



The Way Forward: Promoting Womens Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia

Mid-Term Review



Photo: G.M.B. Akash

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ISBN 978-82-7548-690-3
ISSN 1502-2528

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Norad

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Mid-Term Review

Report, February 26th, 2013



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¹ For a detailed list of task attribution please see Chapter 1

Executive Summary

Background

The UN Women South Asia Regional Office (SARO) Programme “Promoting Women’s Political Leadership and Governance in South Asia” under review here is a programme that was born in 2009 to be implemented in India, Bhutan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. The overarching goals of the programme as originally designed, according to the Programme Document, were to empower elected women representatives (EWR) to make public policy and resource allocation patterns responsive to women’s human rights. In order to achieve this overarching objective, the following outcomes were highlighted in the log frame:

- **Outcome 1:** Laws and policies on decentralized governance and devolution of powers to local bodies strengthened in line with national commitments to gender equality in South Asia by 2015.
- **Outcome 2:** Elected women representatives in local government have the knowledge and capacity to transform and implement policies, programmes, and resource allocation for gender sensitive governance in 6 states (now 5 states) in India by 2015.
- **Outcome 3:** Key capacity development and media institutions and structures in India and South Asia strengthened to mainstream gender responsive governance into their policies and programme by 2015.

The programme was anchored on a number of international agreements, chief amongst them, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Moreover, the effort fit well within the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Action Plan for Women’s Rights and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation (2007-2009, extended for the period 2010-2013).

Purpose of the Mid-Term Review

The purpose of this Mid-Term Review has been to **assess the progress of the UN Women’s Programme on Promoting Women’s Political Leadership and Governance in South Asia as per the agreed Programme Document’s stated goals, outcomes and outputs; over a fixed time period of 2009-2012.**

More specifically, the key objectives of this review have been to assess the:

- *Relevance of the programme objectives in the national and regional contexts.*
- *Effectiveness and coherence of the strategies adopted.*
- *Strengths and challenges regarding the regional dimension of the programme.*
- *Efficiency and cost-effectiveness in implementation and delivery of outputs.*
- *Performance and management of programme support including risk management, results based management, reporting and financial management.*
- *Sustainability of the activities initiated.*

Methodology

The Mid-Term Review is anchored in the abilities framework. This framework enables the examination of the programme from a variety of angles including organizational, administrative, and operational. The abilities under review here included:

- **Ability to be?** The degree to which the programme has a clear and recognized identity that supports its mandate, and serves to facilitate the work they conduct.
- **Ability to organize?** The degree to which the programme is organized in a manner that best supports the generation of outputs, outcomes and impact.
- **Ability to relate?** The degree to which the programme interacted well with key stakeholders.
- **Ability to do?** The degree to which the programme meet its operational objectives.

The Mid-Term Review utilized a variety of data gathering mechanism including:

- **Stakeholder analysis:** Commissioning bodies, primary beneficiaries, implementers; and other interested parties at local, state, national and regional levels. This analysis informed the decision on interviews and types of interviews.
- **Desk review and literature review:** The review of programme documentation, as well as relevant background literature and material.
- **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews in person or via phone/Skype were used to collect detailed information from multiple key individuals, programme staff and stakeholders. We employed both semi-structured and open-ended individual and group interviews. We utilized a purposive sampling strategy.
- **Site visits and observations:** During the field visits to the Indian states the team also attended Grama Sabhas in an effort to better understand how they were conducted and also interact with participating women.
- **Field visits:** We conducted three field visits to three different states in India, as well as to Bhutan.

Findings and Lessons Learned

Here we turn our attention to the key findings of this report and the lessons which were unearthed during the Mid-Term review.

Achievement of goals

The Programme Document was developed based on a consultative process prior, rather than during, the drafting of the document. The consultation included multiple stakeholders in India, Norway, and the UN System, but none from other countries in the region. Furthermore, the document is imprecise and hence, enables varied interpretations. By extension a wide range of activities can be understood as within the scope of the programme. These attributes have meant that the degree to which the Programme Document serves as a real guideline for activities is very limited.

The lack of a solid and robust Program Document has enabled UN Women to engage in a multitude of activities without a clear perspective of how the activities collectively achieve the project outputs and outcomes as set out in the logframe. Essentially, the weakness of the Programme Document may have contributed to diluting the impact of efforts made by not being able to clearly delineate what should, versus what should not, be covered by the current programme.

Relevance in terms of national and regional contexts

The region, and each country specifically targeted with this programme, all face challenges in the field of gender responsive governance and female participation in political decision making. These challenges and how they may be mitigated varies from one context to another. Overall, it is undeniable that supporting this general field of work is an asset to promoting progress. Having simultaneous context specific efforts in multiple countries around the region is important to make the program locally specific even ensuring that gender concerns are at the forefront of the agenda. Over time simultaneous efforts in different countries can serve to reach a critical mass that serves to precipitate and foster change. Having said this, it was difficult to identify initiatives that would have a regional impact from a centrally administered programme. Indeed, there was no clear evidence of how the framing of the programme had benefited from a regional conception. The Programme Document and the overall structure of the programme were largely geared towards India, with the regional aspects almost as an “add on.” This was clear in how the different governing bodies to the programme have been composed (no regional institutional representation - civil society or government), and also how the consultation leading up to the programme was conducted (no regional stakeholder representation - civil society or government).

In the case of India, the relevance of the approach taken is clear at the local level as participation of women in local decision-making processes. The focus on governance through state and non-state channels a very relevant mechanism to ensure that women play a role in decision making which has a direct impact on their socio-economic livelihood, since many such decisions of government are made at that level. Similarly, capacity building of EWRs is an important aspect of ensuring participation. Other aspects, which were more ad hoc in nature, are harder to trace in relation to their direct relevance to changing the conditions on the ground.

One aspect related to the experience in India and which merits attention is the anecdotal, albeit considerable, evidence gathered during the field visits in India suggesting that the risk of violence within the family and from the community is exacerbated in cases where EWRs question entrenched power structures. Clearly, this further stresses the importance of women's empowerment and the need to support women's involvement in decision-making that affects their lives.

In Bhutan, the focus of strengthening capacity at the local government level while simultaneously supporting the national governments efforts to promote gender responsive governance are relevant approaches to ensuring that gender questions are addressed at multiple levels simultaneously and hence, more swiftly able to make progress in the gender field.

General speaking, the understanding of the conditions in Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh also highlight the importance of the issue of gender in the respective contexts as is related to governance issues. However, it is important to stress that while some aspects have been found to be similar, much of what is confronted in each country is specific to the local context. This does not preclude that lessons can be learned, but mandates that each country be able to clearly delineate what is the best approach to mitigating the local challenges.

Effectiveness and coherence

The efforts in India at the field level appear to be highly coherent and effective in that by focusing on the existing governmental structures of government, and enabling women to more actively participate in local governance, women are better able to impact their own socio-economic livelihoods. In India, many decisions regarding socio-economic assistance schemes are made at the local government level. The degree to which other efforts such as support for advocacy and/or training at the macro level (e.g. Mussoorie) are effective, are less clear. The degree to which these efforts have been effective is impossible to determine at this stage, and they don't appear to fall within a clear structure enabling long-term sustainability.

The Hunger Project (THP) component was designed to complement the support through the Indian Government at the local level. However, the implementation of THP and those of the government have not become synergized. Although THP's effort is very coherent and effective in terms of its own work on the ground, there was no coherence and coordination in relation to the other activities under the programme. Furthermore, given the administrative requirements imposed by UN Women, the disbursement of funds to THP is often delayed. While these delays are not purposeful they could have had potentially devastating consequences, according to THP, as they could lead to the halting of activities all together due to lack of available funds at the right time.

The degree to which research efforts will be actively used to nurture the programme activities is also unclear. While research has the capacity to play a key role in informing how best to respond to certain types of challenges faced, this requires that research questions be clearly tied to programme activities prior to the start of research. Otherwise, research findings may be ill fitting to the programmatic plans.

In Bhutan, all efforts undertaken with the exception of the support for the TUB research, and limited funding to a local NGO Renew, are very coherent and effective in that they foster clear established governmental mechanisms that are well established and have the capacity to support progress. The efforts are both at the local and central level. This enables the programme to support progress in the field of both gender responsive governance, and women's participation from both ends.

While the scope of the review had its limitations, the discussions and document review conducted indicate that efforts in the other countries are firmly embedded in the local government structures. This serves to ensure the effectiveness and coherence of the efforts in relation to broader governance at the country level.

Strengths and challenges regarding regional dimension

As noted earlier, the issue of gender responsive governance and women's participation in government are both very relevant to the region. There is of course a catalytic benefit of having efforts in multiple countries simultaneously however, whether or not this should be centrally administered as a single regional programme is less evident. Thus far the regional nature of the programme has not shown any clear added value. To the contrary, it has delayed start up in some cases and made administration more cumbersome. Here we make a clear distinction between: a) the need to support multiple country specific efforts in the region and having a mechanism for sharing knowledge on the country level activities; or b) having a programme that is administered regionally. The latter, as has been the case here, engenders much unnecessary intricacy and complication to the design of a holistic Programme Document, given the different challenges faced in each country.

One component of the current programme which had clear regional implications is the RCoE. This initiative was allocated substantial funds in the original programme budget, but has suffered from unclear goals. Different individuals and documents have described the RCoE in different ways at different times throughout the life cycle of the programme thus far. The RCoE could benefit, therefore, from a more narrowly defined set of goals and objectives that realistically cater to the local needs and which can be met by local research institutions. While there may be a benefit in having such an entity it is difficult to assess the degree to which it is feasible, relevant, and would have an impact, given the varied notions of what this type of effort would entail. If the effort is to be a repository for regional data this may warrant a broader, more regionally inclined, project plan.

Efficiency and cost effectiveness

There could have been significant improvements in efficiency and cost effectiveness by minimising costs associated with the start-up phase. The requirement to secure agreements with partner organisations during programme implementation resulted in significant expenditure, including the full UN Women support costs.

Assessing value for money was also a challenge. The budget allocations in the programme document were only based on outputs. There was no information on the activities expected and associated cost estimates. During implementation, financial reporting and annual work plans were undertaken as separate processes. Furthermore, there was no activity and output-based programme-based financial reporting. As a consequence, it was not feasible to assess the cost effectiveness of delivery. Efficiency was heavily compromised by the transaction intensive bureaucratic requirements of UN Women corporate systems and processes.

Performance and management of programme support

There are a number of factors regarding the performance and management approaches of the programme that leave room for pause. An examination of the MoU, PCA and other contracts concluded that some such agreements are not in line with the Programme Document. Hence, this further dilutes the value of the Programme Document and creates difficult reporting as UN

Women should report following the Program Document, while other partners will follow their respective engagement agreement (i.e. MoU, PCA, etc.). In turn, this means that monitoring frameworks are required as there is no common logframe covering all MoUs, PCAs and contracts. The logframe in the Programme Document is only used by the Embassy and UN Women for monitoring. Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR monitors progress against the seven deliverables in the MOU. Pakistan and Bhutan have their own monitoring frameworks. Although THP's PCA contains outputs, these are not in alignment with the programme logframe. Of the 11 major agreements (Annex 9, Appendix 6) only two have deliverables aligned to the logframe objectives (National Institute for Rural Development -NIRD, NRMC), and two make reference to the Programme Document (Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research - NIBR and Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration - LBSNAA).

The MTR noted that the current accountability mechanisms are relatively weak. This includes monitoring and evaluation systems, processes and reporting, as well as financial accountability systems. These shortcomings make it difficult to determine, in a quantifiable manner, what the achievements of the programme have been. Therefore, many of the conclusions regarding effectiveness and impact rely on anecdotal evidence rather than clearly delineated and quantified indicators of success. In addition to lacking accountability mechanisms, there was no evidence that UN Women or their partners were systematically collecting baseline or longitudinal data to demonstrate, in a quantifiable or qualitative manner, progress made.

Sustainability

Given that for the most part the efforts conducted by the programme are embedded as part of institutions that would generally support the same type of activity, it to a lesser extent (i.e., coverage/number) enables the programme activities to be largely sustainable. Some exceptions apply. For example, some Mahila Sabha's² have resulted from the programme and may or may not be continued in the absence of the programme. These types of meetings do not have a history or standing in the regular local governance structure. The use of motivators is also a component of the programme that while appears to be very useful, is new a direct result of the programme, hence not necessarily independently sustainable.

Additionally, research may be sustainable in that institutions involved in the RCoE are existing research organizations that could undertake research in the field of gender hence, the effort is theoretically sustainable. However, the actual RCoE's sustainability is doubtful since what exactly it will entail has yet to be clearly delineated and thus far, there seem to be no clear efforts of collaboration between different country programmes.

In Bhutan, all the efforts made with the government have been made to support existing offices or mechanisms and hence, if the programme were to end, the sustainability of the efforts is highly likely. Not only does the government support the initiatives undertaken, but there are also a number of other donors and institutions working in the field.

Recommendations

Here we focus on developing recommendations which aim to improve Norway's ability to support women's participation in governance efforts. In relation to the UN Women Programme, the following is relevant:

Achievement of goals

Any subsequent phases of the program will require a reformulation and a Programme Document that both streamlines the programmes goals, objectives and activities and takes into account lessons learned during this, the First Phase of the programme. Any reformulation should be

² See footnote 7

drafted in a manner that ensures that in the future the Programme Document serves as a clear anchor for the programme as it moves forwards. The development and design of any reformulated Program Document for subsequent phases should include all key stakeholders during the drafting process, and in doing so ensure buy-in from the beginning.

All MoUs, PCA, and other contracts that are established in connection with the programme in the future should be clearly tied to the Programme Document. This would limit any conflicting views or perspectives on the objectives of the programme, or the like.

UN Women should utilize a reformulated Programme Document as a clear and explicit guideline to identify activities they choose to become engaged with. Activities that fall outside the goals and objectives delineated in the Programme Document should not be financed with programme funding. Any funding to initiatives which have aims that fall outside those of the Programme Document should be undertaken as an exception, and only because the initiative is essential to further an aim clearly defined in the Program Document.

Ensure there is a monitoring and evaluation system and a performance framework agreed by all programme partners before implementation of subsequent phases of the programme start; and develop the M & E system and collect the necessary baseline and impact data so that progress can be more effectively measured and lessons learned can be more easily identified as the programme progresses.

Relevance in terms of national and regional contexts

- The programme should move away from an administrative regional approach to a national programme approach at the administrative level because it causes undue costs and make the programmes administration far more cumbersome than it needs to be. Hence, each national programme should seek funding unilaterally, but should include a limited budget line that enables efforts in neighbouring country programmes to exchange experiences through knowledge sharing mechanism such as workshops or conferences, and any other type of cross learning mechanism. Focusing on country, rather than programme, efforts would reduce the administrative burden at the Embassy, and also the administrative costs incurred by UN Women. Simultaneously ensuring that there is a common thread between countries (i.e, limited budget line), and a clear exchange of information and lessons learned can support a process of building a “critical mass” at a regional level that enables more timely progress in multiple countries.
- Violence as a form of resistance or backlash must be anticipated, and safety measures must be put in place within the framework of the existing programme. Some suggested measures under the scope of the current programme are:
 - Increase awareness on laws relating to violence against women and legal rights.
 - Facilitate women’s access to support services available in situations of violence.
 - Facilitate women’s access to justice through linkages with the police, legal services and Protection Officers.
 - Provide or facilitate the preparation of referral lists of available services.
 - Use women’s collectives to hold relevant authorities accountable to their statutory roles (e.g., recording FIRs/Domestic Incident Reports, initiating investigations, enforcing court orders).
 - Empower women’s collectives and EWRs to monitor cases where action has been initiated to address violence for adverse outcomes.

Effectiveness and coherence

- The programme should continue to focus primarily on efforts that are firmly embedded in existing government or NGO activities to ensure that they are coherent with the environment and effective (tried and tested).

- Efforts to exit from approaches that were built in as a “start-up” to serve as catalysts to support programme success should be built into future programme iterations. For example, a clear exit plan from using motivators, District Project Officers (DPO’s), and conducting Mahila Sabhas. However, this exit plan should be firmly rooted in local conditions. This means that while it should be thought about and planned for, it should not be implemented too early as premature exiting could set the programme successes backwards.

Strengths and challenges regarding regional dimension

- The RCoE should either be excluded from future iterations of the programme, or very clearly and narrowly defined so that it can realistically be implemented. This redefinition should include the preparation of a business case by MoPR, NIRD and State Institutes for Rural Development (SIRDs) which sets out the purpose and expected results, institutional framework for operating the RCoE, and resource requirements for start-up and on-going funding requirements of the RCoE. The decision on the future direction of the RCoE should be dependent on the approval of the business case.
- As noted above there is a clear value in having programmes working on similar issues in multiple countries in the region, but the administration of these should be handled nationally, as this would enable the design of programmes that far better meet the local challenges and are able to count on a Programme Document that clearly guides the efforts made.

Efficiency and cost effectiveness

- The Programme Document should clearly delineate activities and associated expenditure. There should be a clear line of accountability of funds tied to programme goals and objectives in order to better ensure cost effectiveness and accountability.
- Merge the Annual Consultation (AC) Meeting with the national Project Steering Committee meeting as a single forum in order to support the transparent management of the funds and deliverables of the programme.
- Put in place a system that enables the reconciliation of budget, commitments, advance and expenditure in order to ensure a traceable and accountable system; and which ensures administrative traceability for audit purposes (exchange rates, date stamps, etc.).
- Follow-up on the status of the contributions by UN Women (\$500,000) and NIRD (\$104,000) to ensure that their allocation, and use, is documented and utilized as envisaged.
- A financial audit system should be put in place which enables clear traceability from fund allocations to programme activities (i.e., progress made, benchmark achieved and cost incurred). This system should also ensure that financial expenditures are pre-approved.

Performance and management of programme support

- Accountability mechanisms should be clearly defined and mechanisms to implement it developed. Similarly, mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of programme activities should also be developed and utilized as a matter of course (see Section 8.5).
- The MoPR should be encouraged to participate in the development and implementation of the M&E and the impact assessment, as a way of studying the strengths and weaknesses of alternative models for empowering EWRs at the local level.

Sustainability

- The programme should continue to work specifically with government efforts where programme efforts fit well into standard government activities, in order to ensure long term sustainability

(i.e., efforts where the UN Women intervention serves to support and solidify existing governance mechanisms).

- Training material should undergo clear testing in terms of its effectiveness for imparting knowledge amongst EWR. This is crucial in determining the sustainability of the effort.
- THP should be funded outside the UN Women Programme. Being included in the programme has in no way affected other programme activities (i.e., THP experience has not been informative to other activities) and the actual operational activities of THP have been hampered by UN Women's more bureaucratic approach to fund disbursement.

Acknowledgements

The team would like to thank the staff of UN Women in Delhi, Thimpu, and in the states visited for their assistance and cooperation. In particular, we would like to thank Anne Stenhammer and Suraj Kumar for facilitating the whole MTR process, and Angela Iason for making the field visit to Bhutan possible. We would also like to thank the UN Women Programme Management team at the centre for their contribution to the governance, accountability and financial analysis; and the DPOs in Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha for facilitating the visits to the states. Their joint support was invaluable in the conduct of this Mid-Term Review (MTR). Additionally, the team would like to thank the Norwegian Embassy Staff, particularly Renu Wadehra, and Norad staff, particularly Janne Andresen, for supporting the conducting of this review, and facilitating our work with the Indian government. The Government of India - but at the central level and at the state level Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Rajasthan - were most helpful in supporting our work hence our gratitude is extended to them also. In connection with visits to meet women trained by THP we are thankful to THP's staff and their local partner institutions for facilitating these meetings. We would also like to thank staff at UN Women in Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh who made the time to speak with us. In addition, we extend our gratitude to all those who have taken the time to discuss the programme, and their work with us. These discussions have been invaluable in helping us understand the overall programme and the challenges faced. Above all our deepest gratitude is extended to the EWRs, and women generally, who took time out of their busy lives to discuss their concerns, challenges and views with us.

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Acronyms

AC	Annual Consultation
APARD	Andhra Pradesh Academy of Rural Development
ATR	Action Taken Report
AWP	Annual Work Plan
AWP&B	Annual Work Plan and Budget
BRGF	Backward Regions Grant Fund
CBO	Civil Society Based Organisations
CD	Capacity Development
CSA	Cost Sharing Agreement
CWDS	Centre for Women's Development Studies
DLG	Department of Local Government (Bhutan)
DPO	District Project Officer
DPU	District Project Unit
DT	Dzongkhag Tshogdue
EOI	Expression of Interest
EWR	Elected Women Representatives
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FCRA	Foreign Contribution Regulation Act
GAO	Gewog Administrative Officer (Bhutan)
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (Nepal)
GNHC	Gross National Happiness Commission (Bhutan)
GoI	Government of India
GoR	Government of Rajasthan
GRG	Gender Responsive Governance
GSSK	Gram Sabha Sashaktikaran Karyakrama
GT	Geowg Tshogde
IAS	Indian Administrative Service (IAS)
ICDR	Integrated Child Development Scheme
ICRW	International Centre for Research on Women
IIM B	Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore
ISS	Institute of Social Science
LBSNAA	Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration
LGCDP	Local Governance and Community Development Program (Nepal)
LGSA	Local Self Governance Act (Nepal)
LoD	Liaison Office of Denmark
LSGA	Local Self-Governance Act (Nepal)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFA	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoPR	Ministry of Panchayati Raj
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPs	Members of Parliament
MTR	Mid Term Review
NCG	Nordic Consulting Group
NCWC	National Commission for Women and Children (Bhutan)
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NIBR	Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research
NIRD	National Institute for Rural Development
NPAG	National Plan of Action for Gender (Bhutan)
NPSC	National Project Steering Committee
NREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
NRMC	N.R. Management Consultants, India
NWFP	North-West Frontier Province

PCA	Project Cooperation Agreement
PMEYSA	Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan
PR	Panchayati Raj
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institutions
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PU	Program Unit
QA	Quality-Assurance
RBHs	Rural Business Hubs
RBM	Result Based Management
RCOE	Regional Centre of Excellence
RD	Rural Development
RGSY	Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Yojana
RUB	Royal University of Bhutan
SARO	South Asia Regional Office
SDC	Swedish Development Cooperation
SIRD	State Institutes for Rural Development
SPSC	State Project Steering Committee
THP	The Hunger Project
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this Mid-Term Review (MTR) has been to **assess the progress of the UN Women's Programme on Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in South Asia as per the agreed Programme Document's stated goals, outcomes and outputs; over a fixed time period of 2009-2012.**

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- *Performance and management of programme support including risk management, results based management, reporting and financial management.*
- *Sustainability of the activities initiated.*

The UN Women South Asia Regional Office (SARO) Programme *Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in South Asia* under review here was born in 2009, with the aim of being implemented in India, Bhutan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. The programme was anchored on a number of international agreements, chief among them the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Norway, the programme donor, is a key supporter of gender equality at the international level and regards gender responsive governance as a top priority.

According to the *Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation (2007-2009 and extended for the period 2010-2013)*³, the government wants Norway to be a fearless champion of women's rights and gender equality; with the rights, participation and influence of women at the core of Norway's development cooperation efforts. Norway's aim is to insure the realization of the rights of women that are set out in international rights conventions, through boosting efforts to promote women's rights and gender equality in the international community and among Norway's cooperative partners. Norway feels this is vital in order to eradicate extreme poverty, one of the UN Millennium Development Goals. Norway concentrates on four thematic priority areas, including: 1) women's political empowerment, 2) women's economic empowerment, 3) sexual and reproductive health and rights, and 4) violence against women.

Concerning women's political empowerment, the Norwegian Plan of Action notes that even though the increasing participation of women at all levels of political decision processes gives ground for optimism, women are seriously underrepresented in governing bodies and decision-making at all levels. Formal and informal barriers prevent women's participation. Scepticism is common about women's decision-making capacity, even among women themselves, because the social norm dictates

³See Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Action Plan for Women's Rights Gender in Development Cooperation (2007-2009) Extended for the perior (2010-2013) available at web page: http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/UD/Vedlegg/Utvikling/Kvinner%20og%20likestilling/Handlingsplan_kvinner_Eng0510.pdf

that this is the domain of men. Education, awareness raising and mobilization will be key elements in any strategy to increase women's political participation.

Unsurprisingly therefore, at the international level, Norwegian humanitarian and development work generally adheres to two key requirements, gender inclusivity and anti-corruption measures, as a matter of course. Norway's systematic and sustained support for UN Women since the institutions birth fits well with Norway's general view on gender issues and its importance.

In India, the Norwegian government has a long history of involvement, and one that spans a number of fields including health, environment, and culture, as well as others. Women's participation in the political process in India has been one area that Norway has supported for many years, including before the establishment of the programme under review here. It is also noteworthy that the funds allocated through development cooperation to India have doubled from 15 to 30 million NOK since 2004 (30 million NOK is equal to some 5.4 million USD). The programme under review has been allocated in excess of 10 million USD since its inception.⁴

UN Women, which was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2010, has as its principal aim a focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women. The role played by UN Women in the region varies from one country to another. Some UN Women offices in the region focus all or the grand majority of their attention to the programme under review (i.e., India and Bhutan), while others are involved in multiple interventions (i.e., Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal). This programme was originally conceived as a regional effort with a single coordinating office, the UN Women Delhi.

The overarching goal of the programme, according to the Programme Document,⁵ was to empower elected women representatives (EWR) to make public policy and resource allocation patterns responsive to women's human rights. In order to achieve this overarching objective the following outcomes were highlighted in the logframe:

- **Outcome 1:** Laws and policies on decentralized governance and devolution of powers to local bodies strengthened in line with national commitments to gender equality in South Asia by 2015.
- **Outcome 2:** Elected women representatives in local government have the knowledge and capacity to transform and implement policies, programmes, and resource allocation for gender sensitive governance in 6 states (now 5 states) in India by 2015.
- **Outcome 3:** Key capacity development and media institutions and structures in India and South Asia strengthened to mainstream gender responsive governance into their policies and programme by 2015.

The above objectives were designed in support of the Theory of Change (ToC) (see

⁴ http://www.norwayemb.org.in/News_and_events/Development-Cooperation/

⁵ Although the document itself is entitled 'Project Document,' throughout this review we refer to it as Programme Document in order to have a degree of linguistic homogeneity since we consistently refer to the UN Women effort under review as 'UN Women Programme'.

