new government set up the Ministry took more active role in strategic planning and decision making than it was the case with the previous government. Due to the complexity and significance of the program, the Ministry decided to take over the overall responsibility of the project. This was also reflected in the appointment of the State Secretary of the ministry for the National Director of the project.

GED consists of two units: unit for legal drafting, research and analysis and gender equality promotion unit. The workload of these two units, as defined in relevant government documents is big and demanding so the implementation of donor funded projects required engagement of external people. Already during the implementation of the Phase 2, a temporary team of external experts (known as NAP team) was recruited and financed from project funds. This unit continued to function in Phase 3 as well, mostly because GED was not allowed to hire any new staff, due to difficult economic situation in the country and restrictions in new employments within the civil service. The team works within GED structure and reports to the State Secretary of the Ministry. NAP team consists of: 5 national professional staff, 2 national support staff and 2 interns. The main task of NAP team during phase 3 is implementation of project activities including strengthening GED's professional capacity (more detailed information available in the Project Document).

Back in 2011, Sida has commissioned a PFM assessment of GED and the Ministry in order to analyse their capacities to take responsibility for the financial management of Sida contributions. The assessment has shown that GED's capacities for the management of project funds were rather limited. Several risks for direct channelling of funds were identified and final recommendation was to engage an intermediary – an implementing agent to be in charge of financial management and procurement. Sida and GED agreed to include International Management Group (IMG) as the third partner in the project. Swedish funds for this contribution are channelled through IMG who is in charge of financial management, procurement, contracting and control of use of funds through audits.

5. Approach and Methodology

When carrying out the assignment, the consultant shall be guided by the National Strategy for Improving the Position of Women and Enhancing Gender Equality 2009-2015 of the Government of Serbia and the objectives of Swedish Development Cooperation defined in the Strategy for Development Cooperation with Serbia. The evaluation will use methodologies and techniques as determined by the specific needs for information required for the fulfilment of evaluation objectives. Consultants are expected to analyse all relevant information sources, such as reports, project document, project files, strategic documents and other documents that may provide evidence on which to form opinion. Consultants are also expected to use interviews in collecting relevant data for the evaluation.

6. Time Schedule

The assignment is tentatively planned to start at the end of April 2014/ beginning of May. Dates for the visit to Belgrade (one week) shall be coordinated with the Embassy in Belgrade and partners in Serbia (Ministry, GED and IMG).

7. Reporting and Communication

Following the evaluation performed, the report shall be submitted to the Embassy of Sweden, the Ministry, GED and IMG. The report shall include an executive summary, which should be self-explanatory and should include summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

A draft report shall be submitted within 15 days after the evaluation mission has been carried out. Within two weeks of receiving comments on the draft report, a final version of the document shall be submitted to all stakeholders – printed and electronic versions. Contact person at the Embassy of Sweden in Belgrade is Ms Snezana Vojcic, programme officer (snezana.vojcic@gov.se).

8. Resources

The evaluation shall be carried out by a team of two consultants. In total, 20 days are planned for the evaluation (per consultant). The assignment will be offered to Sida's framework consulting company who is expected to submit a proposal and estimation of assignment costs.

9. Evaluation Team Qualification

Consultants are expected to be experienced in performing evaluations of various types. It is preferred that the consultant is familiar with implementation of gender policies and role of government institutions in that process.

The consultant is expected to have the following skills and experiences:

- At least 5 years' experience in the monitoring and evaluation of development assistance projects and programmes.
- At least 5 years working in or with EU accession or candidate countries.
- Experience in providing technical assistance in the area of change management is preferable.
- Very good knowledge of written and spoken English.

10. References

- Strategy for Development Cooperation with Serbia, January 2009 – December 2012
- Priority Activities of the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Strategy for Improved Status of Women and Gender Equality Promotion, January 2013-December 2015 (Project Document)
- The First Annual Progress Report, January 2014
- The EU Progress Report for Serbia 2013

(Additional documents and further references shall be provided by Sida programme officer in agreement with the consultant.)

²⁵ "Priority activities of the national action plan for the implementation of the National Strategy for improved status of women and gender equality promotion, January 2013-December 2015"

4.2 INCEPTION REPORT

1. Executive Summary

Indevelop was commissioned by the Embassy of Sweden in Serbia to review the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project as implemented in 2013. Special attention should be paid to the future, given the recent abolishment of the project's counterpart and the uncertainty as to the planned institutional setup.

Since 2009, Serbia has a National Strategy for Improving the Position of Women and Enhancing Gender Equality; this strategy covers the period 2010-2015. For its implementation, a National Action Plan was produced covering the same period of time. The Strategy and Action Plan include six Strategic Areas/Overall Objectives. The Swedish bilateral cooperation project addresses three of them.

The Swedish bilateral cooperation to GE promotion is now in its third phase. The first phase, called the "Inception Programme", ran from March 2010 until June 2011, the second phase entitled "One year Programme for the Implementation of Priority Activities in three areas of the NAP" was implemented from July 2011 until September 2012. Phase one and Phase two are not the subject of this evaluation per se, but obviously affect the outcomes observed by the evaluation.

The Annual Report 2013 of the project showed considerable delays in the implementation of activities planned for that year. This evaluation shall inform the Embassy of Sweden on the reasons for these delays and provide recommendations for improvement. Unfortunately, the new Serbian Government decided in April 2014 to abolish the project's counterpart institution, the Gender Equality Directorate (GED). This adds an extra dimension to the evaluation, namely the necessity to find alternative ways to embed the assistance in the new Serbian institutional structures.

The Swedish contribution had the following objectives:

Overall objective: to contribute to increased application of EU and international gender equality standards in Serbia
Impact objective 1: Increased representation of women in public and political life
Impact objective 2: Improved economic status of women and reduced economic inequality between men and women, with new equal opportunities
Impact objective 3: Reduced upholding of gender stereotypes in mass media and increased promotion of gender equality concepts to the wider public (especially at local level)
Impact objective 4: Increased capacity of the Gender Equality Directorate to implement and sustain its work

The original project design does not include a clear theory of change. We have therefore slightly reorganised the intervention logic with the aim to create a theory of change, against which we can better measure progress. This has led to the formulation of a total of 28 evaluation questions covering each of the four impact objectives as well as the issues put forward by the Terms of Reference.

The project design also does not clarify the obstacles to development. In order to assess the relevance of the project, we will therefore rely on reports to the UN and the EU on progress and remaining gaps in gender equality in Serbia.

The approach to and methodology of the evaluation consist in the first place in interviews and document review to clarify and expand upon the theory of change through which the project aims to achieve the objectives. Secondly, the achievement of results intended in the project's theory of change will be assessed from a top down analysis, where we start by capturing examples of outcomes and then work back along "pathways of change" to the Ministry of Labour, GED and the NAP Team as main carriers of the project.