Annex 10). The ToC starts from the notion that legislation which impedes women's political participation, and governments who fail to meet all their commitments in relation to women's human rights, and a lack of capacity development and media programs addressing gender responsive governance issues - are together the challenges that the programme should address. The ToC proposes that research, support for research initiatives; the strengthening through capacity building, lobbying and support of politically active women, as well as civil society; and the identification and support of promotional programmes addressing questions on the issues of gender responsive governance were the three general approaches that could, through a variety of individual activities, lead to a series of outcomes. These outcomes include: higher numbers of women involved in the political process as elected representatives, more efficient and effective engagement through the creation of caucuses, and generally supporting an enabling environment that fosters and promotes women's political engagement. All this was expected to lead to legislation that addresses the impediment to women's political participation, and the development of mechanisms to ensure greater political participation, as well as the development and support of key media institutions. These efforts are expected to culminate in the active participation of women in local governance and in the active implementation of Human Rights at the national level in South Asian countries involved in the programme.

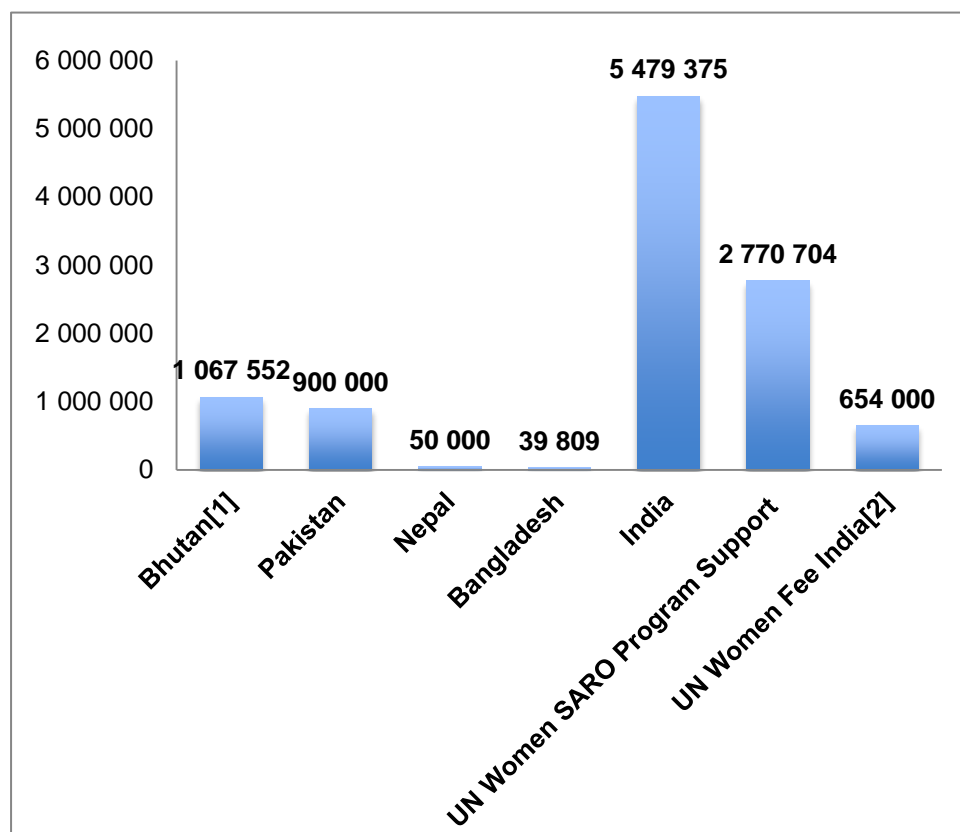
In terms of susceptibility to exogenous factors the Theory of Change (ToC) does not take into consideration the exogenous factors that could be considered as risks for achieving programme outputs and outcomes. The complexity of the programme makes it susceptible at a number of levels. At the regional level, the inability to capitalize on lessons learned and ensure that the programme benefits from the regional angle and justifies the administrative burden incurred is an important factor. Additionally, the degree to which the programme is able to successfully reach local EWR and support their participation actively, and in numbers that are likely to be catalytic, will depend on a variety of factors, not least accessibility to the field (i.e., access to some areas that are far away and have limited access infrastructure is difficult).

In terms of the ToC, other factors that can threaten the programme's ability to attain its goals in the prescribed time include, for example: lengthy electoral processes that may limit the programmes ability to effectively work on certain areas for a period of time (e.g., capacity building has been halted preceding election) in order not to infringe on the election itself; complex legal processes that challenge the programmes ability to generate visible change; and lastly, the ability of the media to effectively reach the target audience. Overall, the ToC assumes the context to be the same at the grassroots levels in all villages, blocks, districts and states. The ToC further assumes a stand-alone implementation without the need for anchoring the programme with other ongoing and planned initiatives for empowering EWRs. Furthermore, the ToC is grounded on the assumption that all activities and outputs would have a regional impact where in reality, over 90% of the programme funds were directed towards country specific activities.

1.1 Financial support

The programme is mainly funded by the Norwegian government (\$10 million USD), and supplemented by contributions from UN Women (\$500,000 USD) and by the National Institute for Rural Development (NIRD) (\$104,000 USD). The budget allocation to the different countries is detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1 - Allocations and commitments entered into 2010-2011 in USD



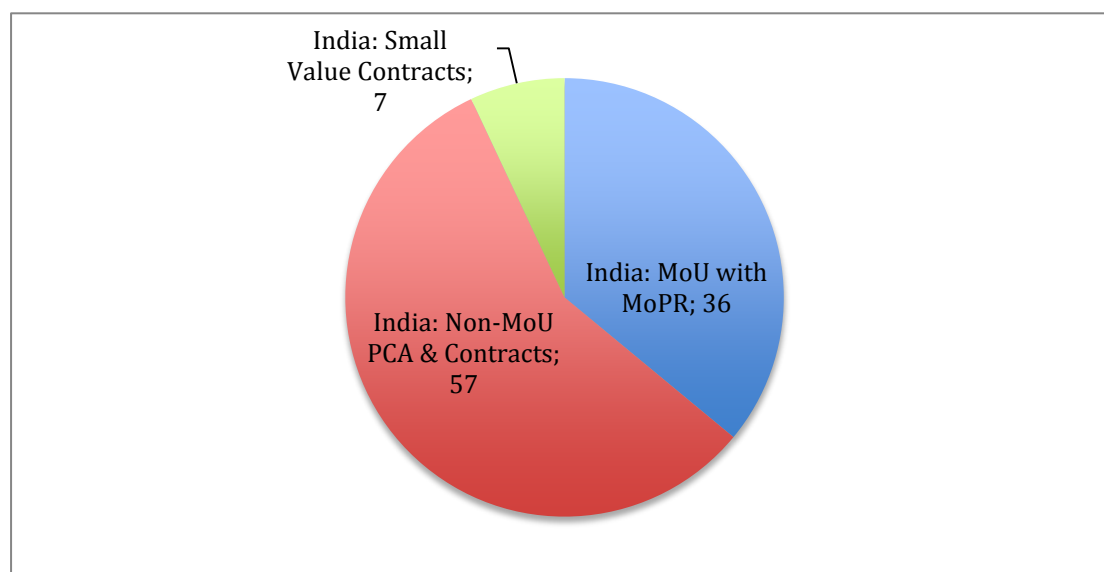
1] The actual budget allocation for Pakistan and Bhutan has been \$963,000 and \$1,373,792 USD respectively.

2] This line item includes UN Women Programme Support Costs and the UN Women Fee of 7%.

Table 1 shows that while this is a regional programme, the majority of the funds are channelled to efforts in India. Notably activities in India have been operationalized for longer and have had a wider outreach (i.e., states) than in other countries.

A more detailed examination of the funding allocation in India shows that the majority of funds are disbursed to institutions and organizations that have Project Cooperation Agreements (PCA), including substantial funding to The Hunger Project (THP). This is followed by a sizable disbursement to the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR), UN Women’s main partner in India (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 - Allocation within India and commitments entered into 2010-2011(MoU with MoPR and State PCA)⁶



1.2 Report structure

This report is divided into seven chapters, including the Introduction. Chapter 1 focuses on delineating the objections of the MTR, providing a limited overview of the project. Chapter 2 focuses on the context within which the programme operates. This chapter focuses primarily on India and Bhutan, but also, even if to a lesser extent, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan. The chapter ends with a delineation of the type of activities that are undertaken by the programme. Chapters 3-6 focus on the different abilities of the programme. Each of these four chapter focuses on a single ability (i.e., be, organize, relate and do). Chapter 7 presents the recommendations arrived at by the review team. Twelve Annexes support the document and findings herein. These include the ToR in annex 1, field trip details in annex 2; the details of the methodology employed including team structure and study limitations as well as a Guide to the questions that were asked during the MTR are found in annex 3. Annex 4 presents the bibliography of documents reviewed, annex 5 provides a list of interviewees. Annex 6 is composed of the case studies for the states visited in India, while annex 7 is devoted exclusively to governance and accountability and annex 8 focuses on Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting. Annex 9 contains support material cited herein which are directly references in annex 7 and 8 is also included. Annex 10 provides a copy of the ToC which has served as the basis for the programme and Annex 11 presents the basic institutional features of the Panchayati Raj system of government. The last annex, Annex 12,⁷ is a note from UN Women outlining their comments to this report.

⁶ This data is based on budget, results and expenditure statement, and contractors list dated 10 November, 2012, provided by the PU.

⁷ It is important to highlight that factual errors noted in annex 12 have been corrected prior to printing.

2.0 Where the Project Works - Context

The contextual parameters that may better explain the situation in each of the countries included in this programme is presented here. Understanding in broad terms the contexts faced by the programme, and there in the challenges faced by implementers, is important to both facilitate an understanding of what can be achieved by this type of programme and highlight areas that require attention in order to maximise the possible impact of this type of undertaking. Here particular focus is placed on India and Bhutan, which is where this MTR focused most of its attention. However, the context of the other three countries is also briefly introduced.

2.1 India context

India has a federal system of government with a national Parliament and executive government at the centre, and state Legislative Assemblies and a state level executive government. Powers and revenues are divided between the centre and state in accordance with a Constitutional scheme. In 1993-94, the national Parliament enacted the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Indian Constitution which mandated the setting up of a 'third tier' of elected 'local self-government.' These are the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in rural areas and Nagar Panchayats, Municipalities and Municipal Corporations in urban areas. While the Constitution provides a list of powers and functions that may be devolved by the state to local governments, each state is responsible for both formulating its own legislation and rules to operationalize the aforementioned Constitutional directive, and for aspects related to the practical devolution of power to local government.

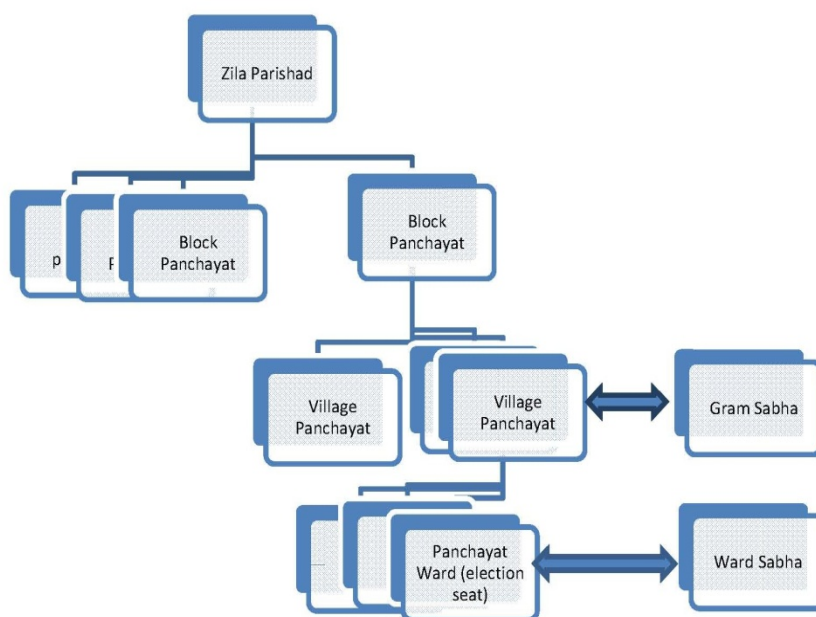
The 73rd Amendment⁸ directed state government to establish a three-level local government structure consisting of Panchayats at the village, intermediate and district level. All seats in the village Panchayats are directly elected by the respective territorial constituencies, which are known as 'Wards'. Intermediate and district Panchayats are composed of directly elected members from lower tiers of the Panchayat structure who are nominated to intermediate or district Panchayat. Panchayats may, in addition, include elected members from state legislature and national Parliament who can serve as ex-officio members of intermediate and district Panchayats in their respective constituencies. The Gram Sabha⁹ is a statutory institution of the Panchayats system. Panchayat laws provide for an annual minimum number of Gram Sabhas to be conducted in every Gram Panchayat area. In some states the law also provides for Ward Sabha.¹⁰ The structure of the Panchayat institutions is depicted in Figure 2.

⁸ The 74th Amendment pertains to the devolution of government in urban areas.

⁹ The assembly of all the registered voters (men and women) in the territorial area of the village Panchayat,

¹⁰ The assembly of all persons (men and women) above 18 years of age residing in the electoral Ward of the Gram Panchayat.

Figure 2 - Hierarchy of Panchayat institutions



The Indian Constitution provides for the reservation of seats in all Panchayat bodies for Schedule Castes and Tribes,¹¹ and for women. Seats reserved for Schedule Castes and Tribes are to be proportional to the total number of seats in the Panchayat. The office of Panchayat presidents and vice-presidents are also reserved in rotation for Schedule Castes and Tribes, and for women.

The provisions of the Indian Constitution pertaining to Panchayats are quite prescriptive and must be followed by all the states.¹² However, some states may add specific attributes to their implementation of the constitutional provision.¹³ States are also responsible for determining the population or territorial sizes of the village, intermediate and district Panchayats.¹⁴ The basic institutional features of the Panchayati Raj system are detailed in Annex 11.

In relation to devolution and the Panchayat system specifically, the Indian Constitution mandates the endowment of powers and authority to the Panchayats to enable them to function as local self-government institutions.¹⁵ Furthermore, the Constitution

¹¹ Historically disadvantaged castes and indigenous groups for whom seats in educational institutions and government jobs may also be reserved. Electoral constituencies are reserved by the election commission, and reservation is applied by rotation, so that no seat is reserved in two consecutive elections.

¹² Barring some special category states who may have their *sui generis* systems.

¹³ For example, some states legally mandate Ward Sabha meetings, while others provide for additional reservations of seats.

¹⁴ These boundaries are determined to some extent by the pattern of settlement, geography (i.e., the population catchment of a village Panchayat might be quite small in a sparsely populated state), as well as by administrative convenience.

¹⁵ Article 243G of the Constitution provides that "Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the Legislature of a State may, by law, endow the Panchayats with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self-government and such

directs the states to devolve powers and responsibilities relative to economic development and social justice generally and the implementation of pertinent schemes specifically; and provides a list (the Eleventh Schedule) of subjects in relation to which implementation powers and responsibilities may be devolved.¹⁶ Each state government, however, determines the process and modalities of devolution of powers and responsibilities. This has led to considerable variation between states in terms of how they effectively and efficiently they have transferred powers and responsibilities to local governments.

Women can participate in Panchayats through two mechanisms: (1) through election to reserved seats,¹⁷ and (2) by attending and participating in Gram Sabhas and Ward Sabhas. In some states, and in all Gram Panchayats covered under this programme, women may also participate through Mahila Sabhas. Women's reservation in Panchayats, which was applied in all states visited for this MTR, serve as a strong enabler to ensure more female participation and leadership at the local level. The women's quorum requirement enforced in Gram and Ward Sabha meetings (in some states) also serves to foster female participation in local government. Mechanisms to foster female participation in local government are, however, dependent on a minimum level of devolution of powers and responsibilities from the central state level to the PRIs. In the absence of devolution, training and grassroots mobilisation are insufficient to ensure the effective participations of women in local government.

While at the government level the participation of women is largely dependent on adequate devolution, socio-cultural patriarchal structures as well as the caste system and other social exclusionary practices also play an important role in determining women's participation in local government. Indeed, EWRs may not be allowed to fulfil their duties, despite the implementation of the governmental facilitating factors mentioned above. In some cases EWRs have their roles usurped by powerful men from the village or by male family members. Women from socially marginalised or disadvantaged castes and communities may, in addition to facing the more regular barriers attached to their sex, also experience challenges to their ability to participate

law may contain provisions for the devolution of powers and responsibilities upon Panchayats at the appropriate level, subject to such conditions as may be specified therein, with respect to: (a) the preparation of plans for economic development and social justice; (b) the implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice as may be entrusted to them including those in relation to the matters listed in the Eleventh Schedule."

¹⁶Subjects listed in the 11th Schedule are: (1) agriculture, including agricultural extension; (2) land improvement, implementation of land reforms, land consolidation and soil conservation; (3) minor irrigation, water management and watershed development; (4) Animal husbandry, dairying and poultry (5) fisheries; (6) social forestry and farm forestry; (7) minor forest produce; (8) small scale industries, including food processing industries; (9) khadi, village and cottage industries; (10) rural housing; (11) drinking water; (12) fuel and fodder; (13) roads, culverts, bridges, ferries, waterways and other means of communication; (14) rural electrification, including distribution of electricity; (15) non-conventional energy sources; (16) poverty alleviation programme; (17) education, including primary and secondary schools; (18) technical training and vocational education; (19) adult and non-formal education; (20) libraries; (21) cultural activities; (22) markets and fairs; (23) health and sanitation, including hospitals, primary health centres and dispensaries; (24) family welfare; (25) women and child development; (26) social welfare, including welfare of the handicapped and mentally retarded; (27) welfare of the weaker sections, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes; (28) public distribution system; (29) maintenance of community assets.

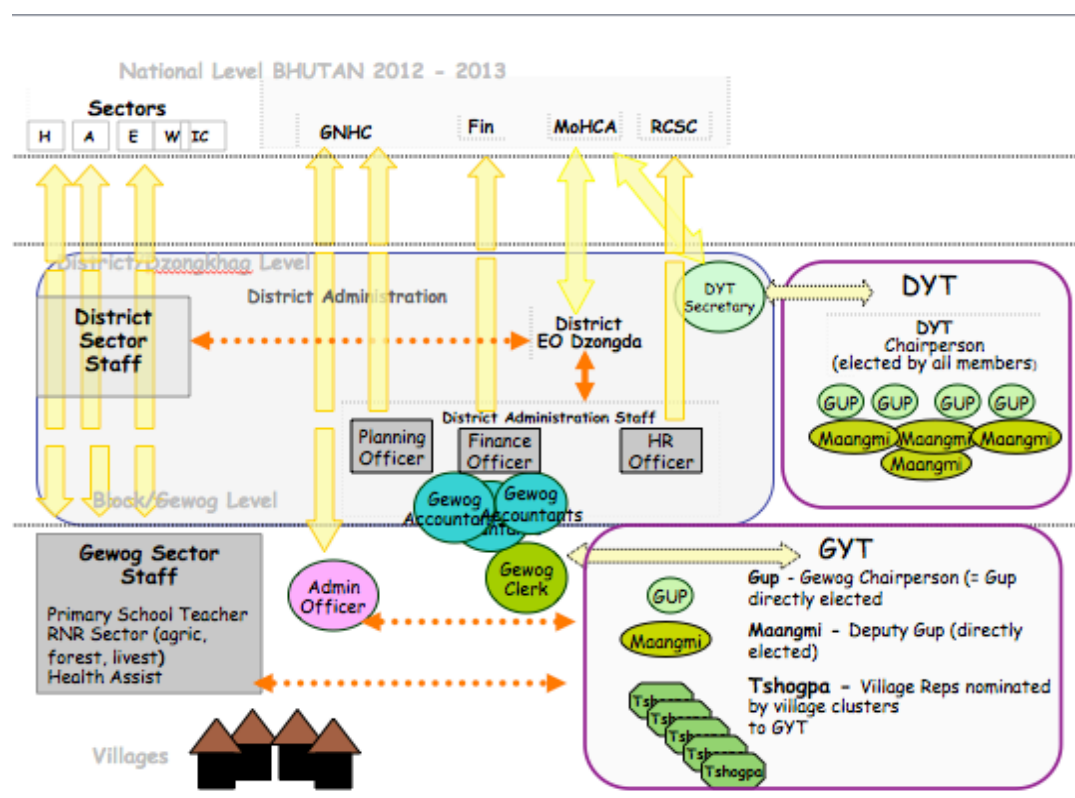
¹⁷ To a much smaller extent, women may also contest and win unreserved seats.

in local government as a result of their perceived position in society as prescribed by their caste or tribe. Additionally, women from low income families are more likely to be dependent on wage labour and hence less able to actively participate in Panchayat meetings or other related schemes.

2.2 Bhutan context

Bhutan is a constitutional monarchy with a history of decentralization that dates back to 1981. Since then, the central government has steadily strengthened the administrations of the 20 *Dzongkhags* (districts) and the 205 *Gewogs* (counties) through a process of devolution. At both district and county levels there is a development council constituted of elected representatives. Larger district may be divided into *Dungkhags* (of which there are 13), there are also 2 urban municipalities in Thimpu and Phuntsholing which are supported by the Gyelyong Tsho Administrations. Each district is chaired by the District Governor and includes the Gups and Mangmis while the county is chaired/led by a Gup. The Gup is supported by an elected Mangmi and an appointed Gewog Administrative Officer (GAO). Figure 3 depicts the Bhutanese government structure in full, including local government, district and national level. Despite solid efforts on behalf of the government to support gender equality, the aforementioned government positions are overwhelmingly held by men.¹⁸

Figure 3 - Government structure in Bhutan



Source: Provided by UNDP - Bhutan

¹⁸ At the local levels of leadership there is currently only one woman District Governor, and twelve women at the lower levels (1 Gup and 11 Mangmis).

Despite this huge disparity between women and men participation in elected government positions, Bhutan's efforts need to be commended. Their efforts include the drafting of the National Plan of Action for Gender (2008-2013) that has covered the years of UN Women programme implementation thus far. The Bhutanese government has encouraged women's participation in decision making at the local level since it started its process of governmental decentralization. This issue is highlighted in the aforementioned national plan of action. The participation of women is identified as one aspect to ensure good governance, and a number of other measures to increase a more gender equal society are mentioned in Bhutan's Guidelines for Preparation of the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2013-2018). Similarly, the Common Country Program Document Action Plan cCPAP 2008-2012 produced jointly by the government of Bhutan and the United Nations in Bhutan also notes the need for attention to gender and commends the efforts made by the UN in this area thus far, including building capacity within the National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC) and in drafting the National Plan of Action for Gender (NPAG).

It is undeniable that women government representatives are far outnumbered by their male counterparts. However, while there seems to be some resistance to female participation, this appears due to a belief that women should not be burdened with the matters of the community rather than a belief that they are unable to fulfil the tasks of an elected representative. This view, according to those interviewed, is primarily held by older generations and was highlighted as directly tied to the challenges of travelling/movement within Bhutan.¹⁹ If educating girls is any measure of how Bhutanese society sees the role of women in the country, there should be solid reason for hope. The Bhutanese government has been able to achieve remarkable increases in girl participation in primary schools within a very short period of time. Currently, they boast equal girl and boy participation at primary school levels, but this is not yet the case in higher education. Progress in Bhutan can also be misleading. While the government's efforts are commendable, it is important to note that participation of women in government and a gendered approach to government expenditure, for example, have much to accomplish still.

The interviewed EWR highlighted that the lack of women running for office in the first place was a key barrier. In Bhutan, unlike India, there are no systems for quotas or reservations for any minority group or underrepresented group, such as women. In fact, the government appears reluctant to address their gender inequality concerns by introducing quotas. Rather, they feel that supporting women so that they may be able to "compete" as equals is important because it will enable the long lasting participation and acceptance of women in roles which were traditionally filled by men.

Capacity building amongst women is understood by the government as a way to improve women's representation in government. The Department of Local Governance (DLG) is tasked with, amongst other things, supporting locally elected government representatives, including women, by providing them with trainings to enable them to both understand and execute their roles effectively. Given the geographical challenges faced in Bhutan (i.e., the terrain is harsh leading to time

¹⁹ Meetings are often far from the representative's home and that this means they must travel long distances, and may find themselves doing so alone. However, the EWR interviewed noted that younger generations were more open to the idea of having ERW despite logistic challenges.

consuming and generally difficult travel) providing adequate support and follow-up are daunting tasks, but ones that the office appears to be committed to undertaking.

2.3 Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan

Here we present some key contextual factors related to the three countries which were not visited, but which are included in the programme under review.

2.3.1 Bangladesh

Bangladesh is a two-tier parliamentary democracy with a unicameral central legislature. The central legislature or Parliament is elected through direct elections based on universal adult franchise for a five year term. The Parliament has 345 seats including 50 reserved seats for women.

The Local Government Ordinance of 1976 established a three-tier local governance system in Bangladesh, with Zilla Parishads at the district level, Thana or Upazila Parishads at the sub-district level and Gram or Union Parishads (local Government) at the lowest level. In urban areas local government is entrusted to Pourashavas/ Municipalities and City Corporations.²⁰ This ordinance first provided for the reservation of two seats for women members who would be nominated by the ten members of the Union Parishad. In 1993, the Local Government (Union Parishads) (Amendment) Act of 1993 introduced a system of indirect election for the three seats exclusively reserved for women members.

The Union Parishads (Second Amendment) Act of 1997 increased the number of seats in the Union Parishad to twelve and kept the number of seats reserved for women at three. It also introduced direct elections for the three reserved seats along the same lines as the elections to the general category seats. The Act divided the union into nine wards for the election of the nine general category seats (one seat from each ward). For the three reserved seats, the union is divided into three wards, each of which is formed by grouping together three of the nine wards for general category seats. Thus, while one male elected representative is responsible for one ward, one female member (reserved seat) is responsible for three wards. The responsibilities associated with the role of women are not clearly defined, hence women remain at the periphery of the local governance structure. Many women secure three seat because they are teachers or spouses of influential males or in rare cases empowered women through the network of women NGOs.

2.3.2 Nepal

The post conflict period in Nepal has been a time of many structural changes. Nepal is currently governed by the Interim Constitution of 2007, which was drafted to facilitate the constitutional transformation process from a unitary constitutional monarchy to a federal republic. The Constitutional Assembly, provided for under the interim constitution, was put in place pursuant to constitutional assembly elections in 2008. It was, however, dissolved in May 2012, by the then Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai, thus leaving Nepal in a 'constitutional crisis'²¹ where the federal structure is still to be determined. It is uncertain when the next general elections will be held and consequently when the constitutional assembly will be reassembled. Local elections have not been held since 1997 and hence, the role of local elected representatives

²⁰ Classification of municipality, city corporation, etc. based on size of urban area.

²¹ See <http://www.sunday-guardian.com/news/constitutional-crisis-in-nepal-likely-to-worsen>.

has temporarily been assigned to civil servants. Under these circumstances of political fluidity, there is a felt need for flexibility in terms of programme implementation in Nepal.²²

In terms of women's participation in governance, the provision for a 33% reservation in the constitutional assembly resulted in significant numbers of women participating in the constitutional drafting process. Women of the dissolved Constituent Assembly had advocated for 50% representation at all levels of state institutions. According to studies cited in Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR's) mapping study, conducted under this programme, one of the most important challenges faced by women in Nepal is their ability to ensure 'proportional representation in policy making and in the implementation in all mechanisms of the state.'²³

In addition to promoting women's participation in constitution drafting processes, the government of Nepal introduced the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) policy in 2009 to make local governance more gender responsive. Furthermore, the Ministry of Local Development has put in place a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Unit, and gender focal points are to be set up at the district level. Nepal also has an active women's movement at the national level. At the local level, research has shown that women's participation in community based organizations (CBO) have made them more aware of their rights and as a consequence, women have become more active in approaching and engaging with institutions in their local communities.

In Nepal, the sub-national structure is constituted by wards at the lowest level, followed by village/municipal and district councils respectively. According to the Local Self-Governance Act (LSGA), 1999, 20% of women should be elected from each ward. In the absence of elected local bodies, a number of mechanisms have been introduced to facilitate popular participation in planning processes. These include: (1) open and closed planning meetings at the village level; (2) all party mechanism at the village and district level (abolished in 2111); (3) integrated planning committees at the village and district level; (4) ward citizens forum at the ward level; (5) various subcommittees at the district level with mandatory representation from women's organizations; and (6) user committees.²⁴ These mechanisms have adopted different methods that are not all quota related, to facilitate women's participation. The impacts of efforts to secure women's participation in local planning processes are not well documented, however.²⁵

2.3.3 Pakistan

Pakistan is a society where gender plays a key role generally, and specifically influences division of labour. This means that traditionally women are not regarded as the "decision" makers in society. According to UN Women documentation (Concept Paper dated August, 2012), "Pakistan has shown increased levels of commitment towards gender equality through formulating policies and ratifying

²² Interview notes from Skype interview with Ziad Sheikh, Gitanjali Singh, Purna Shreshthaa and Puja Jha.

²³ Haug M. June 2012. UN Women South Asia country review series on women's political leadership; women's political participation at the sub-national level in nepal. A mapping study.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

international covenants such as the Beijing Platform of Action, CEDAW, the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), UN SCR 1325, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) which demand representation of women at the decision making level at all levels.”

In line with this commitment, it is noteworthy that the Pakistani constitution awards both men and women equal rights and the government has implemented national and provincially based Gender Reform Action Plans (GRAPs) which aim to provide gender based reforms and planning on all levels of government. Despite the progress made, however, the UN Women document aforementioned highlights that “Pakistan still ranks 132 out of 134 countries according to the Global Gender Gap Report 2009, although in political participation, it ranks higher at 55.”

While Pakistan counts with a proportionally large representation of women in parliament, still much remains to be done in ensuring that women’s rights and issues more generally remain at the forefront of the political agenda. In 2009, a multi party Women’s Parliamentary caucus was established. This avenue has been instrumental in supporting broader political participation of women and promoting gender sensitive governance. This is a positive step towards broader participation, but linking to provincial and district level political participation has yet to be achieved. A focus on decentralization of government, which would place greater emphasis on the role of local level governance and enable the empowerment of the grassroots efforts, has been the focus as of late. This focus has also enabled attention be paid on a quota for women representation (33% at District Level, Tehsil and Union Councils). The introduction of quotas has enabled the participation of 40,000 women as councillors in Pakistan. One of the most recent efforts in the path towards decentralization has been the adoption of the 18th amendment to the Constitution, which enhances the degree of political autonomy of the provinces. While all these measures are very positive, the Pakistani government structure still requires considerable attention before gender responsive governance and women’s participation is fully realized.

2.4 Activities undertaken

The majority of the activities undertaken by the UN Women Programme under review have taken place in India or Bhutan²⁶. Hence, these are the two focus countries of this review. Below we provide a summary of the principal activities that have been undertaken under the programmes’ umbrella.

The GoI and UN Women partnership in India focuses on strengthening and enhancing participation of women in rural local government. Its specific focus is on the lowest level of government, the PRI, of the three levels of Panchayats. The programme focuses on the lowest levels of local government (i.e., the Gram Panchayat and the Gram Sabha). In this context the programme provides training and capacity building support to EWRs, and supports efforts to increase awareness amongst women of Panchayats, and more specifically Ward Sabhas and Gram Sabhas. The programme provides direct support for the participation of women in Ward Sabhas and Gram Sabhas, and supports a sub-set of Ward Sabhas and Gram Sabhas that focus on women’s issues specifically. As a part of this intervention the

²⁶ It should be noted that some activities have also taken place in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal.

programme supports Mahila Sabhas. The objective of Mahila Sabhas in this context is two-fold: to be of direct benefit to the participating community of women, and also to help organise their participation in Ward Sabhas and Gram Sabhas. In addition, the programme in India supports capacity building of local government officials and officials at other levels of government (to a more limited extent) on gender issues. The programme operates in 3-4 districts of five states in India. Direct programme interventions are concentrated in 50-80 Gram Panchayats in selected districts. Regarding support to governmental staff at other levels, the programme supports gender training of officers of the Indian Administrative Service attending the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration at Mussoorie (also referred to as the Mussoorie Academy). This latter programme component does not tie directly to the efforts made at the local government level. The programme supports research, campaigns and media advocacy initiatives that are considered relevant to the Gender Responsive Governance (GRG) in the local context, though this is also not specifically covered by the partnership MoU with MoPR.

In relation to the work conducted at the district level, the programme also supports THP initiatives for women's empowerment and mobilization within the local government structures. THP is an NGO that works in partnership with local NGOs in the states where the programme operates. The work carried out by THP is not administered through the partnership with MoPR or the PCAs with state governments, and is not directly linked to the programme's work through government agencies in India in any operational sense. Districts and Gram Panchayats selected for THP intervention may or may not overlap with those selected for intervention through the UN Women and India government partnership.

In Bhutan the programme activities can be divided into three main categories: research and studies, capacity building and technical support. In the research field, UN Women has most recently entered into partnership with the Royal University of Bhutan (RuB) and NIBR who are, on behalf of UN Women, developing and conducting research which examines the challenges faced when trying to increase the number of EWRs in local government. Prior to this partnership, UN Women had partnered with the National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC) and the Institute for Management Studies who conducted the study on "Participation of Women in 2011 Local Government Election". The effort in Bhutan has focused extensively on capacity building at multiple levels. The work on capacity building includes at the most basic level seminars and workshops on the importance of gender, and gender responsive governance targeting both EWRs and local elected leaders generally (i.e., both men and women), as well as appointed officials. Capacity building at the local government level has been conducted in partnership with the DLG. The capacity building effort also includes activities targeting all levels of the central government from ministers to assistants. These efforts aim to both highlight the relevance of gender, and provide government representatives and staff with the tools for incorporating gender issues into the practice of governance. In addition to building capacity directly with government representatives, the programme efforts in Bhutan will also include the engagement of consultant(s) who will provide targeted technical support on specific tasks. The most recent such effort is to be implemented in early 2013, and includes the engagement of an expert in gender responsive governance who will support the Ministry of Finance in the development of Bhutan's next national budget. In addition, the UN Women Programme has been involved in smaller initiatives focusing on advocacy and

Gender Based Violence (GBV) reduction activities. The grand majority of the efforts in Bhutan targets work with the Bhutanese government directly.

In Bangladesh the programme has undertaken a mapping study to develop an understanding of the progress of women in local politics in Bangladesh through interventions undertaken by Government, donors, development partners and civil society organizations.²⁷ The purpose was also to identify the gaps where UN Women has a comparative advantage to undertake interventions for the improvement of women's participation in local governance in Bangladesh. Based on the mapping study, it was decided that the programme in Bangladesh would focus on the role of women in the national Parliamentary agenda and in national politics more broadly.

At the operational level, UN Women in Bangladesh works in partnership with the Parliament Secretariat. They aim to build an information base for the women MPs on gender equality issues, with a view to mobilizing them in an all-party women Parliamentarians' network for advocacy on Gender Equality and Women's Rights. UN Women has undertaken orientations for women MPs and have developed policy briefs and hand-outs on the following issues.²⁸ They have also organised workshops, local exposure visits, and networking events for women MPs and are presently organising an exposure visit of Bangladeshi MPs to Nepal and India. The initiative has already achieved a consensus amongst women MPs on the formation of an all-Party Women Parliamentary Caucus in Bangladesh. The programme does not currently work with EWRs at the local government level.

In a next phase, the UN Women efforts seek to develop stronger links between women in Parliament and local government. The linkage between the national and the local will strengthen the political base of women in Parliament. The next phase will also advocate for a direct election system to be introduced in at least 100 reserved seats for women in the Parliament. These should be through direct elections and not through nominations. It is important to highlight that not all the efforts by UN Women in Bangladesh fall directly under the auspices of the programme under review here.

In Nepal donor agencies', including the government of Norway,²⁹ support for local governance initiatives has converged around the 'Local Governance and Community Development Program' (LGCDP). Initiated in 2008, this programme is overseen by the Ministry of Local Development and is implemented through CBOs and Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) with support from different UN agencies including the UN Women in Nepal. The programme targets women through the block grant system, and includes training and capacity building on gender issues and promotion for participatory planning presses. Although this programme was supposed to have been completed by July 2012, there has been a no-cost extension

²⁷ See: Reena Marwah et al, *Towards Gender Responsive Governance in Bangladesh – A Mapping Study*, UN Women 2010.

²⁸ Issues covered have included: CEDAW and its implications on Women's lives: Laws related to ending violence against women; national women development policy & Beijing Platform for Action; gender responsive budget; gender in national policy documents; international commitments on gender equality and their implications in the national context (e.g., MDGs, BPfA, CEDAW, ILO conventions on domestic work and migration, climate change policies etc.).

²⁹ Other donors include ADB, DANIDA, CIDA, DFID, SDC, GTZ, JICA, World Bank.

until July 2013, after which its second phase will start. Nepal also implements the 'action plan on the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820' aimed at encouraging women's participation in decision making related to conflict transformation and peace building processes. UN Women office representatives have participated in the Jaipur conference and interacted with the Mussoorie Academy and a baseline mapping has been conducted under the auspices of the programme. Not all these efforts noted here, however, fall directly under the auspices of the programme under review. Un Women functionaries in Nepal highlighted that the sub-regional exchange of successful strategies in promoting women's participation in local governance is highly welcomed.

In Pakistan the efforts by UN Women has conducted baseline reaserach, as has been the case in other countries in the region. Additionally the focus has been on working at the parliamentary level, strengthening of the women's caucus, and supporting national and provincial government structures that facilitate gender responsive governance. At this time there are numerous efforts focusing on gender and gender mainstreaming. These include efforts that foster the promotion of gender equality as a means to development, education programs, economic empowerment and programmes and projects which work directly with the government. These include UN agency programmes as well as other efforts.

In the table below (see Table 4) we focus on the range of activities that have been carried out in the different countries as part of this programme. While there may have been small activities that do not fall within the general category and hence have been omitted, the majority of the activities are duly noted.

Table 3 – Summary of programme activities in different countries

Activity or Activity Type	Description	Countries Where It Has Been Implemented
Baseline research	A number of individual research initiatives focusing on specific topics that have been understood as relevant to the local context. These studies have varied in length of the task as well as on the depth of the investigation.	Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Pakistan
Capacity building of EWR or support for the conduct of capacity building to support ERW	Trainings designed specifically for EWR that aim at either providing them with basic knowledge on gender issues and/or aims to build their capacity on aspects related to the fulfilment of their obligations as elected leaders.	Bhutan and India
Capacity building (or support for capacity building) of other government representatives	These trainings focus on gender related issues and include a variety of issues such as general trainings, as well as specific trainings on issues such as gender responsive budgeting.	Bhutan, India
Technical support to government offices	This kind of support can include the secondment of personnel on a variety of issues including, for example, legal affairs, international aspects, etc.	Bhutan, Pakistan
Support for the	Support for the creation and or maintenance of	Pakistan,

creation/consolidation of women's caucuses	women's caucuses at the central or state/regional government level.	Bangladesh, and Bhutan ³⁰ (), Nepal ³¹
Support for the participation of women in local governance	This includes works aimed at informing and motivating women to participate in the regular meetings in the local area, for example, in India participation in the regular Gram Sabha meetings.	India
Support for the conduct of additional village meetings that serve to enable women to become accustomed to community forums	This includes the support for the conduct of mahila Sabhas and special Gram Sabha's	India
Participation in media campaigns and/or documentaries	Either lead or take part in campaigns or documentaries which aim to make the population aware of gender related issue that affect the community or society at large.	India and Bhutan

2.5 Relevance of the UN Women programme

The relevance of the programme is multi-fold. First, at the regional level, a discussion and promotion for gender responsive governance is both timely and necessary. Most countries in the region show signs of underdeveloped governance efforts in so far as pertains to including gender aspects.

More specifically in India, given the variety of factors that contribute to hampering the participation of women in local government generally and the role of EWR particularly, there is a need to effectively support women's participation in local governance institutions. Women's participation in local government is first and foremost dependent on devolution of state powers, however, even if devolution takes place numerous challenges outlined earlier in Section 2.2, remain. Efforts to mitigate these challenges can include building capacity amongst women generally, and ERW in particular; as well as conducting activities to raise awareness about and help address patriarchal structures and social exclusion as highly relevant and necessary. This underscores the importance of the UN Women efforts in the India context.

Bhutan is a country that has remained quite closed over the years and where the government plays a key role in donor assistance. Hence, unsurprisingly, efforts in the field of gender generally and gender responsive government specifically, including the UN Women Programme, have been supported by the government. But more importantly, the government itself has taken an active role in promoting gender equality more broadly. This has meant that the UN Women Programme is faced with an environment that includes, supports, and even promotes the efforts undertaken in an active and systematic way. The efforts made by the Bhutanese government should not be interpreted as a lack of need for support, but rather embraced by the donor community as an environment where relatively small efforts can achieve clear outcomes if properly targeted and timed to work along with the government plans.

³⁰In Bhutan the effort has been in supporting the Network for Empowering Women

³¹ It is unclear if this effort in Nepal has had any interaction with the programme under review here.

Overall, this means that the UN Women Programme is highly relevant to the Bhutan context as it has thus far been able to actively support nationally driven initiatives. In addition, support for NGOs such as Renew, which focus on highlighting issues affecting women such as GBV, is also important to underscore the role of government in mitigating threats faced by women in attaining their full potential as individuals. Lastly, the governments involvement in gender issues and the way the government of Bhutan thinks of its own role in terms of gender means that on the one hand the UN Women Programme has a willing host, but also that the speed at which progress is attained in Bhutan is primarily set by the government. This can pose challenges to the UN Women Programme particularly in terms of meeting the programme benchmarks on time. To this end, extreme care should be taken to ensure that UN Women efforts do not alienate the government's support by promoting a speed of progress which is at odds with the approach taken and speed of progress set by the government.

The focus of the Programme is relevant to the Pakistan context given the local government structure (see Section 2.3.3 and 2.4). During interview it was noted that a focus at the central level was important in the Pakistani context in order to establish a framework that can later enable work at the local level. It is worth highlighting that at this time there are numerous efforts focusing on gender and gender mainstreaming in Pakistan. These include efforts that foster the promotion of gender equality as a means to development, education programs, economic empowerment and programmes and projects which work directly with the government. These include UN agency programmes as well as other efforts.

In Bangladesh, working at the parliamentary level appears to be relevant and ties in well with efforts by the Bangladesh women's movement to strengthen the role of women in national politics. The women's movement is advocating that women in reserved seats are directly elected, rather than indirectly by a college of elected Parliamentarians. Women's groups in Bangladesh are also supporting a proposed law that will mandate that political parties nominate a certain percentage of women candidates for national elections. The programme does not currently work with elected women in local government, though it proposes to strengthen links between EWRs in local government and in national Parliament in the next phase of the programme. In this, the programme would have to coordinate efforts with other international donor interventions, as well as with government agencies that currently work with women in local government.

In the highly fluid political context in Nepal, efforts under this programme are relevant in setting the stage for future work (i.e., mappings and identification of trends). Participation in training and conferences has also played a role in strengthening the foundations for future work. Simultaneously how this initiative can build on existing efforts currently undertaken in Nepal is key to ensuring the cohesiveness and relevance of the efforts undertaken.

As pertains to the relevance of the programme in relation to the priorities of individual stakeholders, a number of issues are worth mention. First, while efforts in the field of gender responsive governance and women's participation are very relevant to the local conditions, how this may be achieved varies from country to country. The varied needs and approaches have been touched upon earlier. As pertains to the Programme Document, it captures the priorities of all key stakeholders in India, but unfortunately did not do so through a consultative process during the drafting period.

This meant that some of the priorities identified in the document reflect one stakeholder’s wish and contravene another’s (see Chapter 3). This has led to the formulation of multiple additional documents that outline the individual objectives of partners (i.e., individual MoUs). MoUs are able to clearly denote the priorities of individual stakeholders, but this approach can lead to conflicting priorities between different partners. Moreover, other countries in the region outside India have not been part of the Programme Document and have identified their own respective set of priorities and approaches to respond to them. Overall, it appears that in Bhutan the effort has been primarily responsive to the priorities of the local government, and the same has been true in other countries. Outside of India the programme has been far more streamlined and therefore, there has been less opportunity for conflict between different stakeholders and what they individually identify as the key aspects that require attention.

2.6 Contextual factors and relevance – SWOT

Here we turn our attention to the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) faced by the programme which is specifically tied to the context under which it operates.

Strengths	Weaknesses
For the most part the efforts undertaken under the programme umbrella appear to count with the support of the respective governments.	The different contexts and conditions faced in each country make difficult the possibility of a regional programme.
Opportunities	Threats
<p>Given government support there is a clear possibility to provide support that ensures its sustainability by being adopted by respective governments.</p> <p>Bring together the experiences of different efforts in the different countries.</p> <p>Bring together the experiences/lessons learned of government and civil society.</p> <p>Advocacy efforts with governments from the different countries in the region based on the experiences/ lessons by the programme.</p>	<p>The time frames of the programme may be affected by government priorities and the difficulty of UN Women’s ability to meet its own benchmarks. This necessitates that UN Women be clearly aware of government timelines and work along side them.</p> <p>Government counterparts may not be supportive of UN Women’s inclusion of NGO efforts under the same programme framework.</p>

3.0 Findings - Ability to Be

In this chapter we turn our attention to the projects **ability to be**. In line with this aspect of the programme, our questions revolve around the extent to which the different institutions/organizations involved have been able to support the identity of the programme. The institutionalisation and sustainability of the programme generally, both within each country and as a regional effort; and particularly the South Asia Regional Centre of Excellence (RCoE) for Gender Responsive Governance, are issues explored in this chapter.

3.1 Documentation and design: determinants to programme identity

The programme is well established (see Introduction) as a three pronged approach to supporting women's participation in government. At the regional level the programme fits well with the international and Norwegian Agenda generally, and in supporting women's participation in government in particular. The Programme Document was developed based on a consultative process prior, rather than during, the drafting of the document which resulted in a document that included multiple points of view (different stakeholders), but did not resolve conflicting positions between stakeholders. In other words the lack of a consultation "during" drafting led to the need for subsequent documents between actors which are not necessarily in accordance with the Programme document. The consultation included multiple stakeholders in India, Norway and the UN System, but none from other countries in the region. Furthermore, the document is imprecise and hence enables varied interpretations. By extension, a wide range of activities can be understood as within the scope of the programme. These attributes have meant that the degree to which the Programme Document serves as a real guideline for activities is very limited.

In terms of programme documentation we have aimed to examine whether the existing documents serve to strengthen, weaken, or have no impact on the identity of the programme and by extension, its sustainability as a recognized effort.³² Some general observations regarding the programme's governing documents are important in order to understand aspects that have affected the programmes ability to establish a clear identity and be accountable. Generally both the chronology and content of a number of documents has not been conducive to ensuring a solid and recognized programme identity. The Programme Document (signed at UN Women Headquarters) contains information on funding sources, budgets, and the programme's logical framework and governance arrangements. This document envisaged three programme phases: the Inception Phase (6 months); the Implementation Phase covering six states in India, and building regional cooperation systems; and Phase 3 (including years 4 and 5) focusing on programme scale up, mainly to Bhutan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal, based on the experiences gained through the implementation of the programme in India.

In relation to programme identity and the role played by the Programme Document, and other key documents, the following is worth noting. First, Programme Document was preceded by the drafting of a Cost Sharing Agreement (CSA). The CSA includes information on donor funding, budgets, programme framework, institutional governance, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Second, the Programme Document did not lead to modifications of the CSA and was not signed by the donor.

³² The sustainability of the outputs and activities is deal with in Chapter 6.

This has, in effect provided for potential misunderstanding already at an early stage in the programme. Third, a non-financial MoU between UN Women and THP was signed in December 2009 prior to the approval of the Programme Document. This MoU makes no reference to either the CSA or the Programme Document, again allowing for misunderstandings regarding what role each actor is expected to play, and how their distinct roles should complement each other in support of the overall programme goals (i.e., as outlined in the Programme Document). Fourth, there was a significant time lag between the CSA and the Programme Document (16 months), and the signing of a non-financial MoU between MoPR and UN Women, which came twelve months later.

Fifth, as was the case with the MoU with THP, the MoU with the MoPR is neither aligned nor does it make reference to either the Programme Document, the log frame therein, or the CSA document. Indeed the MoPR asserts that the programme should be run in accordance with the MoU and not the Programme Document. The MoPR openly notes that it considers the Programme Document too complicated and hence, focuses their attention on their MoU exclusively.³³ Moreover, the MoPR has not agreed to the programme logframe and does not accept the inclusion of THP as a programme implementing partner.³⁴ Other concerns expressed by the MoPR include the lack of Steering Committee Meetings according to the predefined schedule. The MoPR also objects to UN Women's involvement in activities that are outside the scope of the MoU they have signed jointly. The MoPR feels that they have not been adequately involved in determining the direction of the programme. The MoPR finds this particularly troubling as it contends that UN Women has departed from the capacity development model that was originally envisioned, which focused primarily on the work of DPOs. The MoPR also contends that UN Women have recruited staff that may not have the desired qualities. Added to this, the ministry feels that NIRD and the SIRD are being marginalised.³⁵ As part of the MoU, the MoPR has articulated seven specific deliverables. The principal ones are training and advocacy for EWRs, and the establishment of an RCoE and research partnership.³⁶ Concerns raised by the MoPR are problematic as they threaten the relationship between key actors and by extension, the programmes ability to establish itself as a solid entity in the local landscape of work on promoting women's political participation and governance. In addition to the lack of clear and homogenous Programme Documentation other issues may also be responsible for the ailing relationship between these key actors. These include the lack of a clear understanding by all parties on the degree of involvement that can be had by the MoPR on seeming UN Women internal affairs (i.e., hiring) without affecting UN Women's status as an independent body. Extensive dialogue between UN Women, the Embassy and MoPR has helped to clarify some of the issues mentioned above.

Sixth, some eighteen months after the Programme Document was approved, PCAs were signed with five State Governments (signed between May and September 2011). The PCAs are financing agreements that are intended to complement the MoU between UN Women and the MoPR. Additionally, a one-year PCA was signed

³³ Communicated by Additional Secretary, MoPR at the meeting with the MTR team.

³⁴ Communicated by Additional Secretary, MoPR at the meeting with the MTR team.

³⁵ Letters dated 9/7/2012, 8/0/2012 and 9/11/2012 from the Additional Secretary, MoPR to UN Women and their responses.

³⁶ In their comments UN Women objected to this assertion. However, the letters from MoPR dated 9/7/12, 8/10/12 and 9/11/12 are evidence of MoPR concerns therefore, the MTR feel it would be inappropriate to disregard these issues.

with NIRD in November 2010. Subsequently, there have been four no-cost extensions, but the reasons for these are unclear.

Seventh, in relation to the RCoEs (Centres of Excellence in the respective countries) these have not yet been established fully as originally envisaged. Thus far, the most solid efforts towards establishing an RCoE have taken place in India and Bhutan. The research that has been thus far conducted in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal has been far more ad hoc in nature. In terms of the identity of the RCoE, it is worthy of note that there are no research guides that are intended to establish the research parameters of these centres. While there is an element of uncertainty as to how this should be developed, and it is regarded by UN Women as a work in progress, a limited but clearer outline of what is envisaged would be helpful in moving the effort forward.

Eighth, the rationale for a regional programme is not well articulated in the Programme Document. While it appears that the regional nature of the programme anticipated that lessons learned from the implementation of the programme in India would be scaled up and transferred to the other four countries, in reality there is very little that has or could be transferred. At the local level, which this programme is primarily concerned with, the political and social systems are different. Moreover, as noted above the consultative process that led to the Programme Document did not include non-Indian actors. Therefore, there was no “buy in” from other countries from the start. Considering the lack of participation in the design of the programme and the different realities faced in each country, it is not surprising that both in Bhutan and Pakistan where sizeable contributions have been made available through the programme, the funds are being utilised for the implementation of country specific priorities and results frameworks following country specific logical frameworks. The Bangladesh effort is also country specific although it has not yet been funded. In Nepal it is difficult to clearly ascertain next steps with regard to programme implementation, particularly in the current context of the political instability which prevails in the country. In short, documentations and agreements tied to the programme have not been designed in a way that ensures their automatic alignment and complementarity across borders.