The analysis of data and documents will start immediately upon the approval of the Inception Report. On June 11th, a feedback/verification workshop will be held with the Embassy to discuss preliminary findings and emerging recommendations. The recommendations will focus on the preconditions for continued support to the government and discuss alternative measures and modalities for the future support.

The draft report will be submitted to the Embassy of Sweden no later than 20 June 2014. The definitive final report will be available on July 7th, 2014.

2. Assessment of Scope of the Evaluation

2.1 THE ASSIGNMENT

The main purpose of the assignment is to review the effectiveness and efficiency of the present organisational set up and project design of Sweden's bilateral co-operation with the Ministry of Labour and its Gender Equality Directorate (GED) in Serbia. An assessment is to be made of the implementation of the project as planned for 2013.

The main activities expected according to the ToR are:

- 1) An in-depth assessment of achievement of project results
- 2) An analysis of project design, relevance, effectiveness and efficiency
- 3) An evaluation of the sustainability of activities implemented so far
- 4) A proposal of amendments to the project document and project budget, with recommendations regarding activities to be incorporated in the new action plan that would lead to sustainable project results.

This Inception Report presents the approach and methodology for the evaluation.

2.2 THE PROJECT IN A NUTSHELL

Since 2009, Serbia has a National Strategy for Improving the Position of Women and Enhancing Gender Equality; this strategy covers the period 2010-2015. For its implementation, a National Action Plan was produced covering the same period of time. The Strategy and Action Plan include six Strategic Areas/Overall Objectives. The Swedish bilateral cooperation project addresses three of them, indicated in *italics* in the table below:

	Strategic Areas (SA) and Overall Objectives (OO) of the National Strategy
1	SA: <i>Increasing participation of women in the decision making processes and advancing gender equality</i> OO: <i>Exercising the rights of women to participate in decision making on equal terms with men</i>
2	SA: <i>Improving the economic status of women and achieving gender equality</i> OO: <i>Eradicating economic inequality between men and women, introducing equal opportunities policy and better use of women's development resources</i>
3	SA: <i>Achieving gender equality in education</i> OO: <i>Establishing gender equality and integrating a gender perspective in education</i>
4	SA: <i>Improving women's health and advancing gender equality in healthcare policy</i> OO: <i>Preserving and improving women's health and achieving gender equality in healthcare policy</i>
5	SA: <i>Preventing and combating violence against women and improving victim protection</i> OO: <i>Preventing and combating violence against women and improving victim protection</i>
6	SA: <i>Elimination of gender stereotypes in the media and promotion of gender equality</i> OO: <i>Establishing gender equality in the media, eliminating gender stereotypes and hate speech (mi-</i>

	<i>sogyny)</i>
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Yet, not all specific objectives ranked under the three relevant overall objectives are part of the Swedish contribution. Interventions focus on the following specific objectives:

1.1	Increasing participation of women in representative bodies at all levels
1.2	Increasing participation of women in the executive public authorities, in leadership roles in state administration and public service
1.4	Creating prerequisites for the participation of women discriminated on double or multiple grounds in public and political life
1.5	Build institutional capacities by raising awareness and knowledge about gender equality in political and public life
2.1	Creating systemic prerequisites for equal opportunities policy in the economy
2.2	Stimulating employment, women's entrepreneurship and self-employment
2.4	Building the capacities of all economic and social stakeholders for eliminating gender discrimination and improving use of women's resources
6.1	Affirming gender sensitive action in the media
6.2	Removing gender based stereotypes and eliminating misogyny in public media, particularly with respect to groups discriminated on multiple grounds

And finally, not all activities listed in the NAP under each of these specific objectives are part of the Swedish contribution. This set-up shows that it will be difficult to measure the achievement of NAP indicators related to the overall and specific objectives merely on the basis of the evaluation of Swedish supported interventions.

A fourth Component of the Swedish supported programme –not directly based on the NAP- relates to “Enhancing the professional and institutional capacity of GED”. It encompasses nine individual activities.

The above describes the third phase of the Swedish development cooperation with Serbia in the field of gender equality. The first phase, called the “Inception Programme”, ran from March 2010 until June 2011, the second phase entitled “One year Programme for the Implementation of Priority Activities in three areas of the NAP” was implemented from July 2011 until September 2012. The main objective of both these phases was to implement priority activities in three areas of NAP - representation of women in public and political life, economic empowerment of women, and women and media, and thus support the efforts of Serbian authorities in achieving gender equality. Although Phase one and Phase two are not the subject of this evaluation, frequent references to their activities and results will be necessary.

2.3 RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND FINDINGS

2.3.1 *Developments*

The present evaluation was triggered by the Annual Report 2013 of the project, the draft of which was issued and discussed in January 2014. It showed that considerable delays had been incurred with the implementation of activities planned for 2013. The Embassy of Sweden was eager to understand the underlying reasons for these delays in order to make informed decisions on how to improve the performance of the project. The first impression is that lack of adequate capacities at the Ministry of Labour and GED, as well as cumbersome decision-making procedures, are root causes. This, of course, needs to be verified during the evaluation.

The problem was compounded by the fact that end of April 2014, the new Serbian Government decided to abolish GED without indicating an alternative. This potentially endangers the effective implementation of the project and through that, the efficient use of Swedish funding.

This adds an extra dimension to the evaluation, namely the necessity to find alternative ways to embed the assistance in the new Serbian institutional structures, with a view to increasing the chances of sustainability of the project's results.

2.3.2 *Initial Findings*

Apart from a first superficial study of the project documents, the inception period was used to sound out the opinions of organisations and institutions active in the field of gender equality promotion on the project, on the position of the Ministry of Labour/GED, on the national strategy and on related subjects. These interviews were deemed necessary for the evaluation team to obtain a broad picture of the position of GED, the NAP team and the Swedish financed project within the wider institutional environment.

Meetings were held with representatives of OSCE, UN Women, NDI and IMG. The information gathered during these meetings is summarised here, but it should be borne in mind that validation of the information obtained still needs to take place during the actual implementation of the evaluation. Cautious interpretation of the outcomes of the interviews is therefore necessary.

Interviewees praise the Swedish contributions but at the same time point out that any positive developments must be attributed exclusively to the fact that additional human resources were made available through the NAP team. Both the Ministry of Labour and GED have relied on that additional capacity only, and failed to develop their own capacity in the process. Short-term and ad hoc results were certainly achieved, but they will fade away once Serbia loses its NAP team.