Ninth, in India, the Royal Norwegian Embassy and the UN Women monitor progress made using the logical framework (Annex 10), during the Annual Consultation (AC) meetings. Beyond that, the Programme Document is not utilized. Rather, reliance on individual agreements is focused upon. It is noteworthy, however, that Annual Work Plans (AWP) which are called for in the Programme Document, are adhered to. However, while these activities have been generally approved, they been known to deviate from a clear alignment with the Programme Document.

Additionally, to program documentation, how funding is distributed can also effect the programmes ability to establish a solid identity. Hence the following is noteworthy:

- The share of the India allocation reveals that allocation/commitments to the states and NIRD within the context of the MoU with MOPR are significantly lower than funds directed for non-state activities (18%:30%).
- There is a 22% allocation in the Programme Document for the RCoE and the MoU with MOPR stipulates NIRD as the nodal institution. The agreement with NIRD (PCA) is only 3% (\$333,115) of the budget for one year. The PCA has subsequently been subject to 3 short-term no cost extensions for a list of services that does not include the RCoE.

All in all this means that while the Programme Document was intended to serve as a guide for the implementation of the programme, there has been considerable deviation from this document in other written engagements with partners, and this has served to weaken the value of the Programme Document and by extension the identity of the programme (e.g., lack of a shared programme identity understood and used by all partners as the unquestionable framework for the programme), guidance that such a document can provide and overall programme cohesion.

3.2 Implementing Programme Documents as a way to a strong identity

Here we turn our attention to how, or the degree to which, the Programme Documents have been implemented in a way that fosters the programmes identity or is able to create a programme identity. First, a disconnection between the outcomes and outputs in the logframe and country specific work plans (see Chapter 6) is apparent. One of the reasons for this is the paucity of analysis in the Programme Document on country context regarding the programme's location within the country's government programmes, donor strategies, the One-UN Agenda, and the different political and programme cycles in the region, and within each of the countries that are part of the programme.

Another challenge experienced during implementation of the programme, and which has hindered the programmes ability to establish a solid identity, arose due to the varied interpretation of the regional strategies outlined in the Programme Document. These cover a wide agenda and extend beyond the results framework in the logframe. There have been instances where UN Women has drawn on the areas identified in the regional strategies to inform decisions on activities to be undertaken by the programme. Some of these were perceived by the Embassy³⁷ to be outside the scope of the logframe. There were similar frustrations expressed by MoPR at the National Project Steering Committee and also in correspondence to UN Women.³⁸

As highlighted earlier in this report, the departure from the programme logframe in the agreements with the implementing partners has made the task of reviewing progress against the logframe very difficult. By extension, it has seriously affected the programmes ability to establish a clear identity (aim). Multiple results and reporting frameworks utilised within the UN Women Programme have led to a complex and transaction intensive programme implementation process. For example, there are two different reporting formats for EWR empowerment used by the participating districts and by THP respectively, instead of a single reporting mechanism towards the UN Women. Moreover, the results framework and reporting format is agreement specific and not designed for a collective reporting on capacity building. As a consequence, the only meaningful system to assess progress used by UN Women is activity level reporting.

Another implementation challenge that stemmed from a weakness in programme design concerns the establishment of the South Asia RCoE for Gender Responsive Governance. The Programme Document refers to it as the 'RCoE on Gender Responsive Governance (GRG)'. The MoU with MoPR frames the RCoE as having a narrower focus, 'Empowering Elected Women Representatives in Local Governments'. These different descriptions leave a key question, "What should the RCoE focus on?" The MoPR does not want the RCoE to tackle the wider agenda

³⁷ Minutes of Annual Consultation.

³⁸ Letters dates; NSPC Minutes of 18 November 2012.

implied by GRG, but rather should keep its scope limited to issues relevant to governance and women's issues at the local level. Since the Programme Document does not detail the rationale, purpose and institutional arrangements for setting up and sustaining an RCoE, here too there are varied interpretations of what this component of the programme should be.

3.3 Observations and perceptions on programme identity

In the previous sections we established that at the central level the programme does not count with either documents or procedures that would facilitate the establishment of a programme with a strong identity. However, these shortcomings may or may not be reflected at the field level since from an operational perspective a strong identity is dependent on the individual activities undertaken, and how different stakeholders perceive these.

The field visits in India showed that the programme is recognised by officials at the State Nodal Agency (i.e., the State Training Institutes), Zila Parishad and Block Offices. These offices appeared to be well aware of the programme and its goals and strategies as pertained to the work conducted locally. In some cases the programme is also known amongst district and Zila Parishad officials from other programmes, such as the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) in Rajasthan, and amongst project officers of other UN programmes and NGOs. In Tonk, Rajasthan, for example, the UNICEF district project officer and NGO workers from CEECODECON³⁹ were aware of the programme. This is not all together surprising since both agencies work with Panchayats and women at the district level. However, in other cases such as Odisha, knowledge of the programme was less expansive or inclusive to the extent that government officials claimed to be completely unaware of the work conducted by THP even though THP works in some commons area. However, district and block level functionaries are well aware of the programme and the opportunities it provides. Similarly, other UN agencies such as UNICEF commend the programme for its achievement but were not well versed on the work conducted under/by UN Women, but this can be attributed to the nature of their own work, which in the context of Odisha was not field-based. In Rajasthan, on the other hand, UNICEF appears to have been well versed with the UN programme work. At the grassroots level, EWRs and groups of women who we interacted with were also aware of Mahila Sabhas, Ward Sabhas and Gram Sabhas that were conducted with the support of UN Women. This, however, can be expected since we interacted with women who were direct beneficiaries of the programme.

In Bhutan, the programme was generally well perceived amongst institutions and organizations involved with it. However, there seemed to be little interaction between different initiatives, for example, between the RUB and offices of the government which are also involved with UN Women Programme activities. The RUB is in the process of creating a Centre of Excellence focusing on *Gross National Happiness* which will include a focus on gender issues. UNDP Bhutan is supporting the initiative by the RUB and has supported the inclusion of aspects which would enable the centre's alignment with the RCoE. The centre is, however, an independent enterprise that has benefited from the UN Women Programme with both insights, and by the existence of the RCoE notion. However, their current work funding by UN Women and future plans was unknown to other programme partners such as the different government ministries and offices involved with the programme. Similarly, different

³⁹ A local NGO, and THP partner, that also has other independently funded activities in the district.

government offices were not systematically aware of the support the UN Women Programme provided to other government offices. Moreover, the Gross National Happiness Commission (GNHC) was not fully aware of how the UN Women effort fit into other UN efforts in the country, or regarding gender specifically. However, it should be stressed that there had been a recent staff change at the GNHC and that this could be largely responsible for this disconnect.

Overall the Centre of Excellence was one of the outputs that appeared least developed in terms of both practical implementation and “identity”. Overall, it is hard to see at this stage how the Regional Centres of Excellence would or should develop as a single unit, or what this regional initiative should become based on the different perspectives had by the different actors involved. Indeed, at best it seems now that each institution will move forward independent and may or may not join forces with other agencies as needs may arise.

Although UN Women has undergone a re-structuration in the region, UN Women in Delhi will remain as the South Asia secretariat on issues related to Women’s equality and empowerment. This could enable the Delhi office to play a key role in relation to programme efforts in other countries. Thus far, however, there have been limited indications that the regional nature of the programme, guided from Delhi, has been a clear asset to programme accomplishments. Additional to challenges in communication, aspects such as the inability of Pakistani staff to gain visas for India has also truncated the ability of the programme to adequately share in their respective experiences. In short, there seems to be little or no regional identity to the programme thus far (see also Chapter 6).

3.4 Ability to be – SWOT

Here we turn our attention to the SWOT focusing on the programmes *ability to be*.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>The UN Women Programme has identified a large number of relevant partners and has established relationships and dialogues with them.</p> <p>The programme is well recognized at the field level by the majority of stakeholders (i.e., women beneficiaries).</p>	<p>The Programme Document has not been drafted in a way that serves as the cornerstone for all activities under the programme. In some cases local government representatives were not aware of the programme, its goals, objectives and time lines.</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>A new Programme Document and corresponding MoU could serve to ensure that in future the objectives are clear and regularly met, and that stakeholders have a clear understanding of what the programme aims to achieve.</p> <p>The existing dialogue with actors (see strength) should be used as an asset in establishing a Programme Document for the next face of the programme.</p>	<p>Actors who currently hold MoU may not be willing to openly examine the programme and redefine it in a way that is clear, streamlined and can be implemented without considerable delays. The programme identity is threatened by its inability to capitalize on each contribution and make each effort relevant to the overall objectives.</p>

3.5 Concluding remarks

The programme appears to be well recognized at the field level. At the activity/operational level it appears that in India, Bhutan and also Pakistan, activities conducted under the UN Women umbrella, such as capacity building and technical support to governments respectively, are rightfully attributed to the programme. Similarly, efforts in Bangladesh seem to be well received even though the effort is

relatively small.⁴⁰ At the macro level the lack of clear and consistent guiding documentation facilitating a single vision of what the programme aims to do may have reduced the programmes ability to have a strong common identity shared by all parties involved in the programme.

4.0 Findings - Ability to Organize

In this chapter our focus turns to the programmes ability to put in place mechanisms that ensure processes and procedures that can be replicated, that lessons are identified and solutions sought after and implemented, and that programme personnel issues and finances are clear and transparent. Aspects concerning performance and management of programme support including risk management, results based management, and reporting and financial management will be examined. Additionally, we also discuss the degree to which the different partner institutions are able to meet the organizational demands of the programme.

4.1 UN Women's mandate and institutional ability

The programme is implemented by UN Women, originally UNIFEM. The Programme Document establishes how the programme will be staffed and its governing structure (organogram). The governing structure includes the role of UN Women, and the role and composition of the Steering Board, Advisory Board and Programme Unit. While both the Steering and Advisory Boards stipulate for the participation of both India Government and Civil society representatives, and in the case of the latter even EWR, they do not include for the participation of non-UN individuals from other countries in the region.

The UN Women SARO office is allowed, under its mandate, to shape the design of the programme based on the needs and priorities of the Embassy on the one hand, and the expected deliverables of each stakeholder on the other. In India, this has enabled UN Women to use programme funds for activities which are not delineated in the MoU with the MoPR (see Chapter 3): for example, funding THP's activities.

UN Women has a dual role both as an executing and implementing agency for the programme (see Chapter 6). This dual role can limit UN Women's ability to provide impartial oversight and quality assurance of programme activities. For example, although in the five Indian states the state governments have nominated the SIRD as the nodal institution responsible for implementing the programme and the District Administration as having responsibility for the disbursement of programme funds, the PCA with state government stipulates that UN Women will share responsibility for implementation with the state government. Moreover, UN Women has directly contracted sixteen DPOs to implement the programme. While motivators are supposed to be appointed by the Sarpanch, there is provision in the ToR of the DPOs that permits them to appoint motivators in cases where Gram Panchayats have delayed appointments.⁴¹ Lastly, the DPOs are jointly responsible, with the district administration, for managing programme funds. In terms of oversight, DPOs report to government agencies and to UN Women. In terms of quality assurance DPOs are also involved in ensuring the quality of the deliverables in so far as they facilitate and support motivators and Mahila Sabhas, etc. These types of tasks are

⁴⁰ In Nepal the main activity undertaken under the auspices of this programme so far has been the preparation of a mapping study (*supra* n 23) hence, programme activities in Nepal is not discussed in detail in this chapter.

⁴¹ Annex 4 of NPSC minutes of 16 August, 2011, on terms of reference for motivators.

assigned to DPOs to ensure that programme activities are effectively implemented. Other examples of the dual role (i. e., implementer and oversight) can be illustrated by the advocacy work conducted by UN Women in parallel to similar work conducted by THP, which receives funding through the programme. Conducting operational work in this field can both lead to duplication on the one hand, and on the other and far more important it can create a conflict of interest on behalf of UN Women preventing them from being able to adequately evaluate the outcome of the work conducted by THP. Drawing on the minutes of the AC and NPSCs, the Embassy and MoPR rather than UN Women currently carries out the oversight and quality assurance of the programme. This is also problematic, particularly in terms of the MoPR as the Ministry too might lack impartiality given its implementing role and views of the Programme Document versus their MoU with UN Women.

As pertains to UN Women's ability to administer this type of programme, it is important to acknowledge that this is the largest and most complex programme that UN Women South Asia Regional Office (SARO), based in Delhi, has taken on. While considerable effort has gone into ensuring the adept execution and implementation of the programme, three factors have compromised the programme's performance. These are: 1) an over-complicated and vaguely defined effort (i.e. Programme Document); 2) inadequacies in UN Women's corporate systems and processes for programme based financial management, and; 3) lacking results focused programme/programme management systems and expertise.

4.2 Accountability and implementation

In terms of the UN Women's organizational ability to implement adequate accountability measures, there are a number of issues requiring attention. First, although the UN Women SARO has a regional mandate, implementation of this mandate through country specific activities in Bhutan, where UN Women does not count with its own office, could only be undertaken through the UN systems in operation at the country level. In this context the administrative reporting mechanism established by UN SARO adds a layer of administrative cumbersomeness. This is further difficulted by the lack of a performance monitoring systems aiming to minimise the risk associated with shared accountability. Second, in India, the governance of the programme has not run smoothly. The minutes from the ACs and NPSC meetings and correspondence from the MoPR to UN Women highlight a number of issues that illustrate problems in exercising accountability for deliveries. Moreover, the Embassy has spent considerably more time than originally envisaged overseeing the administration of the programme (see Section 4.1). In addition to the three ACs, there were four supplementary/extraordinary meetings since the first AC in April 2010. The additional meetings were called for by the Embassy to address issues relating to: a) partnerships and programme activities; and b) UN Women's procedures, rules and regulations on financial management of the programme. In addition, there were several major concerns about the content and process of the implementation of the programme including:

- UN Women's financial management systems for applying service charges and accounting for advances made to partners.⁴²
- Timeliness, accuracy and quality of presentation of budgets and financial statements.
- Absence of results based reporting and risk management.

⁴²We understand from UN Women that the procedure for applying the 7% charge has been addressed under the new system (IPSAS).

- Taking on activities under the programme that were outside the scope defined in the Programme Document.⁴³
- Concerns about the strategy and implementation arrangements for the RCoE and the role of NIRD.
- Proposal for implementing performance management and evaluation frameworks.
- Significant delays in the submission of programme direction setting documents, including the media and research strategies.
- AWP requiring several iterations before approval.

Overall, this review has been unable to identify a clear 'line-of-sight' between the objectives (expected results) in the Programme Document and the individual country agreements. As a consequence, reporting country level activity against the results framework in the Programme Document is a challenge. Moreover, risk management and reporting were not mainstreamed at any level. The state PCAs made UN Women jointly accountable for implementation. In addition, UN Women contracted DPOs to implement the programme in the partner districts although this was not envisaged in the MoU with MoPR, and there was no budget provision for these posts.

At the state level, accountability for delivery of programme activities is shared between the SIRD, the District Administration, UN Women appointed DPOs and motivators appointed by the Sarpanches. Aside from this, THP is responsible for accountability for delivery of its own activities independently of the aforementioned institutions. Indeed, there is no official tie between government activities on the one side and THP activities on the other.

Overall, it is not possible at this time to easily demonstrate clear achievements that could serve to further underscore the value of the programme and its position within the broader work in the field of political participation due to a lacking clear organizational structure that ensures adequate follow-up, and partitions responsibilities and oversight in a straight forward manner. This does not mean that achievements have not been made, but rather that documenting them is a challenge.

4.3 Reporting frameworks

Here we focus our attention on the reporting mechanism utilized within the programme. The reporting set up for Bhutan noted above, whereby the UN Women representative based in Thimpu reports both to the RCO as well as to the UN Women office in Delhi adds a layer of administrative complexity to the task.

In India, the 'conditions of service' of DPOs is governed by UN Women's rules for persons contracted as 'expert on mission'. The ToR is silent on accountability for managing the performance of the DPO, and on who is responsible at the district level for fulfilling the operational requirements to ensure the achievement of the ToR. DPOs are expected to generate weekly and monthly reports based on templates provided by the UN Women PU. These templates are not a clear mechanism to evaluate progress made, but rather an account of activities undertaken. However, it is unclear as to who is accountable for monitoring the quality of DPO reporting, or for

⁴³ While it is true that in the majority of cases the work plan was agreed upon, there were occasions where the contribution made by activities to outputs were unclear and in the minutes of 30 March 2011 and 13 February 2012, the Embassy reiterated the importance of focusing on the original logframe and Programme Document as the basis for work to be conducted.

building their capacity in cases where the reporting is weak. It is also unclear as to who should follow-up on missing reports. The MTR team noted that the reporting is not systematic (i.e., there are many missing reports), and that no individual office within UN Women appeared tasked with ensuring that the reporting becomes more systematic and accurate. Moreover, less than 50% of the DPO reports made available to the MTR team contained data that allowed for the development of case studies, and/or identification of lessons learned. However, some of them were useful in order to facilitate our understanding of what has taken place at the field level.

4.4 Organizational ability of implementing partners

There is some implementation/responsibility overlap between different partner agencies and UN Women, here the focus is on the different roles played by partner agencies/institutions and the degree to which their current organizational capacity allows them to adequately fulfil their role within the programme.

4.4.1 In India

The SIRD⁴⁴ has been appointed as State Nodal Agencies for the programme by the participating state governments in terms of their respective PCAs. The SIRDs have direct institutional links with the main government partner, the MoPR, as well as with their respective state governments and hence its role appears fitting. Moreover, the SIRDs have capacity and experience conducting rural capacity building programmes.

- In Andhra Pradesh the SIRD had 3-4 staff, including the State Nodal Officer who was involved with the implementation of this programme, and two training staff covering the training and outreach needs of 5-6 districts each. According to the state nodal officer in Andhra Pradesh, the SIRD intends to expand its outreach capacity by posting training officers in each Zila Parishad office. The Andhra Pradesh SIRD is responsible for monitoring the implementation of, and adherence to, the programme's AWP.
- In Odisha, in addition to the State Nodal Officer, the SIRD also had a full time programme officer responsible for the implementation of this programme within the state (4 districts, with 2 recently selected districts). A detailed monitoring system requiring each DPO to report on their activities on a monthly basis is being used. In addition, a logframe to monitor the work of the DPOs was under development at the time of the Mid-Term Review. The SIRD in Odisha counts with three extension training centres throughout the state.
- In Rajasthan, there was only one staff member working on the UN Women programme. She was assisted in her role by two junior programme staff contracted for the UNDP CDLG programme.⁴⁵ While the Rajasthan state nodal officer herself had a deep commitment to women's issues and gender responsive governance at the Panchayats level, and a solid reputation as a capable trainer, the limited staff available made it impossible for the SIRD to adequately monitor or evaluate the programme's activities.
- All three SIRDs had in-house training facilities and hostels, and SATCOM⁴⁶ systems for rolling out training in remote areas via satellite link. All three SIRDs also had in-house capacity to prepare training modules and tools.

⁴⁴ SIRD is a generic name that applies to each of the state institutes established under the capacity building umbrella of MoPR. Some SIRDs have specific names, such as Andhra Pradesh Academy of Rural Development and Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj Evam Gramin Vikas Sansthan in Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan respectively.

⁴⁵ Due to end on the 31st of December 2012

⁴⁶ A satellite communication system.

At the **district level in India** the Nodal Officer is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Zila Parishad. The programme itself is implemented by Zila Parishad offices (i.e., the district Panchayat's executive office) in Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan, and by the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) in Odisha, and the activities undertaken are to adhere to the AWP. The actual implementation of activities as per the AWP is to be monitored by the District Project Unit (DPU), which is headed by the District Collector.

The Zila Parishad or DRDA office is responsible for the management of local development funds,⁴⁷ for monitoring Panchayat activities, and has oversight over both Block Office and Panchayat office staff. Zila Parishad and DRDA offices are subordinate to the District Collectorate in institutional hierarchy, but at least partially autonomous and do not require approval from the District Collector for his/her activities. Managing the programme through the Zila Parishad office is fitting with the office's other responsibilities. By and large the field visits showed that District Collectors appeared to have few ties to the operational aspects of the programme and limited understanding of/commitment to the programme's goals, strategies or activities. Indeed, among the District Collectors interviewed during the MTR none were unaware of the AWP or of the goals, strategies or activities of the programme (see also Chapter 3). Also notable was that amongst states visited only Andhra Pradesh had DPU that had been both established, and which had had meetings.

At the **ground level**, in addition to the more formally established roles noted above, the programme has also availed itself of **motivators**. Motivators do not have a role outside the programme, but rather are engaged for the sole purpose of supporting the implementation of the programme. Motivators are selected from amongst the village population and are remunerated.

The role of motivators, which can be broadly described as awareness raisers as their principal duty is to engage with the local population to ensure greater participation in local government, is a role that has been created to support the activities of the UN Women programme. While motivators appear to play a central role in improving the chances of success of the UN Women programme, the creation of these positions is contentious. Some argue that this is a position that is not sustainable as it currently does not form part of the local government structure, while others argue that the costs incurred are minimal and are outweighs the benefits. The mechanism employed for selecting motivators varies and is not all that clearly stipulated. The absence of clear guidelines that can be implemented across states leaves room for the development of systems of patronage.

The Hunger Project has, despite the MoPR's objections, been funded through the UN Women Programme from the start. THP also, like the SIRD, provides trainings and capacity building at the local level. Their model of work includes the development of long term relationships with local organizations (i.e., NGOs, grass root organizations) that are able to provide training to EWRs based on material that has been developed by THP. They engage with numerous women volunteers who also fulfil tasks such as those carried out by motivators, but unlike motivators, they are provided with no remuneration. The scale of the work conducted by THP is far smaller than the efforts conducted by the government counterparts. This is likely to have implications both for what THP can accomplish, as well as how it accomplishes its aims. Overall it appears their organizational burden is smaller due to their more limited objectives in terms of coverage.

⁴⁷ Funds that are in the domain of Panchayats.

Local level implementing institutions are engaged both by THP (see above), as well as by SIRD in order to provide training at the ground level. These institutions are many and hence not listed here. However, it is important to note that they are selected because they are locally well established, are credible, and are able to impart the training as required. In some cases (e.g., Gajapati, Odisha), the same institution is utilized by both the SIRD and THP to conduct trainings locally.

4.4.2 In Bhutan

From an organizational perspective, all UN Women partners in Bhutan are administratively well-established entities (i.e., the RUB, Renew and offices of the government). The size of the country, small population density and relatively streamlined government structures also support a very streamlined organizational structure. This facilitates the implementation of programmes and projects and enables, in this case, UN Women to have a relatively clear line-of-sight linking their engagement with the end user/beneficiary.

4.5 Ability to organize – SWOT

Here we turn our attention to the SWOT focusing on *ability to organize*.

Strengths	Weaknesses
The programme counts with highly appropriate partnerships on the ground (implementers).	There is a lack of a clear and solid reporting framework that can support the introduction of lessons learned.
Opportunities	Threats
<p>The identification of strong institutions, for example in Bhutan, has been a clear asset to the programme's ability to have clear organizational structures and clear line-of-sight to outputs. This can be used as an example as the programme expands.</p> <p>In India, partnerships with SIRDs provide an opportunity to infuse existing trainings on local governance with a gender perspective.</p>	The dual role (implementer and overseer) of some of the actors (i.e., UN Women, MoPR) can threaten the ability of the programme to conduct independent and impartial evaluation of programme activities.

4.6 Concluding remarks

The UN Women Programme has identified some very relevant partnerships on the ground. This has been an asset in terms of implementing programme objectives. However, the organizational ability within UN Women has been truncated by a lack of a clear division of tasks and assignment for responsibilities in relation to its partners in India. Not having these clear stipulations can lead to shortcomings in terms of outputs and limits the UN Women's ability to provide independent oversight over activities at the field level. It also makes for unnecessary delays. Clarity, for example, between what is the responsibility of each partner, UN Women on the one side and local counterparts on the other, is important to ensure that activities are executed, monitored, evaluated and modified (if need be) in an efficient and effective way.

In Bhutan where the partners are fewer and the interventions more straight forward, UN Women has been able to capitalize from strong institutions with solid organizational structures.

One of the main UN Women organizational shortcomings of this programme is the lack of a clear and solid reporting framework that can be actively used to support the introduction of lessons learned. This is one tool that could be instrumental in ensuring that UN Women is able to clearly identify, and act upon, lessons learned in a timely and effective manner.

5.0 Findings - Ability to Relate

In this chapter we focus on the programmes ability to build relationships between different stakeholders which support both the goals of the programme directly, and which enables the programme's work to be implemented in a manner that maximizes its impact and sustainability. This section will also examine the value of the regional dimension of the programme.

5.1 Relationships at the regional level

The relationship between **UN Women offices in India and other offices in the region** (i.e., Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan) is a key aspect of the programme. One of the expected benefits identified early on, with creating a regional rather than country only programme, was the opportunity of the different offices to share their experiences and lessons learned and thereby promote the dynamic improvement of the programme. However, there is little evidence to suggest that this sharing of experiences has materialized. Some offices interviewed noted that limited exchanges had occurred, but the effort was not systematic and did not fit into a well established mechanism. There is, however, significant potential for information exchange under the auspices of this programme.

The India office has conducted unilateral follow-up of the different country programmes. In Bhutan the effort is administratively tied to the India office (see Chapter 3) hence, the relationship is far more consistent than with other country programmes. In Pakistan and Bangladesh the India office's involvement has been tied to supporting the establishment of the programme.

One mechanism that could have been used to support the exchange of experiences is the RCoE. However, aside from the efforts in Bhutan where the national RCoE counterpart is being established within the RUB and the commitment on behalf of NIRD, there has been no effort to create similar bodies elsewhere in the region. While the RCoE is sighted, as noted by UN Women, as a success, it is also important to stress that the "regional" nature and impact of the research work has yet to materialize.

5.2 Relationship between UN Women and the Gol

The relationship between UN Women and the central Gol has varied over time. At the time of this MTR the relationship was not very encouraging (see Chapter 3).⁴⁸ Despite this discord the programme fits well into both the national decentralization effort and the women's reservation system. At this time the Gol generally has schemes and initiatives that support Panchayat capacity building and involve Panchayats in local planning and implementation hence, the UN Women Programme is able to support these initiatives. At the state level the relationship between the UN Women DPO and the state and district government representatives seems to be positive, and with broad alignment on work plans, activities and tasks.

5.3 Relationship between UN Women and civil society

THP projects were included in the UN Women Programme, at the request of the donor, in an effort to ensure that THP's approach to capacity building at the local

⁴⁸Indeed the comments to this report suggest that the relationship between the UN Women and the MoPR has improved. However, the difficulties encountered are still noted as they are widely documented in programme correspondence, primarily during 2012.

level could be replicated by actors. The expectation from the donor was that THP would be included in programme discussions and that their long experience in the field of capacity development amongst EWR could inform other efforts (i.e., THP approach/methodology used in training). However, the relationship has developed in quite a different way.⁴⁹ THP essentially gets funding through UN Women but they do not partake in the PSC although their participation is noted in the Programme Document. They are not involved in the work done by UN Women in other countries and above all are not officially recognized by the MoPR as a partner to the programme (i.e., THP is not mentioned in the MoU with the MoPR). In short, the relationship between THP and other actors in the programme resulting from this programme's activities is limited to non-existent. It is important to highlight that in some cases THP does have direct contact with institutions or organizations which are involved in some aspect of the UN Women Programme, but these relationships are bilateral and in no way resulting from efforts carried out within the UN Women Programme. For its part, THP regards UN Women as one additional donor and conducts its activities in the same manner it has done in the past. They note, however, that their ability to access funds in a timely fashion has worsened since Norway started to channel its contribution through UN Women; that UN Women's administrative bureaucracy and fund distribution system hinders THP's ability to carry out their activities in a timely fashion.

NIBR and International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW) have both been involved in research activities. The relationships between UN Women and these organizations are bilateral and output driven (i.e., engaged to pursue research questions). Research institutions are not involved in other components of the programme nor aware of how their findings will be streamlined into the programme, although UN women stresses that findings will be used and have in some cases (see chapter 6.2.1). Research can be a valuable tool, however having a clearer picture from the onset of how any one research effort is expected to inform activities on the ground would be an asset to the programme.

5.4 Relationship between UN Women and the actors in Bhutan and other countries carrying out programme activities

In **Bhutan**, the relationship with the central government has been positive thus far. The Bhutanese government has taken an active role in pursuing the gender question locally. They have conducted a series of efforts to determine how best Bhutan may move forward in order to achieve a more gender sensitive and gender equal society. While it appears that society at large does not systematically object to women's participation in the political process, statistically few women do. The government's commitment, which virtually guarantees support for a long-term effort, is a positive sign for ensuring that interventions are effective and sustainable. The size and complexity of the programme is miniscule compared to its India counterpart. This is likely to be one factor that has contributed to a more fluid and cooperative relationship between the UN Women effort and the Bhutanese government. One aspect in the relationship between UN Women and its Bhutanese counterparts that is noticeable is the focus on bilateral relationships between UN Women and individual actors (i.e., UN Women and the RUB, or UN Women and Renew, or UN Women and the Department for National Budgets). This has meant that there has been little

⁴⁹ In comments to this report UN Women notes that they have made solid effort to attempt to include THP in broader programme discussion. We do not hold UN Women accountable for the lack of cooperative work, but noted here as a relevant point where the objective of the inclusion of THP, as pertains to the donor, has sadly not materialized.

exchange between partners locally. Government bodies often come together and work jointly on issues hence, here the lack of UN Women led efforts to support collaborative work has been less noticeable. However it was striking, for example, that no government office was aware of the work currently being conducted by the RUB or of the intent to establish an RCoE. This has been so even though the RCoE has been endorsed by the Bhutanese Prime Minister and national organizations such as the NCWC and the DLG, as well as the RUB, participated at the Jaipur meeting. Moreover, UN Women asserts that there was a consultative process that included government and non-governmental organizations leading up to the establishment of the RCoE, yet interviewees met with during the field visit were ill aware of the effort.

In **Pakistan and Bangladesh**, it seems that UN Women has emulated the way of working in Bhutan by providing the Pakistani and Bangladeshi government with support to execute its own activities. To this end, the relationship between the programme and the respective counterparts is very positive and has the potential for sustainability because it builds on activities/bodies which already exist.

5.5 Ability to relate – SWOT

Here we turn our attention to the SWOT focusing on the programmes *ability to relate*.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Solid bilateral partnerships between UN Women and implementers in the field.	Lack of capitalization on the regional relevance of the programme and on how the different efforts can inform neighbouring country undertakings.
Opportunities	Threats
The programmes ability (position) to establish networks between actors. One example of this is the relationship that is developing between the RUB and NIBR. This could be used as an example to be followed elsewhere.	No existing system to support relationships and identified synergies in work undertaken.

5.6 Concluding remarks

With the current exception of the MoPR, the UN Women Programme appears to have good relationships with all its counterparts. One aspect that could warrant further attention, however, is the capitalization on the different relationships by using the programme as a mechanism to build networks between partners. Here, UN Women could have a catalytic role not only in bringing together actors working in the same country, but also between countries. UN Women has not, thus far, instituted a mechanism that would systematically and regularly enable the sharing of experiences between countries. Additionally, it is not clear to what extent the UN Women Programme identifies, targets and tracks operational synergies and linkages with other programmes in order to further their own impact. Overall, we agree that having efforts on gender and governance in multiple countries regionally has a catalytic value. Indeed there is an opportunity for different actors to identify synergies and capitalize upon them. However, the varied characteristics, conditions and needs of each individual country would make for an overly complex programme. Thus, it may be far more relevant, efficient and effective to encourage and foster the relationships between the different actors and programmes without the administrative burden of a “regional” programme. Rather a clear understanding for the need of, and a budget allocation that permits, the active exchange of experiences and strengthening of relationships between actors where by any one actor can enter into direct engagement with other parties as may be suitable to the local needs. For

example, direct exchange between Bangladesh and Pakistan without the need for a regional office oversight.

6.0 Findings - Ability to Do

In this chapter we focus on the actual activities that the UN Women Programme under review has undertaken in the different countries since its birth in 2009. In order to provide a more accurate and nuanced picture of the extent to which the UN Women programme has been able to meet its obligations in terms of activities conducted, outputs, outcomes and goals achieved, we felt that it would be more accurate to examine the programme from a number of different angles. Therefore, the report explores the UN Women Programmes **ability to do** from a regional perspective, first. This is followed by an examination of the programme's work in India, and Bhutan respectively. The India section has been sub-divided into national and state related findings. Lastly, we present the findings in relation to the work carried out in the three additional countries - Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal - that are also part of the programme.

6.1 Ability to do – regional

At the regional level the UN Women Programme, according to the Programme Document, had three main objectives:

- Developing a regional research programme on gender in governance in South Asia.
- Supporting formation/strengthening networks of civil society across South Asia for stronger women's coalitions for policy advocacy.
- Strengthening South-to-South exchange, mentoring and cooperation among women representatives.

The general objectives as described in the Program Document can be understood as broadly relevant to the region. However, there appears not to have been a detailed analysis of how relevant these issues were at a regional level and should/could be interpreted/materialized within each country context. As is apparent in the sections below, different countries that have implemented this programme have had varying approaches to responding to the Program Document's objectives. In fact, there appears to have been very little exploration through a regional lens that would have served to fine-tune the programme's regional character.

The degree to which the regional objectives outlined in the Program Document have been met varies. Upon discussion with regional level stakeholders it seems apparent that one key aspect that would be beneficial to the different actors relates to the ability of the programme to utilize its regional approach as a way to bring together actors from the different countries, and ensure that lessons learned in one environment are shared with other environments as may be relevant (See chapter 5).

Moreover, and in line with the above, the RCoE has yet to materialize fully hence this part of the programme has not, thus far, met all its objectives. As is noted in later sections of this chapter, efforts have been made in India and Bhutan to move the Centre of Excellence "idea" forward. However, the success at the country level has not translated into a regional success at a broader level yet, despite being cited by UN Women as an example of good South-South collaboration. Similarly, while women's coalitions, in the form of caucuses, have been successfully promoted within the context of this programme at the country level (see below Pakistan and Bangladesh); these efforts have not yet transcended borders and hence, the regional implications of these activities have not yet materialized.

As pertains to the sustainability of the regional aspect of the programme, the way the programme has been implemented thus far does not seem to capitalize on the regional component. To the contrary the effort could be largely understood as a series of “sister initiatives” in different countries around the region. Indeed, in some cases funding for the initiatives in other countries has been secured directly by the office in that country. In light of this, it is difficult to find a compelling argument to support a programme that is administered regionally. Perhaps a more adept solution, which would reduce administrative costs and the burden on the Embassy in Delhi, and shift towards a model that allows each country to design a programme on the subject matter and apply for funding to the Norwegian Embassy locally. It is of course important to reiterate (see Chapter 5) that having programmes in multiple countries at the same time can have a catalytic effect, however this may very well be achieved in a more efficient and effective fashion enabling each country programme to work bilaterally with other actors as is may be suitable to their needs. In many ways this approach would not take anything away from the regional approach besides streamlining its administration.

Lastly, it is important to stress that there is no over-arching Performance Management Framework (PMF) and Evaluation Framework (EF) for the regional component. Hence, it is not possible to examine the degree to which this part of the programme has in fact met all of its expectations. This type of framework would be cumbersome given the varied conditions and experiences faced in each country. Hence, operating at a national level would allow for the formulation of far more specific and adequate PMF and EFs.

6.2 Ability to do - India programme

The India Programme is by far the largest in the region. It encompasses efforts at the national level and state level. It counts with twenty-four different contracts with different institutions and organizations. Here we focus on both the programme at the national level, as well as the programme at the state level. We have deliberately examined the different aspects of the programme in this way as we have found that this enables us to more clearly show the operational aspects of the programme on the ground, and the differences between different types of intervention.

6.2.1 India programme national level

The MoPR is the main partner to the programme at the national level and serves as the conduit from the national to the state government. The MoPR plays a key role with PSC and in determining the type of activities that are undertaken in partnership with the Gol. The main deliverables noted in the UN Women - MoPR MoU are:

- Involvement of EWR and women in the Gram Sabha, Ward Sabha and Gram Panchayat.
- Issues that concern the women most like livelihoods, education, gender, health, drinking water and sanitation, planning and budget will be taken up in Gram Sabha, Ward Sabha and Gram Panchayat.
- At least 100 Gram Sabha/Ward Sabha meetings will be attended by motivators each year in each programme implementing district to achieve the objectives.
- Discussion will be encouraged on problems like trafficking of women and children, violence against women, special problems of women in disturbed areas in Gram Sabha/Ward Sabha; meetings and the collective bargaining positions will be used for amelioration of the problem.
- There will be an increase in actual participation of women EWR in PRI and reduction in proxy roles of male relations of EWR in PRIs.

- The programme will move on from pilot state to universal stage by generating replicable models which will be done in close coordination with implementing states and district administration.
- The International Centre will carry out a baseline survey for the programme for Research and Women. Later this report will be used for the concurrent monitoring and evaluation of the programme.⁵⁰

Another key partner to UN Women for this programme is NIRD. NIRD is the core agency for research and training in cooperation with resource institutions at the regional and state level. Some research has been conducted thus far, mainly on the development and design of training materials, to support the objectives of the programme. The outputs associated with these efforts have also been used in training for EWR and other government representatives from Bhutan (see Section below). Research activities which have not culminated in a training output have thus far remained outside of the realm of the other activities within the programme (advocacy, training and capacity building, south-south exchange).⁵¹ Despite difficulties integrating research activities into operational work conducted, at the national level some progress has been made in relation to women's political participation and changes in legal frameworks, policies and resource allocation. The most visible advances made by the programme in this area have been at the state level (see Section below).

As pertains to media and campaign coverage, the programme has been involved in a couple of efforts to highlight issues of concern. One such effort was the campaign *Reservation Express* (April 2010 to August 2010) which was supported by UNIFEM, UN Women's predecessor agency. This campaign was responding to the opposition to the Women's Reservation Bill which was passed on March 9, 2010. The campaign was led by *Act Now for Harmony and Democracy (ANHAD)*. The result - *The Reservation Express* - a unique lobbying campaign to clear the air, mobilize support, and mount pressure on the political class to pass the bill, was launched. This campaign covered approximately 20,000 kilometres throughout India. It also frontally challenged the conservative religious sections which opposed women's reservation in the parliament and legislative bodies.⁵² Other efforts include the work in Bhutan that engaged a local NGO in the development of a documentary film touching upon GBV in Bhutan. The timely implementation of a practical and focused media strategy that was country and context specific could have laid the foundations for sustainability and the identification of opportunities for the future scale up and replication of programme initiatives. Unfortunately, the media strategy was only commissioned in mid-2012 leaving little time for implementation.

Advocacy campaigns are one area that the MoPR objected to vehemently during interviews. The MoPR noted that from their perspective the UN Women Programme would be more efficient and effective if it narrowed its field of work and made all their interventions more focused. This would require the reduction of initiatives and hence, the suggestion of doing away with the advocacy and campaign initiatives that UN Women becomes involved in. Some of the efforts UN Women is engaged with have the possibility to become sustainable, but this is primarily so at the state level (see Section below). Not least since the national efforts, such as campaigns and the

⁵⁰ Mou between the MoPR and UN Women, March 18, 2011.

⁵¹ UN Women noted as comments to this draft that they intend to embed into the programme findings from the research, but we have no details of how this will be done and/or how findings may change the shape of the programme.

⁵² ANHAD. Report: Campaign Reservation Express. April-August 2010.

RCoE, are efforts that require further attention. The first is one where funding and competence are required every time a new campaign is decided upon and the latter has not been sufficiently developed yet to secure sustainability.

Another national level initiative is the support for training on gender to Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers at Mussoorie Academy. While overall any training would be beneficial, it is difficult to see how this effort tied to any other activities undertaken under the programme. Moreover, there is no clear evidence to suggest that these training are being adopted at Mussoorie Academy. While district collectors could be trained at Mussoorie, the likelihood that a district collector would end up in a district where the programme is implemented and able to make the link between their training and the programme on the ground to support implementation is minimal. While clearly capacity building on gender issues is important, the link between different branches of the programme is lacking here and hence, it is difficult to see how this intervention makes a solid contribution to the overall goals and objectives of the programme in an efficient and effective way.

As pertains to research conducted by the International ICRW, during the field visits it was found that although a number of state and district level agencies facilitated field level research, they have not read or used the final reports. Hence, the reports have had little impact on informing work at the field level. However, as UN Women notes, these reports have been useful in advocacy at the national level, particularly in terms of influencing the preparation of the 12th five-year plan.

Moreover, a MoU between UN Women, UNICEF and UNDP is noted as very relevant to the programme in terms of synergizing efforts. However, amongst the states visited and interviewees, no one was aware of this MoU and knew nothing of how it was being implemented. With the exception of Tonk in Rajasthan, there were no examples of inter agency collaboration. In Tonk the UNICEF-UN Women collaboration did not seem to be tied to the aforementioned MoU in any way. Hence, while this could have a clear impact in terms of synergies, we found no evidence on the ground to suggest that it has had any impact.

6.2.2 India programme state level

At the state level, both governmental and non-governmental counterparts have conducted activities in India. However, they have largely worked independently of one another.⁵³ Therefore, we have chosen to explore governmental and non-governmental efforts separately from one another.

Before delving into the actual activities conducted, however, it is pertinent to discuss the relevance of the programme. The relevance of the UN Women's Programme at the state level is clear - Indian female participation in government has historically been low. Rules such as quorum requiring a minimum participation by women, as well as seat reservations for women (see Annex 6) have been a welcome step forward. But much more needs to be done before women in India can be seen as equal partners in the local government process. One of the known hindrances to their participation has been a combination of both limited knowledge and understanding of the local government system (how it works) and limited ability, manifested in both their knowledge and "personality", to actively partake in local government. The data

⁵³ In some cases, such as the district of Gajapati in Odisha, the DPO at the district level has worked closely with non-governmental actors. However, this has been more a result of his own initiative than resulting from a consolidated effort by either the government or civil society to actively engage together.

gathered for this MTR showed that women require considerable support in order to feel sufficiently empowered and thereby able to actively participate in local government. Generally, the interviews also suggested that women who participate actively in government are better able to do so if they count with the support and understanding of their family members, particularly the male members of the family. It was also noted that EWRs were often not allowed to fulfil their duties once elected, rather their powers were usurped by their family members, or powerful males within the community (see Annex 6). These kinds of situation serves as a painful reminder of the challenges faced when working in this field in the Indian context.

In addition, anecdotal evidence unearthed during the field studies strongly suggested that women who choose to partake in the local political processes as either EWRs or as active members of society subject themselves to exacerbated possibilities to be victims of violence either at the hands of male family members or even at the hands of powerful male community members. The violence faced by EWRs, a form of backlash, is well documented, particularly in the ICRW study.⁵⁴ In fact backlash in the form of resistance, as well as actual increases in the risks of violence, are likely in any successful community based mobilizing initiative and can in fact be an indicator of progress. There is therefore a need to take specific measures within the framework of the program to anticipate, prepare and mitigate backlash. While it would be grossly unfair to blame the programme for the potential for violence there are activities that can be undertaken by UN Women to mitigate the likelihood of this violence and/or empower women to better protect themselves from it, these are delineated as sub-points to the recommendations provided in this report.

6.2.3 Governmental level implementation

In India the programme was, according to the MoU with the MoPR, expected to be implemented in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Rajasthan. In each state the SIRD, or equivalent, has been the nodal agency for the programme. At the state level, like at the national level the PSC has oversight of the activities conducted, strategic planning and monitoring the implementation of programme components.

At the state and district level the programme has focused on supporting the conduct of Mahila Sabhas and Gram Sabhas which serve to enable women to more actively participate in local government by preparing them for regular Gram Sabhas. Mahila Sabhas are not stipulated for under Indian legislation, but rather is an effort that has emerged with the aim of engaging women specifically. These meetings are intended to provide women with an opportunity to discuss their concerns in a female only environment. These efforts are seen by UN Women as a stepping-stone towards promoting the more active participation of women in the Gram Sabhas. When examining the effect of these types of meetings in the field, research suggested that even though Mahila Sabhas have no actual authority to make binding decisions, they do serve as a way to share information with women, foster their process of political empowerment and support them when they encounter difficulties. This includes, for example, exerting pressure on husbands to support or not abuse their wives. The Mahila Sabha can achieve this because women come together and jointly make demands. In short, the power of the Mahila Sabha is tied to their ability to mobilize women and encourage them to act jointly and as a single unit. It is also important to stress that while women appear to welcome these venues to support their

⁵⁴ ICRW-UN Women. 2012. Discussion paper series on women's political leadership; violence, economics and power, decoding the impact of violence and economic insecurity on women's political participation.

participation, it is unclear how much these meetings have influenced the participation of women in regular community meetings (i.e. Normal Gram Sabhas). Furthermore, it should be noted that Mahila Sabha's are not expressly noted in the MoU with the MoPR, and therefore, constitute a departure from the original planned activities, none of those interviewed fundamentally objected to the use and establishment of Mahila Sabha.

In simple activity terms we know, based on the outreach data provided by UN Women for the period until November 2012, that a total of 474 Special Gram Sabhas, 3,547 Ward/Palli Sabhas and 1,547 Mahila Sabhas were conducted in ten districts in India. These numbers appear to be quite in line with the expected output in terms of organization of meetings noted in the MoU with the MoPR. In order to achieve these goals the UN Women Programme has availed itself of DPO and motivators. The former operate at the district level, while the latter work at the village level. Indeed, the 100 Gram Sabhas noted in Programme Documentation appear to be in line with the currently available capacity to support such meetings.

DPOs are primarily responsible for district level coordination of programme activities which they undertake with some support from the district level administration. DPOs also work closely with block level officials (level closest to the population). While the tasks to be undertaken by DPOs are equal from one district to another, it is undeniable that some districts are more difficult to work in than others given a variety of locally specific factors such as distance between villages, languages spoken locally, degree of backwardness, etc. Moreover, if district office representatives do not stay in their post long term, this too affects the DPOs ability to perform his duties and make considerable progress (see Annex 6).

Government officials, EWRs and motivators interviewed during the field research (see Annex 6) appeared satisfied with the DPOs' work performance. Furthermore, the outputs achieved by DPOs are in consonance with AWP and logframes. It was also noted that in states where ERW have yet to be elected, as has been the case in Andhra Pradesh, the DPO becomes even more important because by virtue of his/her position, he/she can have some leverage in supporting the conduct of meetings generally and in particular in formulating the agenda for Gram Sabha meetings. DPOs report at multiple levels. Locally they respond to the district collector, however they also report to the state level PSC, as well as directly to UN Women in Delhi. The degree to which the reports provided by DPOs are used as active tools to move the programme forward varies. While at the state level, in some cases, it was noted that the reports were utilized on a consistent basis; there was less evidence of this at the UN Women central level in Delhi (see Annexes 6 and 8).

In addition to the DPO, in order to further support local women's engagement in local governance, UN Women has sought after the support of motivators. Motivators are individuals who reside locally, are trusted within the community and hence, are able to mobilize women to participate in meetings. How motivators are identified varied from state to state (see Table 5 below).

Table 4: Selection of motivators

Odisha	Andhra Pradesh	Rajasthan
The ToR of DPO states that motivators must be chosen in accordance with decisions taken at the Gram Sabha or by a committee (although there's no guidance on the constitution of this committee). The TOR for motivators, on the other hand,	Motivators are chosen by the Block Office (.e. MDPO) amongst women at the village level.	Motivators have been selected through Gram Sabha meetings, after which they were interviewed by the CEO, ZP, BDO and DPO. Most of

<p>states that motivators must be chosen by GPs. In both the districts visited, motivators have been nominated by the GP. The results have been mixed, as in some cases the appointments followed clear patronage, and not necessarily an interest in women's issues. However, the advantage of the GP or Gram Sabha's involvement in the appointment of motivators is that there is already a relationship of trust established between the motivator and the community.</p>	<p>Most motivators have prior experience in implementing government schemes at the ground level (i.e., ASHA workers, Anganwadi workers, etc.).</p>	<p>the original selections have been confirmed, but a few were changed. The criteria for selection included basic literacy. Many of the women selected to be motivators were already contract workers of the Gram Panchayat, such as anganwadi workers (ICDS) or ASHA workers (Health).</p>
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Motivators appear to play a crucial role in the success of the UN Women initiatives. Motivators are trained centrally at the state level. Their tasks are to enable or facilitate the participation of women in local government. Motivators use a variety of mechanisms, including collective events ranging from drumming sessions to door-to-door visits, in an effort to secure the more active engagement of women from the community in local leadership and decision-making.

While on the one hand the progress made is commendable, this should not obscure the fact that three years into the programme some target areas have still received no attention. For example, no meetings have been conducted in the state of Karnataka, and two districts in Odisha and one district in MP have not yet benefited from programme activities. The field level roll out of the programme has taken place in four states beginning in August 2011, while in Karnataka the roll out started in April 2012. Two additional districts in Odisha and one in Madhya Pradesh were taken on board only during the National PSC meeting on 23 March, 2012, and the respective DPOs were hired September 2012. Furthermore, in the participating districts only 131 out of the 225 blocks have been covered, and there appears to be no plans for covering the remaining blocks. These difficulties with implementation serve to illustrate the vastness of the challenge faced in terms of areas needing attention, as well as the difficulties encountered when attempting to implement a programme such as this one, which has such far-reaching goals and objectives. This reflects the importance of having an implementation programme that is context specific. Even within India, the political cycles and political challenges are state specific and uniform application of programme interventions are unlikely to succeed.

One aspect not yet mentioned here is that in numerous instances the efforts carried out in connection with the UN Women Programme are coupled by efforts carried out by the government through other initiatives, or by NGOs. While arguably this constitutes a degree of duplication, it appears that progress in the field of women's active participation in governance in India is in its infancy. Therefore, rather than being duplicative, additional efforts are far more likely to be complementary and to serve to strengthen the efforts that area already undertaken. One example of efforts that can be understood as collaborative include Andhra Pradesh Self Help Groups (SHG). SHG have existed in Andhra Pradesh since 1976. The main purpose of the groups is to enable a small group of people to jointly find solutions to pressing issues that affect their livelihoods. In Odisha, SHG have also played a similar role, but at a much lower scale than in Andhra Pradesh where their history is quite long.

National and state government programmes and interventions strengthen structures and participation in Panchayats by mandating planning and implementation roles for Panchayats, and by supporting capacity building of elected representatives and local officials. At the state level, efforts to increase participation and awareness of Panchayats include programmes such as Odisha's "Gram Sabha Sashaktikaran

Karyakrama” (GSSK). This initiative, launched in October 2012, supported the conduct of Gram and Palli Sabha meetings throughout the state to inform people of the functioning of the Panchayati Raj system, to prepare the annual action plans for Panchayats, and to increase awareness of government programmes and schemes. Similar initiatives have also been recorded in Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan.

6.2.4 Non-Governmental level implementation

THP is a non-governmental partner working within the framework of the UN Women Programme at the district level. Their work fits well within the Programme Document, but is not mentioned in the MoU with the MoPR.

Before the birth of the UN Women Programme, THP was funded directly by the Norwegian Embassy. However, when the UN Women Programme was developed, the UN Women Programme incorporated the Norwegian funded components of THP efforts as it was envisaged that doing so would enable THP efforts to be synergized with the government’s work. This has not happened, however. In reality, THP and the government effort have continued to work independently of one another. THP works directly with local partners at the district level. They have an extensive network of local partners who are the implementers at the ground level. However, their coverage is far more limited than that of the government (see Annex 6). The outreach programmes for the two phases in five states has covered 120 districts, 264 blocks and 4,773 Gram Panchayats. The overall goal of THP within the context of the PCA is to strengthen the political leadership of women in Gram Panchayats so that they are empowered to address the issues of governance, social justice and women’s rights in local institutions of governance.

While it is outside the scope of this review to determine the success of THPs effort based on assessments of other activities carried out by them, it would be misleading to not acknowledge that THP has a long history in capacity building/capacity development of EWR and that their efforts (methodologies and approaches) have been tested and are recognized as successful at the ground level and at the international level.⁵⁵

The main distinction that appears to exist between the governmental and non-governmental (mainly THP) appears to be tied to the conduct of capacity building. EWR who had attended trainings by both the government and THP noted that the approach of the two initiatives was quite different from one another with the former having a more traditional academic approach, while the latter was based primarily on simulations and role play. The degree to which, however, the approach to capacity building that is used by THP can be used with larger groups is unknown. While this review is not in a position to evaluate the training material in details, as this was out of the scope outlined in the MTR ToR, it is noticeable that the approach and material generated by the government appears far more formal, cumbersome and dense than the material used by THP which focuses on practice of the skills that women will need to be effective EWRs. Moreover, THP has focused considerable time to the development of their training material and to testing the degree to which this material achieves its objectives at the field level. While we were told, by SIRD in Odisha, that similar testing has been conducted by SIRD, the explanation of the testing seemed to be far more catered to how trainers felt about the material than how effective the material was at imparting knowledge amongst EWRs. While it is undeniable that

⁵⁵ The THPs approach has been independently evaluated <http://www.poverty-action.org/project/0063>.

effective training can be an essential component to empowering women, it can also be disempowering if not formulated in a manner that supports existing knowledge.