An additional problem has been the vagueness of the project setup and its management. Although the Ministry of Labour was responsible for the project and thus for the work of the NAP team, this has merely been an ostensive responsibility. If any steering of the NAP team took place, this was limited to the simple activity level, without taking the overall objectives of the national strategy into account.

The institutions interviewed are disappointed with the lack of coordination between the Serbian Authorities (read: Ministry of Labour/GED) on the one hand, and their own organisations and local institutions (CSOs) active in gender equality promotion, on the other. They consider the project, and GED, badly managed and have therefore chosen to largely avoid GED in their daily work.

The fact that in 2012, the State Secretary of the Ministry of Labour de facto and de jure took over the direct management responsibility for the project implementation from the then GED Director has not helped the smooth implementation of the project.

The institutions interviewed are indeed happy with most of the training and research outcomes of the project, although unfortunately they question the method of selection (and presumably the quality) of researchers and trainers.

There is general agreement that the three strategy areas of the national strategy chosen for the project to work on are the most important ones, although some doubts were expressed as to the theme of media-related activities. At any rate, there is potential scope, and also willingness for cooperation provided responsibilities and mandates are clearly defined.

2.4 THE PROJECT'S INTERVENTION LOGIC

2.4.1 *Assessment*

The Project proposal of 15 November 2012 from the Ministry/Directorate²⁵ does not describe a clear theory of change. The log frame lists a great many activities without sufficiently explaining how these will logically contribute to the expected outcomes and the overall aim. In this chapter we have tried to reorganise and extract the implicit

²⁵ "Priority activities of the national action plan for the implementation of the National Strategy for improved status of women and gender equality promotion, January 2013-December 2015"

assumptions to recreate the intervention logic and formulate a theory of change that we can use as a basis for the evaluation and the evaluation questions. We welcome comments on our interpretation of this project's theory of change as described in the following section.

2.4.2 The Theory of Change

The Theory of Change defines all building blocks required to bring about a given long-term goal (impact). This set of connected building blocks– outcomes or preconditions - is depicted on a map known as a pathway of change or change framework, which is a graphic representation of the change process. Each outcome in the pathway of change is tied to one or more interventions and assumptions, revealing the often complex web of activity that is required to bring about change. A Theory of Change provides a roadmap describing how the intervention assumes to get from here to there and is useful with constituents, staff, partners organisations and funders.

Based on an analysis of the various activities, outputs and outcomes listed in the log frame, we have slightly reorganised and rephrased the outcomes to develop a more logic theory of change against which we can measure progress. Staying close to the original project proposal, we suggest that the expected outcomes and outputs listed in the table below will form the basis for assessing the achievements of the supported project.

An important task for the evaluators is to gather enough knowledge and understanding so as to be able to predict – with some degree of confidence – if and how the chosen inputs, activities and delivered outputs have contributed to the expected outcomes (or will potentially have a chance of doing so). We also need to be able to combine evidence from a number of studies/reports and interviews in order to build a stronger picture of what is taking place, how it is unfolding, and, most importantly, how context influences the project.

Unfortunately, the project document is not clear on the obstacles to development in the four impact areas and therefore the relevance of outcomes and outputs will be difficult to judge. We will however use the opinion of key stakeholders to make an informed assessment.

The overall objective can be defined as “to contribute to increased application of EU and international gender equality standards in Serbia”*

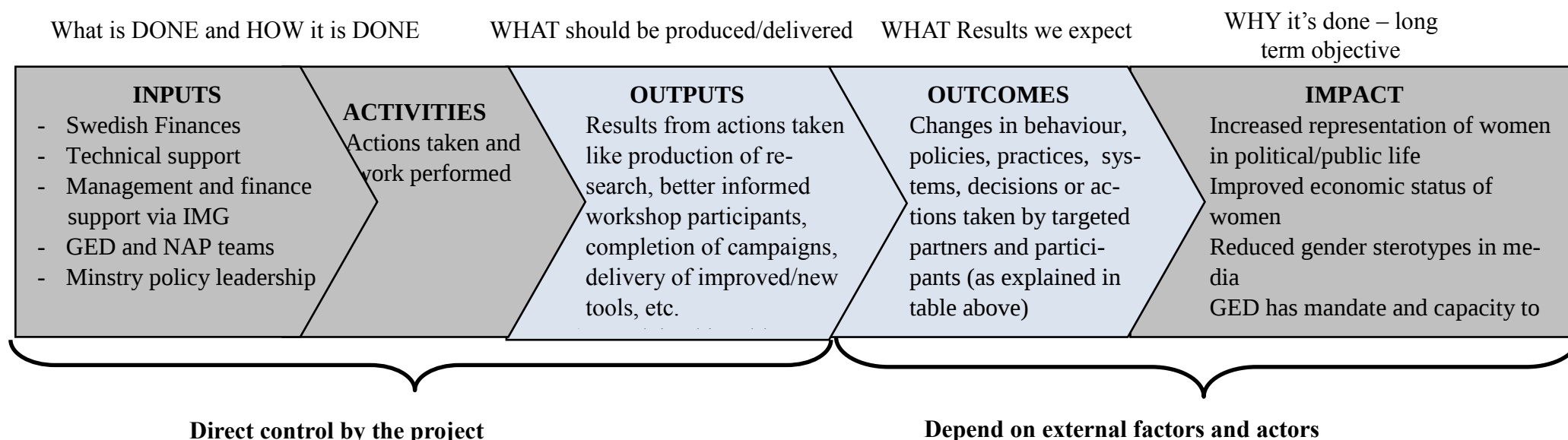
*) These standards are set in the UN and EU conventions and priorities are outlined in EU directives and the EU Strategy on Equality 2010-2015 (*equal economic independence, reducing the gender pay gap, equality in decision-making, and ending gender-based violence*). EU Directives also require the establishment of a legal framework and institutions that can promote and monitor implementation of gender equality measures.

Impact Objectives	Expected outcomes	Expected Outputs *)
Objective 1 <u>Increased</u> representation of women in public and political life	- There is increased awareness and professional capacity on gender equality mechanisms and tools <i>among public servants in national and local self-government administrations</i> (incl. use of quota systems) - There is enhanced capabilities and mandate of the <i>network of Gender Equality Focal Points in the ministries</i> - There is increased awareness and better practices of <i>political parties</i> on gender equality, (incl. use of quota systems) - There is strengthened capacity of <i>civil society</i> to advance the gender equality agenda on the local level, including effective grant making to strategic initiatives - There is increased self-confidence among <i>women in political positions</i> and improved capacity to carry out their expected roles and duties - There is increased numbers of <i>local government structures that apply gender sensitive budgeting</i> and harmonize their services with modern gender equality principles - There is regular monitoring of progress in relation to representation of women in local self-governments by CSOs. There is regular sharing of the results of this monitoring.	1.1.1 Five (5) trainings for human resources executives of political parties on local level conducted 1.1.2 One training on gender equality tools and leadership for young female politicians held 1.1.3 Five (5) trainings for finance officials from local self-governments on gender-sensitive budgeting organized 1.1.5 A series of public debates initiated and one public debate organized on local self-government level to promote the harmonization of local services with modern gender equality principles 1.1.6 21 grants issued to local CSOs for advancing gender equality agenda on local self-government level in the fields of inclusion to political decision-making, economic empowerment, and women in media, and the monitoring of these grants initiated. 1.2.1 Two (2) capacity-building events organized for gender equality focal points in line ministries 2.1.4 Monitoring of representation of women in local self-governments initiated and interim results shared with the public. 4.1.2 Summer school organised for junior professionals from gender equality protection mechanisms from the region.
Objective 2 <u>Improved</u> economic status of women and reduced economic inequality between men and women, with new equal opportunities	- There is <i>increased knowledge among decision makers</i> of the multiple aspects underlying gender-based inequality in Serbia, especially within the following areas f) the situation of single mothers, other family types, and informal employment-like situations faced by women g) the present position of women in business and on the role of ICT related knowledge in women's labour market situation a) the readiness <i>businesses</i> for introducing flexible and gender-sensitive working conditions b) the position women in non-urban environment	1.1.4 A concept of modern day-care service for elementary schools is developed and its promotion in Serbia has been initiated 1.3.1 A series of round-tables initiated and a round-table held for human resources and management executives of larger business enterprises. 2.1.1 Scientific research conducted on the situation of single mothers, other family types, and informal employment-like situations faced by women in Serbia 2.1.2 Survey on the position of women in business in Serbia carried out. 2.1.3 Research on the role of ICT related knowledge in women's labour market situation carried out 2.1.5 Survey carried out on larger business enterprises to measure readi-

Impact Objectives	Expected outcomes	Expected Outputs *)
	c) the public opinion on gender equality - There is <i>increased awareness of business community</i> in Serbia about gender equality concepts and how gender equality can improve their business is enhanced - There is <i>better availability of quality day care centres</i> for children, so that women can work and participate. Good models have been developed.	- ness for introducing flexible and gender-sensitive working conditions 2.1.6 Public opinion poll on gender equality carried out 2.1.7 Research on the position women in non-urban environment in Serbia carried out 4.2.1 Monitoring of the obligation of employers in implementing special measures to ensure gender equality pursuant to Gender Equality Law commenced.
Objective 3 <u>Reduced</u> upholding of gender stereotypes in mass media and <u>increased promotion</u> of gender equality concepts to the wider public (especially at local level)	- There is increased professional <i>capacity and willingness of journalists</i> to report on gender equality and women's rights issues - There is sufficient <i>good quality promotion material and research</i> provided to journalists - There have been quality, paid <i>advertisements with designed messages published</i> in media (TV, radio, papers, internet etc.) - There is regular <i>reporting to media from civil society</i> on gender equality progress and obstacles. Stereotypes are publicly opposed by CSOs.	3.1.1 Three (3) different inserts on gender equality issues developed and published in print media alongside with other existing media campaign materials 3.1.2 One (1) training event organised to advance professional capacity of the Club of Journalists Promoters of gender equality 3.1.3 Conference on the occasion of March 8 organised 3.1.4 GED promotional materials prepared and distribution initiated. 4.1.3 Serbia's participation and visibility at relevant international events maintained.
Objective 4 <u>Increased capacity</u> of the Gender Equality Directorate to implement and sustain its work	- GED has adequate human resources (numbers, competencies, leadership) to fulfil its task and role - GED has adequate systems and structures - GED has ability to mobilize resources, plan strategically, identify opportunities and build/use networks to enhance its agenda - GED has adequate political backing, a clear mandate and a budget from the government	4.1.1 GED attended 5 bi-lateral and multi-lateral working meetings among the region states' gender equality enforcement bodies, with one (1) event organised in Serbia 4.1.4 Professional exchange visit organised between GED and its peer in a country with experience in functional institutional mechanisms in gender equality. 4.2.2 Evaluation of the activities of year 1 of Phase 3 completed 4.2.3 Detailed work plan for Year 2 developed 4.2.4 Attending professional skills- building events abroad enabled for GED staff, and team-building workshop in Serbia held 4.2.5 Necessary equipment needed by GED to discharge its mandate procured. 4.2.6 NAP Team formed and maintained - Vacancy notices and calls for proposals published on need be basis.

*) Outputs listed and their numbering are copied from the log-frame matrix to the project proposal; the numbers refer to the "bridging objectives" also included in the Log-frame. As can be seen from the list, many outputs have actually been formulated as activities.

Results Chain - for the Swedish contribution



3. Intended users of the evaluation

The Embassy of Sweden is actively involved in monitoring of the programme and is therefore expected to directly benefit from the evaluation and learning exercise.

With the demise of the Gender Equality Directorate, there is actually no identified user within the Serbian Government or Public Administration. Yet, the Serbian Authorities are expected to utilise the outcomes of the evaluation for the review –and if needed, improvement- of their role as active counterpart which should eventually lead to the realisation of the objectives of the national strategy. During the Inception Phase it has not yet been possible to obtain a clear picture of the intentions of the new Government related to the institutional embedding of gender equality issues. Further work to clarify this issue is planned.

The International Management Group (IMG) is charged by The Embassy of Sweden with specific parts of project management, including financial management. The evaluation is bound to provide concrete recommendations for the improvement of project management activities, which may affect the future engagement and role of IMG.

4. Relevance and Evaluability of Evaluation Questions

4.1 EVALUATION CRITERIA AND TOPICS

The ToR does not give concrete evaluation questions but rather describe a list of topics the evaluation must cover. The evaluators find these topics relevant and have developed them into a number of evaluation questions, which will inform the interviews and the document analysis. The evaluators will in their work focus on four of the five DAC-criteria, namely relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. A specific dimension is added concerning the assessment of capacities of designated public institutions²⁶ for the management of the Swedish contribution during the next two years.

²⁶ The ToR mentions concretely the Ministry of Labour and GED; with the recent abolishment of GED, the evaluators will consider capacities of any institution to be designated by the Government to implement the NAP.

The above-mentioned evaluation criteria have been used to group the evaluation questions, guide the implementation of the assignment and structure the findings in the evaluation report. The table below “translates” the issues put forward in the ToR into evaluation questions.