6.3 Ability to do - Bhutan programme

In Bhutan, activities carried out by the UN Women Programme can generally be grouped under research, awareness raising and capacity building.

- **Research:** The UN Women Programme has been involved in supporting extensive research conducted by NIBR and the RUB. The collaboration between NIBR and the RUB has a dual objective of gathering data, but also building capacity on research on gender. Moreover, the relationship between NIBR and the RUB, which was initiated by the UN Women Programme in March 2012, has already led to new joint initiatives which are not tied to the UN Women Programme. This is a positive side effect of the programme. The current research conducted with UN Women funding is focusing on factors that limit women's participation in political processes in Bhutan. The results of the research are due at the end of the first quarter of 2013.

The research work currently underway in Bhutan has also served as the instigator for the creation of a Centre of Excellence at the RUB. The proposal of establishing the centre is in its final stages (i.e., compliance with university regulations). However, the goals and objectives of the centre, its areas of focus, and the end users of the research gleaned are not yet determined.

Prior to this partnership between the RUB and UN Women, the NCWC had been engaged by UN Women as has the Institute for Management Studies, to undertake a nationwide perception study on opportunities and challenges for women's political participation in the local assembly elections held for the first time in Bhutan in 2011.

- **Awareness Raising:** UN Women has funded small initiatives that aim to shed light on issues of concern in terms of gender. One such initiative has been a documentary film commissioned by Renew, a local NGO that focuses on GBV and domestic violence in Bhutan. Renew's work focuses on one of the derivative issues covered by the Programme Document (i.e., violence against women) and also falls under advocacy and media efforts. These initiatives have been very few and small in scope. However, they have been used to bring attention to gender issues, which may have otherwise been overlooked or ignored. In the case of the work done with Renew, the advocacy work is anchored on issues of violence against women rather than local governance.
- **Capacity Building:** This component has focused on gender issues at three levels. First, it has supported the training of EWR. EWR (twelve in total) have been trained through the UN Women Programme in either India or Sri Lanka. In addition, UN Women has supported the training modules implemented by the DLG, which would normally train all local elected officials. This support includes participation of UN Women staff on workshops provided for local elected leaders (both men and women), as well as locally appointed officials. Second, the UN Women Programme also enabled the gender training of staff members from the Secretariat of the National Council. Third, the UN Women Programme facilitated the training of high level government officials as well as functionaries on issues of gender responsive budgeting.

The objectives of the above noted trainings were multi-fold. The training of EWRs and local elected leaders more generally has focused primarily on raising awareness

about gender questions, and their relevance and importance within local government. The training of the National Council Staff was also focused on raising awareness on gender issues and their importance at the national level. The National Council Staff is responsible for supporting parliamentarians with research and background material. The objective of these trainings has been to ensure that gender becomes a more prominent feature of government discussions. Lastly, the efforts to support gender responsive budgeting have included a number of courses and workshops at different levels of government. Initially, the effort aimed at the highest levels (ministers) in order to secure buy in for gender responsive budgeting efforts. Having secured buy in the efforts have shifted toward building capacity amongst functionaries at the Ministry of Finance so that they are able to create budgets that are gender responsive. The latter has included the support of a consultant that will work with the ministry in order to support the drafting of the next national budget.

It appears that the work conducted by UN Women in Bhutan thus far has been well received, and each initiative appears to be a positive step forward in supporting the attainment of a more gender equal society. However, it is important to note that the initiatives in Bhutan are very recent (2012 onwards). While the initial impressions by the participants themselves, particularly in terms of how they explain the information, will be/or have been incorporated into their work is promising, it is too early to know the degree to which the efforts will have a long term impact.

In terms of sustainability, it is likely that efforts and investments made in Bhutan will have a long-term impact and be highly sustainable. Bhutan is a country where development and initiatives cannot take place without the approval and support from the government. This also serves to secure a degree of government buy-in from the start. In the case of gender specifically, the government counts with a strong view that gender equality should be an issue worth pursuing. Therefore, if the UN were to discontinue its support the process would most likely, in the absence of a new donors, be drastically decelerated. However, it is very unlikely that it would stop all together. Moreover, there are a number of other actors that currently work on the issue (i.e, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNDP, Liaison Office of Denmark - LoD and DIPD-Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy), who would also be in a position to support the work if the UN women effort was terminated.

6.4 Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal

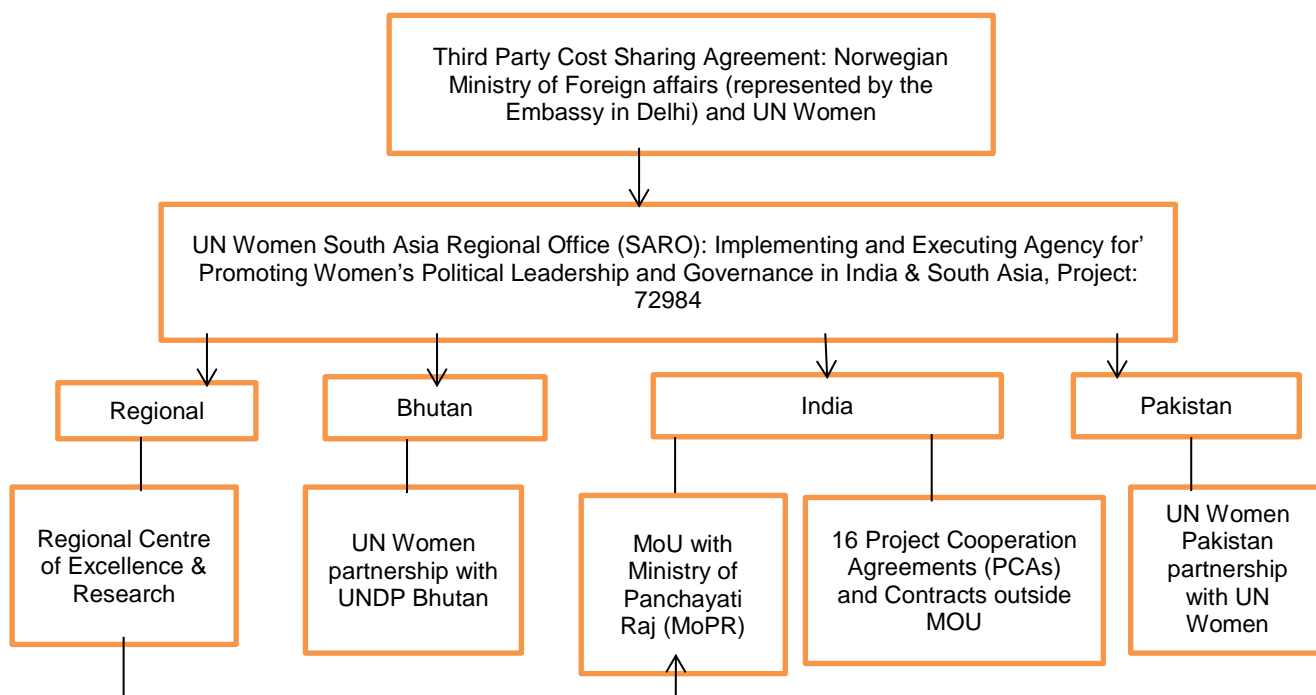
Pakistan Bangladesh and Nepal progress has been slower. The only activity that has taken place in Nepal, under this programme, has been a mapping study, which was conducted by NIBR. However, the UN Women office in Nepal stresses their eagerness to become more active in the issues of women's participation on the governance process. In Bangladesh, a programme proposal delineating the areas of focus has been developed and hence current efforts are aiming to secure funding are underway. The efforts in Bangladesh are primarily focused on working with women parliamentarians in the development of an all party women's caucus. The programme intends, in later phases to expand its work to assist in bridging, or creating links, between parliamentarians and local level representatives. In Pakistan, the efforts have been somewhat similar to those envisaged in Bangladesh. The UN Women effort has primarily focused on working with the parliament at national and provincial levels. The efforts have aimed at providing, or assisting Pakistan's government with expert capacity to support in the creation of all party women's caucuses in order to enable a forum that can better respond, or has the mandate to better respond, to women's needs. In Pakistan, unlike India, the UN Women office has an extensive number of initiatives of which this is but one small part. Still, discussions with the office confirmed that the efforts to support women's participation

in governance have thus far been successful. In Pakistan, the target group is primarily at the central government level. The Pakistan UN Women office noted, however, that they hope to be able to expand their efforts to include work with local EWR.

6.5 Monitoring and reporting at the programme level

The programme is multi-dimensional and multi-layered with many partnerships as reflected in the diagram below. The programme was designed by UN Women, funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and administered and implemented by UN Women SARO. The Royal Norwegian Embassy, New Delhi, acting on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for monitoring the programme.

Figure 4 Program Partnership Framework



The Programme Document establishes that three components for M&E mechanisms were to be established during the programme's Inception Phase. Accordingly, the Programme Unit (PU) in UN Women is responsible for supporting partners and for developing systems for data collection that feed into national monitoring frameworks. For its part the RCOE was identified, in the Programme Document, as critical in establishing the M&E framework. However, despite these plans, a mechanism to track results through a performance management framework has not been implemented thus far. In short, budget monitoring at this time is constrained by limitations in UN Women's current financial reporting systems. The modular Atlas-based monitoring used by the UN system is able to record programme expenditures. However, the module that enables the analysis of expenditure by programme activity, output and outcome has not been implemented in connection to this programme.

Although the aforementioned are hindrances to adequate M&E, at the moment activity monitoring by the PSC and field visits by the PU staff has been partially implemented. At this time it would be possible to conduct output monitoring if the

current system of activity based reporting⁵⁶ were replaced by an output based system, and a set of agreed performance indicators were established and used. So far in the lifespan of the programme the only third party monitoring that has taken place has been the financial audit conducted by an external agency for 2010-2011.

More broadly, there has been a departure from a common logframe and this has led to a situation where a common monitoring and reporting framework is no longer feasible, nor is it possible to follow a result based management structure based on available documentation. The issues that make sequential follow through of the programme from needs through to impact (i.e., RBM) varies. For example, as noted in Chapter 3, the MoU between UN Women and MoPR makes no connection with the programme document. Similarly, the PCA between UN Women and THP India is framed around THP's objectives and performance indicators rather than those identified in the Programme Document and logframe. In Bhutan the partnership with UNDP Bhutan comes under the One UN country-operating model, and includes the Delivery as One (DaO) approach. As such, the UN Women effort contributes towards three outcomes of the Governance Theme Group and counts with a unified logframe including annual targets. Therefore, the programme effort is expected to contribute to three components, each with its own logframe: 1) multi-donor⁵⁷ local governance support programme; 2) UN support for Women's empowerment and gender equality in Bhutan, and; 3) support for parliamentary democracy. Likewise, the contribution to the Pakistan programme is also part of the One UN country-operating model with UN Women Pakistan as the implementing agency. In Pakistan, the effort is concerned with enhancing the capacities of federal and provincial women parliamentarians to advocate gender responsive laws and policies. This leads to a clear disconnect between the objectives delineated in the Programme Document to what has taken place in the field; and therein to the outcomes, outputs and impact that can be expected from each intervention. Moreover, the current reporting model that is under use has not tried to link inputs with activities, and activities with progress made. In some instances, such as the MoU with the MoPR, there has been no reporting that focuses on the specific deliverables noted in the MoU. Therefore, it is not possible to know what kind of progress has been made.

These shortcomings in terms of monitoring and evaluating progress at the global programme level should not, however, obscure the progress made by the different initiatives in the field. In short, the inability to adequately quantify progress made should not be understood as a lack of progress.

6.6 Funding distribution

The programme is mainly funded by the Norwegian government (\$10 million USD). The Norwegian funding is supplemented by contributions from UN Women (\$500,000 USD) and NIRD (\$104,000 USD). The programme budget allocation is described in Table 5 overleaf.

Table 5 - Programme budget in Programme Document approved February 201

⁵⁶ As produced in October 2012: Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia Progress Report.

⁵⁷ Source Bhutan Work Plan for 2011-2012, Local Governance Support Programme: Denmark: Nu. 70.67m (LGSP); EU: Nu. 86.80 m; UNDP: Nu. 16.60 m (RR -\$181,101.31; OR- \$ 187,700]; UN Women: Nu. 5.89 m (OR - \$130,849-provided through UNDP); UNCDF: Nu.14.00 m (\$311,143.70); SDC: Nu. 54.00m.

	Component Total \$	%
Research & Policy Advocacy Outcome 1	1,117,000	10%
Component 2: Capacity Development (CD) Outcome 2	2,100,000	20%
Strengthen Capacity Development Structures / Outcome 3	2,875,000	27%
Total Program Support	3,254,000	31%
UN Women 7% Programme Support Fee	654,000	6%
Total to be funded by embassy	10,000,000	
UN Women Contribution for Program Support	500,000	5%
NIRD Contribution	104,000	1%
Total Budget	10,604,000	

The programme counts with a relatively high allocation for programme support (37.6%, which includes 31% as other programme support and 6.5% as UN Women Administrative fee). The single most significant component allocation (22%) is directed to the establishment of the RCOE. Capacity development (CD) is another major component (24%). There is a separate and sizeable allocation for M&E (\$500,000, 5% of programme budget) reflecting the importance attached to the need for timely and effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. However, as noted earlier a number of these allocations have not led to the expected outputs.

Thorough examination of the budget and funding allocation reveals that the outputs and sub-outputs in the budget do not align with the programme logframe. We also found that the budget overall lacks a great degree of detail. For example, the budget does not include mention of country specific allocation (i.e., how much each country included in the project is to receive). Similarly, the programme budget does not elaborate on the distribution of funds amongst the different Indian States, which are to partake in the programme. How the fund allocation by UN Women and NIRD will be utilized in the context of the programme is, according to UN Women, delineated in detail in their financial system. However, all efforts made by the MTR team to access this information failed. Nor does the budget clearly delineate the administrative cost imposed by UN Women (UN Women support fee). The budget also omits information on how line items are calculated in relation to sub-outputs. Also absent is information on the type of input that is required to secure the delivery of any given activity. Despite the shortcomings in tracking project expenditures (see Annex 8), we have been able to establish, with the assistance of the PU, a status report on the utilization/distribution funds (See Table 6 below).⁵⁸

Table 6 - Allocations and commitments entered into 2010-2011

	Allocations/ Commitments	% Based on \$10,604,100 (Original Budget)
Bhutan ⁵⁹	1,067,552	10%
Pakistan	900,000	8%
Nepal	50,000	.5%

⁵⁸ The following documents have served as the foundation for this analysis: a) the financial commitments in project cooperation agreements (PCAs); b) financial commitments in country letters of agreement; and c) third party contracts.

⁵⁹ The actual budget allocation for Pakistan and Bhutan has been \$963,000 and 1,373,792 USD respectively.

	Allocations/ Commitments	% Based on \$10,604,100 (Original Budget)
Bangladesh	39,809	.4%
India	5,479,375	52%
UN Women SARO Program Support	2,770,704	26%
UN Women Fee India ⁶⁰	654,000	6.1%
Total	10,961,440	

Table 6 reveals an over commitment of \$357,440 USD. Additional documentation review revealed that the allocation/commitments to the states and NIRD are significantly lower than funds directed for non-state activities. Moreover, while the Programme Document stipulates that 22% of the allocation should be destined to the RCOE, and the MoU with the MoPR stipulates that the NIRD is to be the nodal institution for the RCOE in India, the agreement with NIRD (PCA) stipulates their funding allocation to be \$333,115 (this sum is equal to 3% of the budget). Other discrepancies include an increase in the budget allocation for Bhutan of \$644, 225 (September 2012) from the original allocation of \$361,553 USD, which had been agreed between UN Women and UNDP Bhutan in February 2011. The amendment in September, 2012, also extended the duration of the programme until December, 2013. While Norway remains committed to the programme we did not find documentation that would attest to a programme extension until December 2013.

The deliverables of the programme are centred on three ‘outcomes’ for which the programme document provides information on the outputs expected, and their respective budgets. A comparison of the budgets in the Programme Document logframe with the budgets in the AWP&Bs shows significant departures from the baseline funding allocation set out in the Programme Document. The reasons for these changes are not documented in any of the reports, minutes and other relevant documents used for monitoring and directing the programme. The key discrepancies between the two documents include the:

- Budget allocation for Outcome 1 (evidence-based advocacy and gender responsive governance strengthens legal frameworks and policies for women in South Asia by 2015) was increased by 70%.
- Budget allocation for Outcome 2 (EWR in local government have the knowledge and capacity to implement and transform policies, programmes and resource allocations for gender sensitive governance in six states in India by 2015) was increased by 22%.
- Budget allocation for Outcome 3 (key capacity development and media institutions and structures in India and South Asia strengthened to mainstream gender into their policies and programmes by 2015) was decreased by 26%.
- General funding allocated to programme support was decreased by 22%.
- Funding allocated to the RCOE was reduced by 1 million USD (from a budgeted \$2.3 million to \$1.3 million).
- Budget allocation for strengthening capacity of state government officials was increased by 73%.

However, overall only 63% of the funds planned in the AWP&Bs were actually utilised. The biggest single under spending occurred in 2011, where there was a

⁶⁰ This line item includes UN Women Programme Support Costs and the UN Women Fee of 7%.

shortfall of \$1.66 million. Problems with the changeover in the UN Women accounting systems, and processes and complex procurement rules and procedures, appear to have had a severe impacted on the level of effectiveness and efficiency of the overall funding allocation.

In terms of funding the programme the allocation commitments made to the programme are delineated in the Table 7 below.⁶¹

Table 7⁶²: Allocations and commitments entered into 2010-2011

	Allocations/ Commitments	India Breakdown	% Based on Budget of \$10,604,100
Bhutan	1,067,552 ⁶³		10%
Pakistan	900,000 ⁶⁴		8%
Nepal	50,000 ⁶⁵		.5%
Bangladesh	39,809 ⁶⁶		.4%
India	5,479,375		52%
• India MoU with MoPR		1,951,430 ⁶⁷ (18%)	
• India Non-MOU PCAs & Contracts		3,142,721 ⁶⁸ (30%)	
• India: Small Value Contracts		385,224 (4%)	
UN Women SARO Program Support	2,770,704 ⁶⁹		26%
UN Women Fee India	654,000		6.1%
Total	10,961,440		

6.7 Susceptibility to exogenous factors

In terms of susceptibility to exogenous factors, the complexity of the programme makes it susceptible at a number of levels. At the regional level, the inability to capitalize on lessons learned and ensure that the programme benefits from the regional angle and hence, justifies the administrative burden incurred is an important factor. Additionally, the sensitivity of gender issues at certain levels of government may also prove a threat to the programme. Lastly, the degree to which the programme is able to successfully reach local EWRs and support their participation

⁶¹ As pertains to the financing of the programme the MTR team, with support from the UN Women Programme Unit staff, compiled a status report on financial allocations and commitments for the programme cycle. This compilation is based on the: a) financial commitments contained in programme cooperation agreements (PCAs); b) financial commitments in country Letters of Agreement, and; c) third party contracts. The UN Women Programme Support Costs and the UN Women Fee of 7% have been added as commitments (See Table 9).

⁶² Based on budget, results and expenditure statement and contractors list as at 10 November 2012, provided by the PU .

⁶³ Excludes \$306,240 UN Women SARO programme support costs; includes NIBR (200,000) and RUB(29,567) contracts.

⁶⁴ Excludes \$63,000 (7%) UN Women fee.

⁶⁵ NIBR Study.

⁶⁶ Programme Support and Country Study

⁶⁷ Covers 5 states (1,602,619), NIRD (333,115) & \$15,696 for two third party contracts. Madhya Pradesh \$324,167, Rajasthan \$470,862, Andhra Pradesh \$427,551, Orissa \$298,429 and Karnataka \$294,593

⁶⁸ Covers 18 Contracts including THP, NIBR, LBSNAA, IIMB, ICRW, RUB, NRMIC.

⁶⁹ Includes M&E study \$193,760 and Audit \$7,543.

actively and in numbers that are likely to be catalytic will be, depending on a variety of factors, not least the ability of DPOs to reach remote areas targeted by the programme.

In India, varying conditions between states in terms of procedures to get the programme off the ground proved to be a challenge. Local government electoral cycles vary between states and in one of the programme states, elections have in fact not been held and hence there have been no elected bodies during the period of the programme. These factors are difficult to predict or to estimate their impact accurately. Moreover, the states own commitment to devolution, strengthening of the panchayats system, and to strengthening the participation of women, are factors that will affect the overall outcome of the programme. Another risk factor is institutional rivalries and lack of effective coordination between the various government agencies and institutions that are involved. For example, the SIRDs claim that they prepared their own training modules and did not rely on what was prepared by NIRD.

In Bhutan, the programme is highly susceptible to the national governments pace as it moves forward in its pursuit of gender responsive governance efforts. Given the governments willingness to engage in the subject this is not understood as a strong threat to the programme. The difficulties in travel and reaching the different areas of the country, however, is a far more present challenge that will be faced by the programme. Similarly, the ability of the RUB of making its research work as part of the RCoE relevant to national actors is an open question. How these finding will be incorporated into other efforts and the degree to which they will be respected and regarded as legitimate is an issue of concern. Discussions during the filed visit suggested that not only were none of the other actors aware of the work conducted by the RUB, but also some felt that academic research was not relevant to the governments needs. This could create a situation where findings are not utilized and capitalized upon as much as they could or should.

6.8 Effectiveness and coherence

At the macro level, in terms of how the programme benefits for example from the research conducted and how this influences work, there is no evidence thus far of this. It is unclear how the findings of baseline studies have been utilized as foundations for, or have influenced, the way the work has been conducted, if at all. The question here is: would work have been drastically different in the absence of the studies? Moreover, the current research being conducted lacks a streamlining plan. In short, it is unclear what aspect of the programme will be impacted by the findings. While clearly it is impossible to prompt what the research will conclude, it would have been wise to have a clear plan of what can or cannot be changed as a result of the findings. This is also particularly tied to scope. There is, for example, little value in identifying findings that call for an effort that far exceeds the envisaged scope of the programme.

Additionally, the degree to which the media strategy has influenced the programme and served to strength it is unclear. This seems primarily tied to the fact that the strategy was recently drafted and hence it is still unknown how, and if, it will influence the outputs of the work.

As regards to capacity building there is a clear coherence between the impact at the field level, and the need for capacity building at that level of both women and EWRs, as well as local level administrative functionaries to create an enabling environment for empowering women. However, the training conducted at Mussoorie, for example, seems less tied to the overall objective as there appears to be no direct relation between those trained at Mussoorie and those providing services at the local level in

the programme districts. While from an abstract perspective it is clear that any effort to build capacity on gender is beneficial, how this effort ties to other efforts done under the programme and serves to strengthen the programme output overall is not visible beyond the fact that a district collector that was trained in Gender may later be posted in a region where the UN Women effort is being implemented. The important question to consider is the following: is this type of initiative utilizing resources that would be better served if targeted towards initiatives that are more decisively and clearly tied to other efforts undertaken by the programme?

At the state level in India, capacity building seems to be a corner stone of the work conducted and central to empowering women. This coupled with the conduct of Sabha meetings (Gram and Mahila) are clearly two components that complement each other well. Support for the local participation of women in local governance is of key importance within the India context as it enables women to have a direct level of influence into other socio-economic aspects of their livelihoods. Moreover, the capacity development work conducted by THP is also an asset to this overall objective. However, the effectiveness of the different capacity building efforts by the government on the one hand and THP on the other could have benefited from more solid collaboration to benefit from the experiences of each partner.

Lastly, it is important to also note that while the regional meetings, for example the meeting in Jaipur, are valuable in highlighting the importance of the gender issue at the macro level, this type of enterprise has little impact on the ground level. It seems apparent that there is a rhetorical buy in for this type of undertaking at the central level, and the field efforts demonstrate that both are a way to respond to the challenges and a willingness to do so. Therefore, it is less clear what exactly the macro level and highly visible meetings contribute to the overall plight faced by women on the ground.

In Bhutan, the coherence and relevance of the work is clear in terms of all the efforts conducted with the government. This is to say that each effort with individual branches of the government is clearly working in unison towards a single objective. However, the degree to which the work by the RUB will fit into other efforts remains to be seen.

Overall, the work of the programme has generally targeted the right venue for their work in all countries. The only possible exception to this have been smaller initiatives undertaken in India, such as support to Mussoorie, which have a more tenuous link in terms of coherence and relevant impact to the overall objective of the programme. Not to say that the effort is not relevant, but rather that the investment does not directly feed into supporting other efforts undertaken.

Given the aforementioned it may be far more cost effective and efficient to have a more tightly coherent programme in future that limits the number of initiatives and partners, and focuses its energy primarily into affecting the conditions in the field which this programme has also done thus far.

6.9 Programme sustainability

The core programme efforts are largely sustainable in that they primarily rely on the government structures to begin with, and/or on existing institutions that are likely to remain irrespective of the programme life cycle (i.e., SIRD, NIRD, RUB). However, the degree of sustainability is more solid in Bhutan where all the efforts are clearly backed by the government and where there is a push at the government level; than in India where despite government support many of the activities (Mahila Sabha and special Gram Sabhas) are outside the scope of the normal government work.

However the degree of sustainability of the impact, should be noted, is one aspect that can very well develop a high degree of sustainability once a catalytic scale of change has been reached. However, this catalytic point is one that will require extensive work over time first.

Overall, it is important to stress that progress and achieving sustainability of this kind of programme is something that requires time. Change is difficult particularly on issues that are socially contentious and therefore it is unrealistic to expect that any progress made is automatically sustainable without continued support.