List of topics as per the ToR	Proposed evaluation questions
Relevance	
Relevance of the project vis-à-vis the needs and priorities defined in the Strategy and NAP	EQ 01 How appropriate was the selection of focus areas and activities in terms of furthering the overall and specific objectives of the National Strategy and addressing the problems experienced by women?
Relevance of the project vis-à-vis Serbia’s EU integration process	EQ 02 To what extent did the project design take into consideration Serbia’s EU integration process?
The extent to which the project has taken into consideration external and internal risks	EQ 03 To what extent did the project design allow for flexible response to changing internal and external conditions?
(.)	EQ 04 To what extent was the project consistent with Swedish development policy?
Efficiency	
Efficiency and cost-effectiveness	EQ 05 Were inputs from the NAP team and external subcontractors delivered timely and with adequate quality?
	EQ 06 To what extent has each of the expected outputs as listed in the table above been achieved?
The performance of the implementing agency IMG with regards to achieving long-term objectives of the project	EQ 07 Did the overall organisational and administrative set up (Ministry, GED, NAP, IMG) support or hamper the efficient implementation of the project?
	EQ 08 Were IMG’s capacities, role and mandate to monitor and report on technical and managerial performance of Ministry/GED sufficient?
An in-depth assessment of achievement of project results as compared to overall and annual targets	EQ 09 To what extent were quarterly and annual work plans fulfilled?
The extent to which the project has taken into consideration external and internal risks	EQ 10 How adequately did the project team (Ministry/GED, NAP, IMG) react to internal and external risks materialising?

List of topics as per the ToR	Proposed evaluation questions
Effectiveness	
An in-depth assessment of achievement of project results as compared to overall and annual targets	EQ 11 To what extent has each of the expected outcomes listed in the table above been achieved?
	EQ 12 To what extent did the outputs delivered contribute to the expected outcomes?
	EQ 13 Which factors (financial, political, institutional, human factor) possibly hampered the achievement of results?
The performance of the NAP team with regards to achieving long-term objectives of the project	EQ 14 Were GED's capacities, role and mandate to monitor and report on outputs and outcomes of the project sufficient?
	EQ 15 To what extent did the work of the NAP team affect the achievement of long-term objectives of the project, positively or negatively?
Relevance of the project vis-à-vis Serbia's EU integration process	EQ 16 To what extent has Swedish financial assistance to this project contributed to accession preparation?
Sustainability	
The organisational and financial sustainability of project outputs and outcomes	EQ 17 Are the identified outcomes sustainable?
	EQ 18 To what extent did NAP manage to inspire/ensure ownership by responsible government authorities, businesses and media actors for the programme, its outcomes and its continuation?
	EQ 19 To what extent did the project succeed to generate/leverage government and donor contributions to the sector?
	EQ 20 To what extent did the project succeed in mobilising additional national and sub-national government human resources for GE promotion?
Transfer of knowledge and development of competence within GED	EQ 21 To what extent have GED employees contributed to the project activities?
	EQ 22 To what extent have GED employees gained knowledge, skills and competences through the project?

List of topics as per the ToR	Proposed evaluation questions
	EQ 23 How likely is it that current GED employees will be retained for the same work?
<i>Future management</i>	
Organisational aspects and institutional development within GED and the Ministry	EQ 24 How likely is it that either the Ministry of Labour or any other Government institution will retain or even expand its formal mandate and budget for GE promotion?
The capacities of designated public institutions for the management of the Swedish contribution during the next two years.	EQ 25 What should be the focus of activities in year 2 and 3 of the project?
	EQ 26 What would be the ideal institutional embedding of the project?
	EQ 27 What should be changed in composition, roles, tasks and responsibilities of the NAP team and IMG?
	EQ 28 What should be the minimum contribution of the Serbian authorities to the project, in terms of political support, capacities, decision-making, institutional counterpart?
The most effective modalities.	EQ 29 In case the present formal and institutional setup must be discontinued, how should Sweden channel the support (e.g. via other donors such as EU, UN, Norway), directly to government bodies, institutions and organisations or via a national coordinating body?

Annex 1 builds upon these evaluation questions, by showing for each evaluation criterion and evaluation question the judgement criteria, indicators and methods/sources of information.

5. Proposed Approach and Methodology

5.1 OVERALL METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

First, interviews and document review will be used to clarify and expand upon the theory of change through which the project aims to achieve the objectives. This will provide the basis for our assessment of achievements.

Second, the achievement of results intended in the project's theory of change will be assessed both from a *top down analysis*, where we start by capturing examples of outcomes (regardless of them being reported or not and regardless of them being a result of the project interventions). The analysis will then work back along "pathways of change" to GED and the NAP Team as main carriers of the project to assess its specific or accumulated contribution. The *bottom up analysis* will take its starting point in the delivered outputs (as reported and documented). The perceptions of the targeted agents on their possible contribution to existing or potential outcomes will be discussed.

As we suspect (based on initial interviews) that the outcomes may not be substantial, the focus of our questions will be on lessons learnt and way forward.

It is crucial for a systematic analysis that we receive feedback from the Embassy regarding the proposed evaluation questions, since they will guide our further work.

5.2 DATA COLLECTION

The evaluation will take its starting point in a desk review of contextual information (such as EU and UN reports on Serbian progress and gaps in its application of gender equality standards²⁷, research, CSO reports, media analyses, etc.), project information (such as annual reports and reports from activities undertaken from GED and the ministry) and initial interviews related to the emerging situation since the government has abolished GED.

²⁷ These standards are set in the UN and EU conventions and priorities are outlined in EU directives and the EU Strategy on Equality 2010-2015 (*equal economic independence, reducing the gender pay gap, equality in decision-making, and ending gender-based violence*). EU Directives also require the establishment of a legal framework and institutions that can promote and monitor implementation of gender equality measures.

The retrieval and collection of documents has already started in the Inception Phase. It will continue during the weeks to come. The main sources will be:

- Inception Reports and Annual Reports for phases I and II
- Project plans, annual and quarterly reports for phase III
- Documents related to selection of trainers, consultants and CSOs
- Project deliverables (trainers' reports; training evaluation reports, analyses, research reports, publications, curriculums for educational events etc.)
- GED reports related to specific issues
- Background documents: "Shadow Report" for CEDAW, EC Progress report for Serbia 2013, Annual Reports of national independent institutions (Ombudsman, Commissioner for Equality), other key GE stakeholders analyses and reports.

Apart from written evidence, the main source of information will be the experiences and knowledge of the people who have been involved – directly or indirectly - in the implementation of the project. Our interview programme, that will take place from 2 till 9 June 2014, envisages meetings with at least the following five categories of persons:

- Staff and decision makers directly involved in the implementation of the project, such as –but not limited to- representatives from GED, NAP, the Embassy of Sweden, IMG and the Ministry of Labour.
- Staff and decision-makers involved in the preparation and contracting of the project, such as the Embassy of Sweden, Indevelop consultants, the Ministry of Labour, other consultants involved in project design.
- External observers, donors and other key stakeholders in the gender equality and women's rights field, such as Norway, UN Women, EU Delegation, OSCE, Serbian European Integration Office, Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities, NDI, NDP.
- Individuals and representatives of institutions targeted by the project, such as –but not limited to- local self-governments, the Provincial Secretariat for Economy, Employment and Gender Equality, Council for Gender Equality, local gender equality mechanisms/commissions, political parties, gender equality focal points within ministries, the media, journalists, business entities, relevant CSOs, (young) female politicians.
- Individual consultants, CSOs and research institutions, who have performed tasks under the project.

These respondents will be approached with semi-structured interviews, based on a list of topics to discuss (see evaluation framework matrix). The list naturally varies according to the position and role of the interviewee.

As for the institutions and individuals targeted by the project, we plan to have group meetings during which we will first endeavour to obtain information for the evalua-

tion, and then launch an open exchange of opinions on the most desired future institutional embedding of the project, taking into account the obligations arising from the *acquis communautaire*. This will hopefully lead to a number of realistic, implementable alternatives.

The data collection phase will be finalised on 6 June.

5.3 ANALYSIS AND DRAFTING

The analysis of data and documents will start immediately upon the approval of the Inception Report. The analysis and drafting phase will include the following steps:

1. Analysis of the collected data (desk review, interviews and groups discussions) will be done during a joint team meeting in Belgrade 9-10 June. All findings will be discussed and organised to answer the evaluation questions.
2. A feedback/verification workshop will be held with the Embassy on the 11 June to discuss preliminary findings and emerging recommendations. Should the Embassy agree, we could also invite other important actors to discuss possible future synergies (after the workshop with the Embassy).
3. Submission of the draft report to the Embassy of Sweden and Serbian authorities, if identified, will take place no later than 20 June 2014; Comments from the Embassy are expected within 10 calendar days.
4. Incorporation of comments and writing of the final Report will then be done and submission of the final report is expected on July 7th, 2014.

5.4 LIMITATIONS

The evaluation will take place during a period of political and institutional uncertainty related to GE promotion. Most likely, information to be obtained from Serbian national authorities will be inconclusive as regards the future. Yet, the final report will contain recommendations as to the minimum requirements that have to be fulfilled by the Serbian authorities to make a continuation of the Swedish contributions to the government's efforts on gender equality effective and sustainable. Alternative options and modalities for the support will also be explored.

Time limitations will influence the evaluation, especially the field work, given the relatively large quantity of evaluation questions for a project of this size. This will mean a strict selection of interview partners as well as the use of other techniques that enhance the efficiency of the fieldwork, such as Skype interviews and group meetings.

The evaluation will be dependent on contact information and access to key informants and a good response rate. Likewise, the availability of any baseline and monitoring data is important to allow an assessment of change over time. This will affect the quality of data collected and the volume of evidence from which to draw conclusions.

6. Intermediate and final products of the evaluation

Although the period of execution of the assignment is relatively short, our work plan foresees regular exchange of information with the Embassy to ensure that activities unfold in the desired direction and that (minor) adaptations remain possible.

6.1 INTERMEDIATE PRODUCTS

The first tangible intermediate product is the present Inception Report. It is not merely a repetition of the activities we have described in our proposal, but it includes a first analysis of the situation in the field, based on document study, interviews and discussions with the Embassy. As such, it already provides insight in the current situation, including the political and institutional environment of the project. The IR is an important decision-making document for the Embassy, since it sets the course for and focus of the investigations.

The second intermediary product planned is the verification workshop with the Embassy that is planned for June 11th. During this workshop, we will present the preliminary results of our investigations and facilitate a discussion on the findings and the way forward. Although maintaining its independent position, the evaluation team highly appreciates the first reactions of the Embassy to the preliminary findings, especially with a view of formulating feasible, workable recommendations for the future.

6.2 FINAL PRODUCTS

Final reporting takes place in two phases: first a draft report to be submitted to the Embassy on June 20th. The hand-over of the draft report will be accompanied by a presentation by the evaluation team on the most important findings, conclusions and recommendations. After that, we hope to receive comments and reactions from the Embassy within ten calendar days.

The comments and reactions will be included in a “table of treatment of comments” that forms an annex to the definitive final report. It will show which of the comments were taken on board by the evaluators and how they have dealt with those in the report.

The definitive final report will then be formally submitted to the Embassy on 7 July 2014. By then, there is no need for additional presentations or discussions so submission will take place in written and electronic format only.

4.3 LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES CONSULTED

General project documents
Project Proposal 2013 – 2015
Annual Report 2013 with Annexes 1 and 2
Report on Inception phase March 2010-June 2011
Report on Second phase July 2011- Dec 2012
Quarterly Plans 2013 (I, II, III, IV) and 2014
Interim Work Plan for 2014
Annual Work Plans 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014
Contract Sida – IMG
Project Proposal for Second Phase, 2012
Documents related to selection of externals
TORs and procedures for selection of externals, per activity: trainers, consultants and CSOs for services 2013
Small grants for CSOs 2013 – on going
Small grants for CSOs & WE 2012
Project Outputs / Deliverables per activity
trainers' reports; training evaluation reports; attendance lists; research reports; publications; curriculums for educational event; guidelines etc.
National gender related documents
National Strategy for Improving Position of Women and Enhancing Gender Equality and related NAP for period 201- 2015
http://www.gendernet.rs/
Annual GED Reports for 2011, 2012, 2013
GED Media Focus Report 2011- 2012
Annual Report of the Commissioner for Protection of Equality, 2012
Collection of opinions and recommendations of the Commissioner for Protection of Equality, 2013
Annual Report of the Protector of Citizens, 2013
OSCE/ODIHR Limited Election Observation Mission, Serbia Final Report March 2014
Women and Man in the Republic of Serbia, National Statistic Office, 2011
Time Use in the Republic of Serbia, 2010- 2011
Mechanisms for achieving gender equality at the local level, OSCE 2010
Background documents and links
Results strategy for Sweden's reform cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey, 2014 – 2020
EU Progress Report for Serbia 2013, 2012
National Plan for the adoption of the ACQUIS (2013-2016)
Concluding Observations on the combined 2 nd and 3 rd report of Serbia, CEDAW 2013
Shadow over Serbia, NGO Report for the 55 th CEDAW Committee Session 2013
European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local life, 2006
Dealing with complexity through Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation (PME) – Praxis Pa-

per 26, INTRAC January 2012
A Three-fold Theory of Social Change and Implications for Practice, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, CDRA 2007
Guide to Evaluating Capacity Development Results, A collection of guidance notes to help development practitioners and evaluators assess capacity development efforts, World Bank 2012
http://www.wikigender.org/index.php/Gender Equality Law in the European Union
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/economic-independence/index_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-pay-gap/index_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/index_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-violence/index_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/development-cooperation/index_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/events/role-of-men/index_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/law/index_en.htm
http://rr.skgo.org/
http://www.parlament.gov.rs/
http://www.f.bg.ac.rs/files/instituti/ISI/isi_2014_Jednoroditeljske_porodice_u_Srbiji.pdf