6.10 Ability to do – SWOT

Here we turn our attention to the SWOT in terms of the programmes *ability to do*.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>At the field level in India (District) the program seems to be very relevant in terms of the promotion of Sabha meetings. The capacity building of ERW, and other elected representatives and appointed officials at the local level is highly relevant and appears an effective way to promoting women's representation.</p>	<p>The programme lacked a very clear guideline (Programme Document) that delineated in details what is to be achieved. While AWP have done so and so have different MoU and bilateral agreements with different actors, the absence of a single document has meant that coherence within the programme has been compromised somewhat. Some efforts appear to have contributed little to the effectiveness of the programme on the ground. Lack of a solid monitoring and evaluation mechanism hampers the programmes ability to identify and implement lessons learned.</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>The research conducted could be clearly designed to ensure that the findings will be directly relevant to the work undertaken. This would require narrow research questions that answer specific relevant queries. The programme should clearly delineate the efforts that are undertaken by other actors and by the government and be designed in a manner that complements other efforts.</p>	<p>Some trainings, and training materials, may not be effective tools to impart the knowledge desired.</p>

6.11 Concluding remarks

Generally, it appears that the programme has been well received and successful at the field level. That is to say those women respondents in villages in India, EWR in India and Bhutan, as well as government representatives, thought there was great value in the programme. However, the evidence that contends to the success of the programme is largely anecdotal, in the absence of clear and solid monitoring & evaluation systems and a solid accountability framework. As pertains to the funding of the programme, it has been extremely difficult to attribute expenditure and establish cost effectiveness given the data we had available to us. Some of the challenges encountered in attempting to solidly document the programmes expenditure (cost-effectiveness) are documented in detail in Annex 8.

7.0 Recommendations

Here we focus on developing recommendations which aim to improve the Norway's ability to support women's participation in governance efforts. In relation to the UN Women Programme, the following is relevant.

7.1 Achievement of goals

- The Programme Document should be reformulated and in doing so streamlined taking into account lessons learned during this, the First Phase of the programme. The revised Programme Document should be drafted in a manner that ensures that in the future this document serves as a clear anchor for the programme as it moves forwards. The development and design of the new Programme Document should include all key stakeholders during the drafting process and in doing so ensure buy-in from the beginning.
- All MoUs, PCA, and other contracts that are established in connection with the programme in the future, should be clearly tied to the Programme Document. This would limit any conflicting views or perspectives on the objectives of the programme or the like.
- UN Women should utilize a revised Programme Document as a clear and explicit guideline to identify activities they choose to become engaged with. Activities that fall outside the goals, and objectives delineated in the Programme Document should not be financed with programme funding. Any funding to initiatives which have aims that fall outside those of the Programme Document should be undertaken as an exception, and only because the initiative is essential to further an aim clearly defined in the Programme Document.
- Develop a system to collect baseline and impact data which can be used to more effectively measure progress and identify lessons learned as the programme progresses.

7.2 Relevance in terms of national and regional contexts

- The programme should move away from administrative regional approach, to a national programme approach at the administrative level. Hence, each national programme should seek funding unilaterally, but should include a limited budget line that enables efforts in neighbouring country programmes to exchange experiences through knowledge sharing mechanism such as workshops or conferences, and any other type of cross learning mechanism. Focusing on country, rather than programme, efforts would reduce the administrative burden at the Embassy, and also the administrative costs incurred by UN Women.
- The risk of exacerbated violence as a form of backlash to successful programme implementation and effective functioning of ERWs was evident from anecdotal information collected during field visits. Some suggested measures under the scope of the current programme are:
 - Increase awareness on laws relating to violence against women and legal rights.
 - Facilitate women's access to support services available in situations of violence.
 - Facilitate women's access to justice through linkages with the police, legal services and Protection Officers.
 - Provide or facilitate the preparation of referral lists of available services

- Use women's collectives to hold relevant authorities accountable to their statutory roles (e.g., recording FIRs/Domestic Incident Reports, initiating investigations, enforcing court orders).
- Empower women's collectives and EWRs to monitor cases where action has been initiated to address violence for adverse outcomes.

7.3 Effectiveness and coherence

- The programme should continue to focus primarily on efforts that are firmly embedded in existing government or NGO activities to ensure that they are coherent with the environment and effective (tried and tested).
- Efforts to exit from approaches that were built in as a "start-up" to serve as catalysts to support programme success should be built into future programme iterations. For example, a clear exit plan from using motivators, DPOs, and conducting Mahila Sabhas. However, this exit plan should be firmly rooted in local conditions. This means that while it should be thought about and planned for, it should not be implemented too early as premature exiting could set the programme successes backwards.

7.4 Strengths and challenges regarding regional dimension

- The RCOE should either be excluded from future iterations of the programme, or very clearly and narrowly defined so that it can realistically be implemented. This redefinition should include the preparation of a business case by MoPR, NIRD and SIRDs which sets out the purpose and expected results, institutional framework for operating the RCOE, and resource requirements for start-up and on-going funding requirements of the RCOE. The decision on the future direction of the RCOE should be dependent on the approval of the business case.
- As noted above, there is a clear value in having programmes working on similar issues in multiple countries in the region, but the administration of these should be handled nationally as this would enable the design of programmes that far better meet the local challenges and are able to count on a programme document that clearly guides the efforts made.

7.5 Efficiency and cost effectiveness

- The redefinition of the Programme Document, which takes stock of what was done and learns from it but which is far more narrowly defined and serves as a clear guide for future work, should include a clear mechanism for baseline data collection that can overtime serve to document the degree to which the programme activities have an impact that can be quantified in relation to local government structures and institutions.
- The Programme Document should clearly delineate activities and associated expenditure. There should be a clear line of accountability of funds tied to programme goals and objectives in order to better ensure cost effectiveness and accountability.
- Merge the AC Meeting with the national Project Steering Committee meeting as a single forum in order to support a the transparent management of the funds and deliverables of the programme.
- Put in place a system that enables the reconciliation of budget, commitments, advance and expenditure in order to ensure a traceable and accountable system;

and which ensures administrative traceability for audit purposes (exchange rates, date stamps, etc.).

- Follow up on the status of the contributions by UN Women (\$500,000) and NIRD (\$104,000) to ensure that their allocation and use is documented and utilized as envisaged.
- A financial audit system should be put in place which enables clear traceability from fund allocations to programme activities (i.e., progress made, benchmark achieved and cost incurred). This system should also ensure that financial expenditures are pre approved.

7.6 Performance and management of programme support

- Accountability mechanisms should be clearly defined, and mechanisms to implement it developed. Similarly, mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of programme activities should also be developed and utilized as a matter of course (see Section 8.5).
- The MoPR should be encouraged to participate in the development and implementation of the M&E and the impact assessment as a way of studying the strengths and weaknesses of alternative models for empowering EWRS at the local level.

7.7 Sustainability

- The programme should continue to work specifically with government efforts where programme efforts fit well into standard government activities in order to ensure long term sustainability; efforts where the UN Women intervention serves to support and solidify existing governance mechanisms.
- Training material should undergo clear testing, in terms of its effectiveness for imparting knowledge amongst EWR. This is crucial in determining the sustainability of the effort.
- THP should be funded outside the UN Women Programme. Being included in the programme has in no way affected other programme activities (i.e., THPs experience has not been informative to other activities) and the actual operational activities of THP have been hampered by UN Women's more bureaucratic approach to fund disbursement.

Annexes:

Annex 1: TOR

TERMS OF REFERENCE REVIEW OF THE UN WOMEN'S WORK ON THE PROGRAMME, 'PROMOTING WOMEN'S POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE IN INDIA AND SOUTH ASIA'

Background

In 2009, the Norwegian Embassy in India signed an agreement with Unifem, now UN Women, South Asia Regional Office to initiate a programme entitled 'Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia' (in short: Gender Responsive Governance Programme- GRG). The programme aims to empower elected women representatives in local governance to make public policy and resource allocation patterns responsive to women's rights. The programme covers 5 countries of South Asia (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, and Pakistan).

The Programme has been designed for a 5 year period of implementation. The Norwegian Embassy and UN Women entered a three year agreement in 2009 in support of the programme. The agreement is likely to be extended with a non-cost extension an additional 6 months due to delays in the implementation. However, as the initial 3 years of the agreement comes to a close in 2012, the Norwegian Embassy would like to undertake a review to assess the effectiveness of the GRG programme in delivering on its objectives and has requested the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation to facilitate this process.

Short description of programme

The GRG Programme has been designed with the spirit to capture the specific issues and challenges with regard to women's political empowerment that each country experiences. This is a demand driven programme that envisages to understand and address issues of women's participation in local governance from the grassroots perspective.

The programme aims to empower elected women representatives in local governments to make public policy and resource allocation patterns responsive to women's human rights. The programme adopts three main strategies: a) Support research and policy advocacy to address the legal and policy impediments to women's political participation; b) Support trainings, coalitions and lobbying (e.g., with political parties) so that women representatives transform and implement policies, programmes and resource allocations in favour of women's rights; and c) Strengthen key capacity development and media institutions in the region to mainstream gender responsive governance in their programmes.

The Programme objectives are as follows:

Programme Goal: By 2015, elected women representatives in local governments ensure implementation of national commitments on women's human rights in four South Asian countries.

The following outcomes will contribute to the programme goal.

1. Strengthened legal frameworks and policies for women's political participation in local governance in India and South Asia by 2015.
2. Elected women and men representatives in local governments have the knowledge and capacity to transform and implement policies, programmes and resource allocations for gender sensitive governance in five states in India by 2015.
3. Key capacity development and media institutions and structures in India and South Asia are strengthened to mainstream gender into their policies and programmes by 2015.

In addition to other outputs at national / sub-national levels, the focus at Regional level is on:

- a) Developing a Regional Research programme on Gender in Governance in South Asia
- b) Strengthening of women's coalitions for policy advocacy across South Asia
- c) Strengthening South to South exchange and cooperation among capacity development institutions and women representatives at all levels

The programme started in India, and then proceeded to scale up the learning to Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan. As an exit strategy, the programme intends to institutionalise the above functions in a South Asia Regional Centre of Excellence for Gender Responsive Governance.

While the agreement between the Government of Norway and UN Women (then UNIFEM) was signed end of 2009, it took a year to recruit the staff members for the programme. By August 2010, a Programme Analyst, Programme Associate, and a Research Analyst had joined; while the Head of Governance Unit and the Senior Programme Specialist joined by November and December 2010 respectively.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between UN Women and Ministry of Panchayati Raj, GoI on 18 March 2011. The programme was formally launched in India in November 2010 by the Hon'ble Minister of Panchayati Raj and Rural Development, Government of India, and the Hon'ble Minister of International Development and the Environment, Government of Norway. Since then, activities have been initiated in Bhutan and Pakistan and are planned to roll out in Nepal and Bangladesh.

In India, the programme is being implemented in the following states and districts:

State	Districts
Andhra Pradesh	Mahabubnagar
	Srikakulam
	Vizianagaram
Orissa	Bhadrak
	Dhenkanal
	Gajapati

	Sambalpur
Karnataka	Dharwad
	Mysore
	Uttara Kannada
Madhya Pradesh	Jhabua
	Sagar
	Sehore
Rajasthan	Dungarpur
	Tonk
	Alwar

The programme's key partners with whom agreements have been signed thus far include the following:

Key Partners:

- a. Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India
- b. National Commission for Women and Children, Royal Government of Bhutan
- c. Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, Government of Bangladesh
- d. National Commission on the Status of Women, Government of Pakistan
- e. National Institute for Rural Development (NIRD), Hyderabad
- f. The Hunger Project (THP), New Delhi with state presence in Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Rajasthan.
- g. The International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW), New Delhi
- h. The Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research, Oslo
- i. Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Mussoorie
- j. Departments of Panchayati Raj under the state governments of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Rajasthan.
- k. UNRCs in Bhutan and Bangladesh
- l. UNDP, India and UNICEF India for Joint Programming for Capacity Development of Decentralized Governance Systems with particular focus on Women's Political Leadership.

Other Partners:

Apart from these long-term partners, UN Women has also engaged with the Institute for Social Sciences (ISS) supporting their annual Women's Empowerment Day celebration where they award elected women representatives who have shown outstanding achievement in political office. UN Women also supported the Women's Reservation Express campaign on 50 percent reservation for women in the Lok Sabha in India.

Review Objectives and Scope

Objectives

The purpose of this review is to assess the progress of UN Women's programme on Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in South Asia as per the agreed Programme Document's stated goal, outcomes and outputs, over a fixed period of time: 2009-2012. In addition to this, the key objectives of this review are to assess:

- The relevance of the programme objectives in the national and regional contexts;
- The effectiveness and coherence of the strategies adopted;
- The strengths and challenges regarding the regional dimension of the programme
- Efficiency and cost-effectiveness in implementation and delivery of outputs;
- Performance and management of programme support, including *risk management, results based management, reporting and financial management*;
- The *sustainability* of the activities initiated

The review will assess the achievements made so far, identify strengths and challenges in the GRG programme, identify reasons for achievement and non-achievement towards the programme outcomes and identify areas where strengthened efforts are needed for the programme objectives to be achieved according to plan. The lessons from this review are expected to strengthen and contribute to the improvement of the GRG programme.

Scope

The geographical scope of this review includes work done by UN Women to support the GRG programme across 5 states and 16 districts in India; as well as for Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, and Pakistan. The review should include field visits to 6 districts in 3 states in India. It may also include one short visit to Bhutan although this may be subject to change. The time frame for this review will be GRG programme activities supported by UN Women in the period 2009-2012 with a special focus on UN Women's GRG programme from 2010 onward. The review is expected to take 10 working weeks for a team of 2/3 consultants including one Team Leader and one Specialist over a period of 3 months, allowing sufficient time for UN Women and the Embassy to review the draft Review Report.

Review questions

The Inception Report is expected to elaborate on the review objectives outlined above. The following table describes examples of relevant sub-questions that will focus the review exercise.

Table 1: Review questions and sources of data

Review Questions	Sources of data
Q 1 Overall review question: The extent to which the GRG programme is on track in achieving its stated goal, outcomes and outputs?	Desk review, interview with programme staff, partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries
Q 2 Assess the relevance of the programme objectives in the national and regional contexts	
2.1 How was the situation and needs analysis undertaken for the GRG programme and its activities?	Desk review Interviews with programme staff and stakeholders
2.2 How were the priorities identified and who were consulted?	Desk review Interview with programme staff and stakeholders
2.3 The extent to which the programme is successful in addressing key priorities of relevant stakeholders?	Desk review Interview with programme

	staff and stakeholders
Q 3 Assess the effectiveness and coherence of the strategies adopted;	
3.1 The extent to which the research strategy of the GRG programme is contributing to the achievement of programme objectives ?	Desk review Interviews with programme staff, partners and stakeholders Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme
3.2 The extent to which the research component feed into other components and strategies of the programme (advocacy, training and capacity building, south-south exchange)?	Desk review Interviews with stakeholders and research partners Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme
3.3 The extent to which the training, policy advocacy and lobbying are contributing towards a) reducing barriers for women's political participation, b) women elected representatives' ability to transform policies c) changes in legal frameworks, policies and resource allocations?	Desk review Interviews with stakeholders
3.4 The extent to which the GRG programme is reaching relevant development and media institutions in the region and to what extent is this leading to a strengthened focus on GRG in their activities?	Desk review Interviews with stakeholders Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme
3.5 The extent to which lessons learned through other components of the programme are used strategically in communication and media outreach?	Interview with programme staff, partners and stakeholders
3.6 The extent to which experiences and concerns from partners and stakeholders have been fed into decision making and advocacy and vice versa, how lessons learned from the programme have benefited partners and stakeholders?	Interview with programme staff, partners and stakeholders Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme
Q 4 Identify the strengths and challenges regarding the regional dimension of the programme	
4.1 Regional research programme	Desk review Interviews with research partners and stakeholders Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme
4.2 Strengthening women's coalitions regionally	Desk review Interviews with stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries Interviews by

	phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme
4.3 South-South exchange	Desk review, interviews with stakeholders Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme
Q 5 Assess the efficiency and cost-effectiveness in implementation and delivery of outputs	
5.1 How effective has UN Women been in ensuring adequate human, financial and technical resources towards the programme?	Analysis of resources, organizational capacity Interview with programme staff, partners and Embassy staff
5.2 What measures have been taken during the planning and implementation phase to ensure that resources are efficiently used?	Review of reporting, cost data and financial records Interview with programme staff, partners and Embassy staff
5.3 The extent to which activities and outputs delivered as agreed?	Review of reporting, cost data and financial records Interview with programme staff and partners
Q 6 Assess the performance and management of programme support, including risk management, results based management, reporting and financial management;	
6.1 To what extent are the management structures of the programme adequate and effective?	Analysis of reporting, interviews with programme staff, partners and stakeholders
6.2 To what extent is decision making in the programme following contractual agreements?	Desk review and interviews with programme staff, partners and Embassy staff
6.3 How well has the GRG programme followed up risk management through the programme period from developing and updating analysis, mitigating measures and in implementing mitigating measures?	Desk review and interviews with programme staff, partners and Embassy staff
6.4 Assess the systems in place for ensuring a results based approach to programming, including the quality of the results framework, and identify areas of improvement	Desk review and interviews with programme staff, partners and Embassy staff
6.5 The extent to which the reporting fulfills agreed requirements and to what extent does it provide adequate information regarding progress and challenges?	Desk review and interviews with programme staff, partners and Embassy staff
6.6 The extent to which agreed auditing procedures are followed?	Desk review, audit reports, interviews with programme staff, partners and Embassy staff
6.7 Assess the financial implementation rates as per the planned budgets and progress?	Analysis of planned budgets and expenditure reports
Q 7 Assess the sustainability of the activities initiated	
7.1 To what extent have measures been adopted to ensure sustainability of the programme activities and achievements?	Desk review and interviews with programme staff,

	partners
7.2 To what extent has ownership of the programme activities been assured with the different partners and how?	Desk review and interviews with programme staff, partners
7.3 What are the greatest threats to the sustainability of the outcomes of the programme?	Desk review and interviews with programme staff, partners and Embassy staff

Review approach and methods

Sampling Strategy

UN Women has implemented the GRG programme since the year 2009, and this is the first review of its GRG activities in South Asia. As a result, the reference period for the review includes all programme activities and initiatives supported by UN Women in South Asia since 2009; however the primary focus will be on activities conducted since 2010.

The sampling strategy for selection of candidates for interviews and survey should be purposive, based on recommendations from programme staff and independent identification by the review team.

Data Collection

To address the above questions and sub-questions, the review will employ a variety of data sources and follow the principle of triangulation. The review team will review secondary data through a desk review of the relevant documents produced under the programme, budgets and expenditure reports that have been prepared by the government departments, audit reports for the programme etc.

The review team will collect primary data, through semi-structured interviews and surveys, organized as individual interviews, focus group discussions, phone interviews or by email where appropriate.

Table 2 describes the main data source, data collection method, instruments for data collection and sampling procedure. The last column matches the various data source and methods to specific review questions outlined in the previous section.

Table 2: Data Collection Methods and Sampling

Data source	Data collection method	Instruments for data collection	Sampling procedure
Documents	Desk Review	Literature Reviews	All relevant document for activities conducted since 2009; purposive sampling
Information filed	Desk Review	Literature Reviews	All relevant document for activities conducted since 2009; purposive sampling
Financial records	Desk Review	Cost-Effectiveness Analysis	Financial analysis of all activities since 2009;
Staff	Interview, sample survey; focus group discussions	Semi-structured questionnaire	All UNIFEM/UN Women programme staff since 2009
Government sources	Interview, sample survey; focus group discussions	Semi-structured questionnaire	Purposive sampling; target sample of policymakers since 2009.

Community groups	Interview, sample survey; focus group discussions	Semi-structured questionnaire	Purposive sampling; target sample of community groups since 2009.
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Following an initial desk review, the review team is expected to revisit this review framework and propose the final areas of enquiry, review questions and sub-questions, and the methodologies to be used for data collection and analysis in the Inception Report.

Review management

Management arrangement

The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) will be contracting the team of consultants for the assignment, bear the financial responsibility and provide quality assurance of the draft and final inception report and the draft and final review report. UN Women SARO will provide assistance in making available all relevant documentation and facilitate contact and appointments with relevant stakeholders. The draft inception report and the draft review report will be distributed for comments to UN Women and the Norwegian Embassy before approval.

This review is to be carried out by an organization with advanced knowledge and experience in review and evaluation, especially related to decentralization, governance systems, and women's political participation and gender issues in South Asia, particularly India. Advanced knowledge and experience in organizational reviews and with UN organisations is also necessary. Team members should possess appropriate training and documented experience in conducting reviews, as well as field review methods and techniques. The review team should comprise 2-3 full time team members including one team leader and one specialist and preferably one local consultant with contextual knowledge and language skills for facilitation of the field visits.

The team leader will be accountable for the delivery of the inception report and the final report; provide intellectual leadership and direction and leading the dissemination of the findings and recommendations. Further details regarding team responsibilities and expected experience level are provided below.

Expected Experience of Team

As a unit, the review team must offer the following demonstrated experience and knowledge:

- Experience of conducting similar studies and review
- In depth knowledge of gender issues, governance and decentralization in South Asia in general and India in particular
- Good knowledge of the UN system
- Updated experience on gender equality issues and knowledge of mainstreaming gender into policies/programming/development; knowledge of gender related strategies of government, non-government agencies;
- Experience in assessing financial management
- Knowledge of relevant languages in India for facilitation of fieldwork
- Experience with human rights based approaches;
- Facilitation skills, particularly design of stakeholder consultations exercises;
- Strong quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis skills

The Team leader must have extensive experience in the field of review. The team leader should have:

- Minimum 7 years working experience in international development
- Experience of leading similar studies and reviews
- Fluency in the English language, written and spoken.

Review schedule

Table 3: Timeline and Products

	Activities	Month					
		0,5	1	1.5	2	2.5	3
1.	Initial desk review by review team Identify and obtain programme documents that may be relevant Desk review						
2.	Review Planning Detailed review planning - consultations with the Embassy, UN Women Governance Programme Unit and M & E Unit including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • draft questionnaire for the data collection • identify interviewees • plan field trips 						
3.	Draft Inception report submitted to Norad (no later than 2 weeks from the start of the review) (not more than 10 pages) containing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review purpose and objectives • Team - roles and responsibilities • Review approach • Review methodology • Work plan – including reporting timelines, data collection and analysis 						
4.	Final inception report approved within one week						
5.	Data collection and survey Field visits for data collection through individual interviews, surveys and focus group discussions with government officials, programme staff and beneficiaries.						
6.	Debriefing for the Embassy and UN Women concluding the field work						
7.	Data compilation and analysis						
8.	Drafting of review report						
9.	Draft Report submitted to Norad by the end of working week 9 Norad will be allowed minimum 10 working days to review the report and collect comments from UN Women and the Embassy on the draft. Incorporating comments from UN Women, the Embassy RNE and other key stakeholders during working week 10						
10.	Final review Report						
11.	Presentation to disseminate the findings of the review with key stakeholders, UN Women and the Embassy 1 day						

i. Deliverables

Deliverable 1 – Inception Report

Deliverable 2 – Debriefing presentation to UN Women and the Embassy following the field work

Deliverable 3 – Final review Report

Deliverable 4 – Dissemination presentation to be organized in consultation with the Embassy and UN Women

Inception Report

The inception report will include review methodology, detailed workplan, data collection instruments (including questionnaire for the interviews) roles and responsibilities of the team members and plans for field visits.

Final review Report

A final review report will be submitted by the organization. The Report should contain at least the following sections and the main body should preferably not exceed 40 pages:

- Executive Summary
- Background and context of the review
- Programme description – its logic theory, results framework and exogenous factors likely to affect success
- Review purpose
- Review approach and methodology
- Findings – from various data sources including desk reviews, interviews, surveys etc. Provide explanation of findings and interpretations
- Conclusions and lessons learnt
- Recommendations
- Annexes:
 - Terms of Reference for the review
 - Itinerary (actual)
 - Data collection instruments: interview/survey questionnaire, focus group discussions questionnaire
 - List of documents reviewed
 - List of people consulted beneficiaries, CSO officials, government and (current and former) programme staff interviewed (without identifying names to maintain confidentiality).

Dissemination presentation

A dissemination presentation will be organized by the review agency in consultation with the Embassy and UN Women, wherein various stakeholders involved in the GRG programme and government departments will be invited. The dissemination presentation will present the key findings and recommendations from review.

Review audience

The review users are the Government of Norway, UN Women headquarters, regional office and Country programme office in South Asia; Government of India, governments of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, and Pakistan, and relevant ministries and departments; bilateral and multilateral agencies and donors; and CSOs.

Annex 2: Field Trip Details and Schedules

Annex 2.1 Andhra Pradesh

MID TERM REVIEW OF THE UNW GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME Field visit to ANDHRA PRADESH, 19-24 NOVEMBER, 2012

**Team Members: Asha Newsum (09945210651), Asmita Basu (08130877285)
and Arkaja Singh(09818112255)**

18 November 2012

- *Arrive in Hyderabad*

MONDAY: 19 November 2012

**State Level Coordinator: Prof. Suryanaryana Reddy, AMR – APARD
(09849003645)**

Pick up from Hotel Katariya Raj Bhavan Rd, Somajiguda at 1000hrs

Meeting with:

- **1130 to 1200 hrs** - Sri C.R. Biswal, Principal Secretary, Department of Panchayati Raj and Rural Development
- Sri Ram Gopal, Commissioner, Department of Panchayati Raj and Rural Development - *TBC*
- Dr. Krishna Chandramouli, Commissioner, AMR-APARD, Rajendranagar - *TBC*

TUESDAY: 20 November 2012

**Field visit to Mahabubnagar (DISTRICT PROJECT OFFICER SABA HASSNAIN:
08143403029)**

- **0830 hrs** – Start for Mahbubnagar (2 hour drive from Hyderabad)
- **1000-1100 hrs** - Meeting with the District Collector and Magistrate
- **1100-1200 hrs** - Meeting with CEO, Dy. CEO, PD-ICDS, PD-DRDA, PD Water & Sanitation (in one group)
- **1300- 1400 hrs** -Lunch Break
- **1400-1500 hrs** -Focus Group Discussion (08-15 participants) with Ex-EWRs and Motivators
- **1500-1600 hrs**- Meeting with District Project Officer, UN Women, DTMs APARD
- Night halt at Mahbubnagar (Hotel Sindhu)

WEDNESDAY: 21 NOVEMBER 2012

- **1000-1200 hrs**- Travel to Narayenpet mandal by road
- **1200-1300 hrs** - Meeting at Mandal office with MPDO, EO PR & RD, Office staffs, NGO members, SHG president, line department at Mandal level etc.
- **1300-1400 hrs** Lunch Break
- **1400-1430 hrs** Travel to Kotakonda
- **1430-1530 hrs** Meeting with Community women, Motivator, SHG members etc.
- **1530-1730 hrs** *Travel back to Mahabubnagar*

THURSDAY: 22 NOVEMBER 2012

- **For Asha Newsum – Meeting at NIRD, scheduled at 1100 hrs with Dr. C.S.Singhal**
- *Asmita Basu and Arkaja Singh - Flight to Vizag*
- *Travel to Vizianagaram (DISTRICT PROJECT OFFICER VEERASWAMY: 09491198417)*
- **1030 hrs** Arrival at Vizianagaram
- **1100-1200 hrs** Meeting with District Collector, CEO,ZP, PD DRDA, DPO, PD ICDS (Venue: Zilla Parishad office)
- **1200-1300 hrs** Meeting with Civil Society Organisations (Mahila Samatha Society ,Bapuji Mahila Ogranisation, Janshi Laxmibai Mahila Mandali, ROJIES, Mahila Welfare Society, Deeksha Mahila Welfare Society etc.)
- **1300-1430 hrs** Lunch break
- **1500-1700 hrs** FGDs with Former EWRs
- Night halt at Vizianagram SVN Lake Palace (3 star hotel) – Vizianagaram.