4.4 LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

1. Per – Olof Olofsson, Head of Regional Office, International Management Group IMG
2. Sanja Sameraj, Project Manager International Management Group IMG
3. Ksenija Blazic, Project Assistant, International Management Group IMG
4. Natalija Ostojic, Project Manager, NAP Team
5. Sonja Mazibrada, Project Assistant, NAP Team
6. Olga Belosavic Milanovic, PR Assistant, NAP Team
7. Jelena Sekulic, Capacity Building Coordinator, NAP Team
8. Marko research and public awareness monitoring Assistant, NAP Team
9. Luka Puletic, Office Assistant, NAP Team
10. PhD Natalija Micunovic, GED Director
11. Stana Bozovic, Head of GE Council of the Serbian Government (ex Project Director)
12. Jasnima Muric, ex Project Manager
13. LJiljana Milutinovic, GED, civil servant
14. LJiljana Topic, GED, civil servant
15. Dragan Knezevic, GED, civil servant
16. Jasna Vujacic, GED, civil servant
17. Mira Marjanovic, GED, civil servant
18. Asya Varbanova, Head of UN Women Office in Belgrade
19. Zorana Antonijevic, OSCE National Programme Officer
20. Sofija Mandic, NDI Project Coordinator for Gender Equality Programme
21. Gordana Stevanovic, Deputy Ombudsman for Children's Rights and Gender Equality
22. Kosana Beker, Assistant Commissioner for Protection of Equality
23. Rozeta Aleksov, Gender Equality Component Coordinator, SCTM
24. Ana Milenic, Program Manager, EU Delegation to the Republic of Serbia
25. Roger Jorgensen, Deputy Head of Mission, Norwegian Embassy in Serbia
26. Nina Zivanovic, Head of local Gender Equality Mechanism in Vracar Municipality
27. Vesna Babic, civil servant from Vracar Municipality, participant of the training
28. Nela Dancetovic, ex Head of local Gender Equality Mechanism in the City of Kraljevo
29. Tamara – e club Kraljevo
30. Predrag Kurcubic, Research Director, Media CT and Public Affairs, IPSOS Strategic Marketing
31. Ana Delic, researcher, IPSOS Strategic Marketing
32. Natasa Gospic, President, CSO Equal Opportunities
33. Svetlana Popov, Vice President CSO Equal Opportunities
34. Lola Milojevic, Gender Trainer
35. Biljana Maletin Uljarevic, Gender Trainer
36. Aneta Dukic, CSO Fenomena
37. Maja Stojanovic, External Consultant
38. Nebojsa Simic, Trainer
39. Catharina Schmitz, Managing Director In-develop Sweden
40. Ulf Färnsveden, GE expert and consultant, NCG, involved in GE trainings in Serbia and in phase 1 of the project
41. Catharina Schmitz, GE expert and consultant, Indevelop, involved in gender budgeting training

4.5 EVALUATION MATRIX

DAC crit.	Evaluation questions	Judgement Criteria <i>Indicators</i>	Methods and data sources
Relevance	EQ 01 How appropriate was the selection of focus areas and activities in terms of furthering the overall and specific objectives of the National Strategy and addressing the problems experienced by women?	Relative importance of interventions as compared to non-supported activities as perceived by Serbian stakeholders and reported in the EU and CEDAW monitoring processes. <i>Estimated progress in realisation of all six objectives of the national strategy</i>	Study of strategy, NAP and planned implementing parties. CEDAW and EU reports on Serbian progress and gaps in relation to gender equality, gender equality indices, research. Interviews with stakeholders, donors, other organisations active in the field
	EQ 02 To what extent did the project design take into consideration Serbia's EU integration process?	Desired outcomes, expected outputs and planned activities clearly referenced with the <i>acquis</i> <i>Explicit references to acquis and the EU goals and strategies in the project documents.</i>	Study of project proposal and <i>the EU conventions and the EU Strategy for equality 2010-2015</i> . Interviews with EUD and SEIO
	EQ 03 To what extent did the project design allow for flexible response to changing internal and external conditions?	Adequate risk analysis with mitigating measures. <i>Mitigating measures are feasible and implementable, if needed.</i>	Study of project proposal Interviews with IMG and NAP team on risk aversion policy
	EQ 04 To what extent was the project consistent with Swedish development policy?	Rights based approach and perspective of the poor included in project design and monitoring arrangements <i>Concrete activities/outputs/outcomes planned that reflect the above.</i>	Study of project proposal and annual reports

DAC crit.	Evaluation questions	Judgement Criteria Indicators	Methods and data sources
Efficiency	EQ 05 Were inputs from the NAP team and external sub-contractors delivered timely and with adequate quality?	NAP team has discharged their tasks according to quarterly work plans <i>Discrepancy between plans and real delivery</i>	Study of time sheets and expert reports Interviews with NAP team and external providers; Interviews with IMG
	EQ 06 To what extent has each of the expected outputs as listed in the table in section 1.4.2 of the report been achieved?	Outputs are delivered for the lowest reasonable costs, in a timely fashion and with good quality. <i>Contracts designed and implemented on schedule. Objective tender procedures used</i>	Interviews with IMG and with sub-contractors; tendering, evaluation and selection documentation; timesheets; physical outputs and output dates
	EQ 07 Did the overall organisational and administrative set up (Ministry, GED, NAP, IMG) support or hamper the efficient implementation of the project?	Perceived added value of competencies and contributions from each unit. Efforts taken to create synergies and clear roles and mandates. <i>Documents on mandate and roles and responsibilities exist, are clear and are followed. Documentation from meetings addressing the cooperation or lack of such.</i>	Review of contracts and MoUs and meeting notes. Interviews with NAP team, IMG and other donors/supporters of gender equality measures in Serbia
	EQ 08 Were IMG's capacities, role and mandate to monitor and report on technical and managerial performance of GED sufficient?	Indicators and monitoring mechanisms are in place and functioning. <i>Indicators are SMART. IMG monitoring reports show overall effectiveness, efficiency, quality of the implementation of activities towards meeting the outcome level and impact objectives.</i>	Study of project documents Interviews with NAP team and IMG
	EQ 09 To what extent were quarterly and annual work plans fulfilled?	Actual delivery of activities and outputs included in work plans <i>Estimated percentage of planned outputs</i>	Study of project documents
	EQ 10 How adequately did the project team (GED, NAP, IMG) react to internal and external risks materialising?	Unexpected external events adequately countered by the project team <i>Absence of disruption of project activities</i>	Interviews with the teams and external observers

DAC crit.	Evaluation questions	Judgement Criteria Indicators	Methods and data sources
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Effectiveness	EQ 11 To what extent has each of the expected outcomes listed in section 1.4.2 of the report been achieved?	Examples of positive change among targeted local governments, political parties, businesses, media and CSOs <i>There is evidence of outcomes in reports from partners.</i>	Annual reports from partners, reports from the project. Interviews with selected partners from the four groups (local government, businesses, media and CSOs).
	EQ 12 To what extent did the outputs delivered contribute to the expected outcomes?	There is likelihood that the outputs delivered have contributed or will contribute to the expected outcomes. <i>There is perception among targeted actors that the project outputs have contributed to the observed outcomes.</i>	Annual reports from partners, reports from the project. Interviews with selected partners from the four groups (local government, businesses, media and CSOs)
	EQ 13 Which factors (financial, political, institutional, human factor) possibly hampered the achievement of results?	External factors negatively affected effectiveness <i>Factors negatively influencing performance identified</i>	All interviews and group meetings
	EQ 14 Were GED's capacities, role and mandate to monitor and report on outputs and outcomes of the project sufficient?	Indicators and monitoring mechanisms and monitoring capacities are in place and functioning. <i>Indicators are SMART. GED monitoring reports show overall effectiveness, efficiency, quality of the implementation of activities towards realising outputs and outcomes.</i>	Reports from GED on project monitoring; interviews with GED staff; interviews with NAP team; interviews with IMG
	EQ 15 To what extent did the work of the NAP team affect the achievement of long-term objectives of the project, positively or negatively?	The competencies and capacities now available at GED and the targeted agencies thanks to NAP. <i>Deliberate efforts to develop capacities of others.</i>	Project annual report; implementation/monitoring reports; interview with targeted agencies
	EQ 16 To what extent has Swedish financial assistance to this project contributed to accession preparation?	Clear link between activities funded and Serbia's progress in the alignment with the acquis. The project has had or will likely have a measurable positive impact on the negotiations on the relevant chapter of the acquis. <i>Quantitative assessment of delivered outputs and results and links with the acquis alignment. Clear evidence of progress towards meeting the conditions of the relevant chapter</i>	EU progress reports Interviews with SEIO

DAC crit.	Evaluation questions	Judgement Criteria <i>Indicators</i>	Methods and data sources
Sustainability	EQ 17 Are the identified outcomes sustainable?	Capacities built and attitudes changed <i>Evidence of follow-up on project results</i>	Interviews with stakeholders
	EQ 18 To what extent did NAP manage to inspire/ensure ownership by responsible government authorities, businesses and media actors for the programme, its outcomes and its continuation?	Trends of increased funding and effort by local governments, businesses and media to address gender equality, after support has ended. <i>Examples of local governments that are paying positions and budgets for gender equality. Examples of businesses that have adopted gender equality policies or quota systems. Examples of journalists that continue to challenge gender stereotypes after capacity development (e.g. reactions to Eurovision winner?). Examples of non-normative reporting and programmes.</i>	Reports from local governments and businesses targeted. Media analyses (hopefully commissioned by GED to monitor change). Interviews with a wide range of stakeholders
	EQ 19 To what extent did the project succeed to generate/leverage government and donor contributions to the sector?	Improved donor coordination and commitments, stronger government coordination and commitments. <i>Percentage of increase in donor support to and government budget to GE promotion the sector.</i>	Interviews with donor and –if identified- government officials Interviews with SEIO Study of donor and national budgets
	EQ 20 To what extent did the project succeed in mobilising additional national and sub-national government human resources for GE promotion?	Stronger political commitment <i>Evolution in Government reaction to CEDAW comments and recommendations</i>	Interviews with –if available- Ministry of Labour officials
	EQ 21 To what extent have GED employees contributed to the project activities?	Active involvement of GED staff in project activities <i>Percentage of time spent by GED employees directly on project-related activities</i>	Interviews with GED staff and NAP team
	EQ 22 To what extent have GED employees gained knowledge, skills and competences through the project?	Capability of GED employees to perform GE promotion activities independently from NAP team <i>Percentage of time spent by GED employees directly on follow up of project-related activities</i>	Interviews with GED staff and NAP team
	EQ 23 How likely is it that current GED employees will be retained for the same work?	Labour contracts and job descriptions <i>No criteria</i>	Interviews with GED staff and –if available- Ministry of Labour officials
	EQ 24 How likely is it that either the Ministry of Labour or any other Government institution will retain or even expand its formal mandate and budget for GE promotion?		Interviews
F	EQ 25 What should be the focus of activities in year 2 and 3 of the project?		Interviews/focus groups

	EQ 26 What would be the ideal institutional embedding of the project?	Interviews/focus groups
	EQ 27 What should be changed in composition, roles, tasks and responsibilities of the NAP team and IMG?	Interviews
	EQ 28 What should be the minimum contribution of the Serbian authorities to the project, in terms of political support, capacities, decision-making, institutional counterpart?	Interviews
	EQ 29 In case the present formal and institutional setup must be discontinued, how should Sweden channel the support (e.g. via other donors such as EU, UN, Norway), directly to government bodies, institutions and organisations or via a national coordinating body?	Interviews



Evaluation of Support to the Implementation of Priority Activities in the National Action Plan for Gender Equality, Republic of Serbia

Since 2010, Sweden has supported the implementation of the Serbian National Action Plan for Improving the Position of Women and Enhancing Gender Equality (NAP). The purpose of this evaluation was to review the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisational set up and project design of the support, with focus on 2013. The evaluation concludes that the organisational set up and design of the project were indeed weak. Almost all activities were delayed and the likelihood of reaching any of the expected outcomes is slim. The main reasons for the limited progress of the project were (a) lack of political will; (b) scattered activities without a clear theory of change; (c) poor cooperation and communication between the parties involved; (d) lack of overall leadership and monitoring and (e) lack of coordination with other stakeholders. The evaluation concludes that the continued Swedish support to gender equality promotion in Serbia is highly relevant. The support should continue but with a revised strategy and with another organisational set up. Donor coordination and local ownership/commitment will be key factors for an improved set-up. The evaluation recommends that the Embassy freeze the project and redefine the scope and organisation of the project, aiming at a re-start in January 2015.