FRIDAY: 23 NOVEMBER 2012

- **0900-1300 hrs** Field visit **Travel by road** Iddanavalasa - Mentada (M), T Burjivalasa - DRajeru (M) **Option** Jarjapupeta – Nellimarla(M)
- **1300-1330 hrs Lunch**
- **1345 hrs** Travel back from VZM to Hyderabad
- **Flight details AI 951 AIR INDIA – Departure:18:20/ Arrival: 19:20 (MTR team to book tickets)**

SATURDAY: 24 NOVEMBER 2012

- Debriefing with Dr. Krishna Chandramouli, Commissioner, AMR-APARD, Rajendranagar - TBC
- Depart to Delhi

Annex 2.2 Odisha

MID TERM REVIEW OF THE UNW GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME Field visit to ODISHA, 26 NOVEMBER, 2012 TO 1 DECEMBER 2012

Team Members: Asmita Basu and Ananda Milliard

25 November 2012

- Arrive in Bhubaneswar – Night halt at Hotel Sandy Towers, Bhubaneswar

Focal point for coordination:

Mr Shibabrata Kar,
Gopabandhu Nagar, Unit 8, Bhubaneswar – 751012
Mobile: +919437160428
Email: shibabrata.kar@unwomen.org

26 November 2012 (MONDAY)

Meeting with:

- 10.30-11.30 Sri Saroj Dash, Deputy Director, SIRD
Gopabandhu Nagar, Unit 8, Bhubaneswar – 751012
Mobile: +919437189835
Email: saroj.skd1962@gmail.com
- 11.30-12.30 Smt Chithra Arumgam, IAS, Director, Special Projects and Director, SIRD
Gopabandhu Nagar, Unit 8, Bhubaneswar – 751012
Email: sirdodisha@gmail.com
Contact person for assistance:
Mr Shibabrata Kar,
Mobile: +919437160428
- 12.30-1.30 SIRD Team (Amita Patra and Shibabrata Kar)
Gopabandhu Nagar, Unit 8, Bhubaneswar – 751012
Mobile: +919437078772
Email: amitapatra99@yahoo.com
- 1.30-2.30 Lunch break
- 2.45-3.30 Mr Ambika Prasad Nanda, SPO, UNDP
Odisha Hub, UN House-II, N/4-F/41, IRC Village, Nayapalli,
Bhubaneswar
Mobile: +919437020580
Email: Ambika.Prasad@undp.org
- 3.45-4.30 UNICEF - TBC
44 Surya Nagar, Bhubaneswar 751003
Phone: +91 674 2397977/ 78/ 79/ 80
Contact person: Ms Lopamudra Tripathy
- 4.45-5.30 The Hunger Project (THP) Team, Bhubaneswar - TBC

- 6.00 Smt Aparajita Sarangi
Commissioner cum Secretary,
Panchayati Raj Department, Govt of Odisha
Secretariat, Bhubaneswar
Email: aparajita_sarang_i@rediffmail.com

Contact person for assistance:

PS to the Secretary, Phone: +91 674 2536680, 2322875

27 NOVEMBER 2012 (TUESDAY)

- 8.00 Depart Bhubaneswar by Road
- 10.00 Arrival Dhenkanal, Check in at Pantha Niwas

Meeting with

- 10.30-11.00 Mr. B. P. Panda, IAS
District Collector
Contact No. 06762-225601
- 11.00-12.00 Mr. Jagannath Mohanty
Project Director DRDA
Contact No. – 06762-224506

and Other Dist Level Key Officials

Contact Person
Trinath Mohanta
DPO, UN Women
09437161882

- 12.00-13.00 Travel to Kamakhya Nagar Block
- 13.00-14.00 Lunch at Irrigation Bungalow- Kamakhya Nagar
- 14.00-15.30 Meeting with BDO, ABDO, Panchyat Samitee Chair Person and EWRs, Motivator
- 15.30-16.00 Tea
- 16.00-17.00 Travel Back to Dhenkanal –Dinner at Pantha Niwas-Night Halt

28 NOVEMBER 2012 (WEDNESDAY)

- 9.00-9.30 Breakfast and Tea
- 9.30-10.30 Travel to Babandha village
- 10.30-12.30 Meeting with EWRs and Women
- 12.30-13.30 Travel Back to Dhenkanal Pantha Niwas
- 13.30-14.30 Lunch at Pantha Niwas

- 15.00-17.00 Depart from Dhenkanal to Bhubaneswar
- 17.15 Check in to Hotel

29 NOVEMBER 2012 (THURSDAY)

- 5.30 Depart to Gajapati by road
- 10.30 Arrival at Gajapati
Check in to Circuit House, Breakfast
- 11.00 Proceed to Gosani block
- 11.30 FGD with EWRs
- 13.00 Visit nearby Villages/discussion with the block officials
- 16.30 Proceed to Paralakhemundi Circuit House
- 14.00 LUNCH at Circuit house, Paralakhemundi
- 15.00 Discussion with DPO/UN WOMEN/ZP Chairman

Meeting with

- 16.00 Mr. Basudev Bahinipati,
District Collector, Gajapati
Tel-06815-2223996/97, Mob:+91-9437561919,
dm-gajapati@nic.in

Mr.Ashok Kumar Sarangi, PD, DRDA, Gajapati
Contact No. 06815-222420, 223500, +91-9437334518,

ori-dgajapati@nic.in
Ms.Krishna Halder, District Social Welfare Officer,
Contact No. 06815222025,
+91-9437219220, dswogajapati@nic.in

Mr.Nandi Ram Kuldi, District Panchayat Officer,
Contact No. 06815-222735,+91-9439408832

Contact Person
Minaram Patnaik
District Project Officer(Governance)
+91-6815222420, +91-9437746161
- 18.00 Discussion with the Civil societies organizations
- 19.00 Return to Circuit House, Gajapati

30 NOVEMBER 2012 (FRIDAY)

- 08.30 Proceed to Gumma Block
- 10.00 Discussion with the Block officials
- 11.00 Attend Mahila Sabha

- 12.30 Return to Circuit house at Paralakhemundi
- 13.30 LUNCH at Circuit House, Paralakhemundi

- 14.30 Proceed to Bhubaneswa
- 19.30 Reach Bhubaneswar, Check in to Hotel

1 DECEMBER 2012 (SATURDAY)

- *Debriefing with Smt Aparajita Sarangi and Smt Chithra Arumgam - TBC*
- *Depart to Delhi*

Annex 2.3 Rajasthan

MID TERM REVIEW OF THE UNW GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME

Field visit to Rajasthan, 17-21 DECEMBER, 2012

Team Member: Arkaja Singh

17 December 2012

- Arrive in Jaipur (Please provide Hotel and Flight detail Arkaja)

For Coordination in Jaipur Mr Viplav Kumar, DPO Dungarpur - 09414102994

MONDAY

17 December 2012

Meetings in Jaipur

- 12.30 – 1.30 pm Ms Anita Brandon, Nodal Officer Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj Sansthan
- 1.30 – 2.30 pm Lunch at IGPRS
- 3.00 – 3.30 pm Mr. Madhusudan Sharma, Additional Director Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj Sansthan

Ms Anita Brandon, Nodal Officer IGPRS - 09413344576

TUESDAY: 18 December 2012

7.30 am **Depart for Tonk (Time taken from Jaipur – approximately 2 hours)**

Discussion with

- 10.00 – 10.30 am meeting with officials from CEECODECON – a civil society organization working in Tonk
- 10.30 – 11.00 am Mr Kuldeep Singh Tanwer, UNICEF
- 11.30 – 12.00 pm Mr Rajendra Singh Gurjar, Deputy Director, ICDS, Tonk/ Ms Priyanka Sharma, CDPO Tonk

12.00- 13.00 pm Lunch

Departure to Vanasthali Travel time 13.00- 14.00 pm

- 14.00 – 16.00 pm Newai (Block) and village +FGD+ discussion with NGOs

Departure to Tonk Travel time 16.00- 17.15 pm

- 17.30 – 18.00 pm meeting with Mr Muktanand Aggarwal, IAS, District Collector, Tonk

Night halt at Circuit House - Tonk

For Coordination in Tonk Ms Kavita Mishra, DPO Tonk - 09828766622

WEDNESDAY: 19 December 2012 (Alwar)

8.30 am **Depart for Alwar (Time taken from Jaipur - approximately 4 hours)**

Scheduled Discussion with -

- 2:00 to 2:45 pm Zila Pramukh, Alwar at Zila Parishad Office.
- 2:45 to 3:30 pm CEO, ZP; Alwar- Zila Parishad Office.
- 3:30 to 4:15 pm ACEO, ZP; Alwar- Time at Zila Parishad Office.

- 4:30 to 5: 15 pm DD, ICDS, Alwar- at ICDS office.
- 5:30 to 6:30 pm District Collector, Alwar- Time at Dist. Collector's Office.
- 6:45 to 7:30 pm DPM, NRHM/Dist. Public Health Nurse Manager, DPMU/Block Manager Child Health, NRHM, at CMHO, Alwar.

Night stay at Hotel Clarks In, Alwar

THURSDAY: 20 December 2012 (Alwar)

- 10:00 to 10:45 am Meeting with BDO, Ramgarh, at Panchayat Samiti Office Ramgarh.
- 10:45 to 11:30 am Meeting with Chair Person, (Pradhan) Panchayat Samiti Ramgarh, at Panchayat Samiti Office, Ramgarh.
- 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm Participation in Gram Sabha of Ramgarh Panchayat Samiti
- 2:15 to 3:10 pm Lunch
- 3:15 to 4:00 pm Discussion with one NGO member at Zila Parishad office-Time.
- 4:30 pm Depart for Jaipur

FRIDAY: 21 December 2012 (1/2 day)

Debriefing with State Officials (tbc)

For Coordination in Alwar Mr Vivek Awasthi, DPO Alwar - 09415182514

Annex 2.4 Thimpu and Paro – Bhutan

Independent Mid-Term Review of the Gender Responsive Governance Programme for South Asia 19-23 November 2012.

Monday 19th November

- Arrival of Dr Ananda Millard

Monday 19th November

- 02:30PM-04:00PM Meeting with Angela Ison, UNW/UNRCO Gender Specialist and Mr Kunzang Norbu, ARR UNDP Governance at UNDP Governance Room .
- 04:00PM-05:00PM Briefing meeting with Ms Claire Van der Vaeren, UN Resident Coordinator, Angela Ison, and UNDP DRR Ms Hideko Hadzialic and ARR Mr Kunzang Norbu at UNRC Office.

Tuesday , 20th November

- 09:00AM-11:00AM Meeting with Dir Dorji Thinley, Director for Research and Development, and Mr Changa Dorji, Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) at Research and External Relations Office, RUB
- 11:00AM-11:10AM Travel from RUB to GNHC.
- 11:10AM-01:00PM Meeting with Ms Tandin Wangmo, Senior Programme Coordinator, Development Cooperation Division and Ms Sonam Choki, Programme Officer and Gender Focal Point, Gross National Happiness Commission at GNHC Office.
- 01:00PM-02:00PM Lunch.
- 02:00PM-02:10PM Travel to RENEW.
- 02:10PM-03:30PM Meeting with Aum Chime, Executive Director, Dr Meenakshi Rai, RENEW at RENEW Office.

Wednesday, 21 November

- 09:00AM -10:30AM Meeting with Mr Rinzin and Ms Sonam Chuki, Dept of National Budget, Ministry of Finance at DNB/MoF Office.
- 10:30AM-10:40AM Travel from MoF to National Council.
- 10:40AM-12:40PM Meeting with Mr Tshering Dendup, Programme Officer (et al) National Council Secretariat at NC Secretariat.
- 12:40PM-01:40PM Lunch.
- 01:40PM-02:00PM Travel from NC to Department of Local Governance (DLG)
- 02:00PM-03:30PM Meeting with Mr Karma Galay, Senior Programme Officer and Mr Wangdi Gyeltsen, Programme Officer, Department of Local Governance at DLG Office.

Thursday, 22 November

- 09:30AM-11:30AM Meeting with Mr Sonam Penjor, Programme Officer and Ms Tsewang Lhamo, Asst Programme Officer, NCWC Women's Division and selected interministerial gender focal points Travel to Paro at NCWC Office.

- 11:30AM-01:00PM Travel to Paro.
- 01:00PM-02:00PM Lunch.
- 02:00PM-04:00PM Meeting with Tsheten Zangmo Elected Women Representative (Mangmi) Dogar Gewog, Paro, Phub Dolma Elected Women Representative (Mangmi) Wangchang Gewog, at Paro Dzong.

Friday, 23 November

- 10:00AM-11:00 AM De-briefing meeting with Ms Claire Van der Vaeren, UN Resident Coordinator, Angela Ison, UNDP DRR Hideko Hadzialic and ARR Mr Kunzang Norbu at UNRC Office.

Saturday , 24 November

Departure

Annex 3 Methodology

In this annex we present the methodology and methodological tools employed during the MTR.

Annex 3.1 Approach and method used

This MTR aimed to be both extractive, and also serve as a learning process for stakeholders. Therefore, fieldwork included feedback sessions with key stakeholders. These meetings enabled the discussion of preliminary impressions and exchange of further perceptions, ideas and understandings of the findings and their interpretation. This process, together with consultation with key stakeholders including Norad, the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Delhi, the Government of India (GoI) and UN Women, at different stages of the process, has assisted the MTR team in ensuring that the final report responds to the key questions posed by the different stakeholders as much as possible.

Given that the programme has been most active in India, proportionally, the majority of the data utilized is directly relevant to India. In addition to conducting field research in India, the programme in Bhutan was also visited and key partners met with.

The data gathering process and its subsequent analysis was organized using three different, but complementary, methodological frameworks; which together have enabled us to respond to both the general, as well as the specific, objectives of this task. These frameworks include: an adapted version of **abilities of actors approach**, the **results based management framework**, and the **Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) identification diagram**. However, in order to simplify the presentation of the findings we have focused our presentation of findings on the *abilities framework* guided by the questions noted in the ToR (See Annex 1).

The abilities framework, originally designed to evaluate organizations, was used here to frame the programme review. The approach enabled us to examine a number of the programme's characteristics and attributes in order to determine where its strengths and weaknesses lie at a macro level. These included:

- **Ability to be?** The degree to which the programme has a clear and recognized identity that enables it to support its mandate, and serves to facilitate its work.
- **Ability to organize?** The degree to which the programme is organized in a manner that best supports the generation of outputs, outcomes and impact.
- **Ability to relate?** The degree to which the programme interacts with key stakeholders, and capitalizes on the relationships it has with different stakeholders.
- **Ability to do?** The degree to which the programme meets its operational objectives. This section focuses primarily on the implementation of the *RBM framework*.

In order to gather relevant data, the team has utilized the following methodologies:

- **Stakeholder analysis:** Commissioning bodies, primary beneficiaries, implementers; and other interested parties at local, state, national and regional levels. This analysis informed the decision on respondent groups and types of interviews.

- **Desk review and literature review:** The review of programme documentation, as well as relevant background literature and material.
- **Interviews:** Interviews in person or via phone/Skype were used to collect detailed information from multiple respondents including programme staff and other stakeholders. Both semi-structured and open-ended individual and group interviews were used. A purposive sampling strategy that relied on information gathered through the literature review and in consultation with key actors, mainly UN Women, the India Government and the Embassy in Delhi was used.
- **Site visits and observations:** Field visits to 3 Indian states, and 6 districts, were conducted. These visits enabled the conduct of interviews, as well as observation of Gram Sabha and Mahila Sabha meetings. Observation of the aforementioned meetings enabled a better understanding of their conduct and facilitated direct interaction with participating women, elected representatives and UN Women Programme staff.

Originally, we had intended to use **surveys** as a mechanism to collect standardised data across implementing partners and stakeholders. However, once the review got underway and the team became more familiar with the activities undertaken, it became apparent that a survey would add little to the data collection process given the diverse type of activities undertaken, actors involved, and contexts. Therefore, this tool was not utilized in favour of a stronger reliance on semi-structured and open-ended individual and group interviews.

After reviewing the programme documents available to us during the inception period and discussing options both amongst our team and with the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Delhi, the UN Women office, and the Indian government representative at the MoPR, a set of states and districts were identified as the most relevant study cases (see Table 2).

Table 2 - Districts and States visited

States	Districts
Andhra Pradesh	Mahbubnagar
	Vizianagaram
Rajasthan	Alwar
	Tonk
Odisha	Dhenkanal
	Gajapati

The selection of field visit locations was also purposive. Locations were selected because UN Women, the Royal Norwegian Embassy and the GoI agreed that they were representative of the conditions faced by the programme more generally.

Data gathered during the field visits in India was used as the basis for the state reports found in the Annexes. The data was also, like the data from Bhutan, used throughout the report to inform on findings. When there was a lack of alignment of responses or experiences noted in the report specifically, refer to data gathered from a specific location (i.e., state or district) where this is so noted.

Wherever possible, data has been triangulated (i.e., multiple sources and multiple data gathering methods). This has meant that interviews have been used to corroborate our understanding of written material. Exceptions to this include statements of fact gleaned from existing documents, positions of institutional representatives, and perceptions of beneficiaries. In the case of perceptions from beneficiaries, it was not possible to triangulate data using multiple data gathering

mechanisms since all the data was gathered through interviews. However, no information was reported which was not corroborated by multiple respondents.

Annex 3.2 Mid-Term Review Team

The team was composed of four key team members and two quality assurors. The team leader, an NCG partner, was in charge of oversight of the review. She was involved in the methodological design, data gathering generally, and particularly the Bhutan and Pakistan case studies. She took part in the Odisha case study and was responsible for drafting, compiling and submitting all deliverables associated with this task. Arkaja Singh and Asmita Basu, team members and GHK consultants, were responsible for the design of methodological tools for the India state level case studies, as well as for data collection on the Bangladesh and Nepal cases respectively. Both Arkaja and Asmita were responsible for drafting the Annexes that correspond to state specific cases studies. Asha Newsum, a team member and GHK consultant, was responsible for examining the programme overall and in particular, the governance and accountability processes. Asha was responsible for drafting Annexes 7-9 which focus on governance, monitoring and financial reporting. Janne Lexow, a NCG senior partner, and Richard Slater, a GHK principal, served as quality assurors for the project. The review was conducted in the period between September 2012 and February 2013, with fieldwork taking place between November 19th and December 17th, 2012.

Annex 3.3 Limitations of the review

The start of the MTR in India was delayed on multiple occasions. These delays caused a general delay in the submission of findings, but did not affect the collection of data in any way.

The MTR team visited states and districts and was assisted by UN Women and THP, which meant that all women interviewed/met with were direct beneficiaries of the programme, and that programme staff were present during discussions with beneficiaries. All interactions with women and EWRs were arranged and moderated by State Institutes for Rural Development (SIRD), UN Women District Project Officer (DPO) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which have partnered with THP. This is likely to have impeded open and free discussion, particularly if the respondent had anything critical to contribute to the discussion. Language was a barrier in the case of Andhra Pradesh and despite our request for third party interpreters, the Andhra Pradesh Academy of Rural Development (APARD) representative served as the interpreter, thereby further reducing the independence of the review. Additionally, field visits were hampered because in some cases key background information was provided the evening before the field visits thus not allowing enough time to fine tune questionnaires and research tools.

Moreover, this MTR did not include a control study in order to measure the degree of change between areas where UN Women has intervened, and areas where it has not. Therefore, it is impossible to know with total certainty if the progress made can be solely attributed to the UN Women Programme, or to the conduct of specific community meetings under the auspices of the programme. The degree to which, for example, the Mahila Sabhas⁷⁰ can be credited with change is unknown, although

⁷⁰ Mahila Sabha are special assemblies similar to Ward and Gram Sabhas with the exception that it is held only with women above the age of 18 (or voting age) residing in the territorial limits of a Gram Panchayat area. The role and responsibilities of Mahila Sabhas are determined by the state government or mentioned in the agenda of the meeting itself. Mahila

they appear to be very positive endeavours. The MTR included phone/Skype interview(s) with the relevant staff in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. Having not visited these countries, our ability to detail and confirm claims made has been hampered.

The significant gaps in the budget, expenditure and financial data, and reports, has necessitated considerable extra lines of enquiry, data analysis and the development of financial reports specific for the review. Had there been a robust financial and budget management system, the reports and reconciliation would have been much quicker and results more accurate. Despite the aforementioned shortcomings, we feel the findings of this review are still valuable and can serve to contribute to the next stage of the programme.

Sabhas are not a a statutory institution (unlike Gram Sabhas), their roles and responsibilities are less formal and generally aim to mobilise and prepare women to participate in Gram Sabha meetings and other Panchayat activities.

Annex 3.4 Questions Asked During the MRT

Below a table outlining the general questions and sources of data used is provided. This table provides a general overview of the type of questions that were asked throughout the review process, but is not a detailed listing of each and every question that was asked.

Review Questions	Sources of data	Desk Review/material reviewed	Interview Question	Survey Question for partners and stake holders
Q 1 Overall review question				
The extent to which the “Promoting Women’s Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia” programme is on track in achieving its stated goal, outcomes and outputs?		Program plan, amendment to program plan documents, review of outputs and outcomes	Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: Which goals have been achieved so far? Which goals have not been achieved? Why? Beneficiaries: Why type of activity would be helpful to you in order to ensure a greater degree of women’s participation in decision-making?	Which goals have been achieved so far? (pick list) Which goals have not been achieved? (pick list) Why?
Q 2 Assess the relevance of the programme objectives in the national and regional contexts				
2.1 How was the situation and needs analysis undertaken for the “Promoting Women’s Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia” programme and its activities?	Desk review Interviews with programme staff and stakeholders	Program plan, amendment to program plan documents, review of outputs and outcomes	Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: How was the relevance assessed before the program started? How has it been assessed during the program? and how is it assessed now? What were the conclusions of the assessment of relevance at each stage of the programme cycle? What types of amendments were made to the program in order	How was the relevance assessed before the program started? How has it been assessed during the program? and how is it assessed now? What were the conclusions of the assessment of relevance at each stage of the programme cycle? What types of amendments were made to the program in order to adapt to changing needs (relevance)?

			<p>to adapt to changing needs (relevance)?</p> <p>Beneficiaries: What type of activities do you feel are most relevant in order to (goal/objective of the task at hand)?</p>	
2.2 How were the priorities identified and who were consulted?	Desk review Interview with programme staff and stakeholders	Program plan, amendment to program plan documents.	<p>Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: Who and how were priorities identified? Has the same process to identify priorities been used throughout the life cycle of the program?</p> <p>Beneficiaries: Do you know who designed the priorities of the program? Were you (or your peers) involved? What was the purpose of this involvement? Or Do you think that being involved would have been useful and if so how/why?</p>	Who and how were priorities identified? Has the same process to identify priorities been used throughout the life cycle of the program?
2.3 The extent to which the programme is successful in addressing key priorities of relevant stakeholders?	Desk review Interview with programme staff and stakeholders	Description of project activities, outputs and documented outcomes	<p>Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: What are the key priorities regarded "Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia" programme? How have these priorities identified as relevant? Which group of stakeholders</p>	What are the key priorities regarded "Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia" programme? How have these priorities identified as relevant?

			are these priorities relevant to?	
			Beneficiaries: What are your key priorities regarding “Promoting Women’s Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia” programme? Have these priorities been met?	
Q 3 Assess the effectiveness and coherence of the strategies adopted;				
3.1 The extent to which the research strategy of the “Promoting Women’s Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia” programme is contributing to the achievement of programme objectives?	Desk review Interviews with programme staff, partners and stakeholders Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme	Research products: plans, projects, outputs	Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: Are you familiar with the research strategy? Who developed the strategy? How was the strategy developed? Beneficiaries: Do you think that research in this field is needed? Why? What is its utility? If yes (to needed) what type of research do you think is required and why?	Are you familiar with the research strategy? Who developed the strategy? How was the strategy developed?
3.2 The extent to which the research component feed into other components and strategies of the programme (advocacy, training and capacity building, south-south exchange)?	Desk review Interviews with stakeholders and research partners Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme	Research outputs and program documents delineating program goals. Strategy and plan of action for how research is to be employed and has been employed.	Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: Are you familiar with any of the research outputs? Have you use them? What for? Beneficiaries: Have you had access to the research outputs? If yes have they been useful and what for?	Do you think that research in this field is needed? Why? What is its utility? If yes (to needed) what type of research do you think is required and why?

<p>3.3 The extent to which the training, policy advocacy and lobbying are contributing towards a) reducing barriers for women’s political participation, b) women elected representatives’ ability to transform policies c) changes in legal frameworks, policies and resource allocations?</p>	<p>Desk review Interviews with stakeholders</p>	<p>Review of activities conducted and documents outputs and outcomes</p>	<p>Programme staff, partners, stakeholder: What have been the outputs, outcome and impact of the activities conducted and how have these been measured?</p>	<p>What have been the outputs, outcome and impact of the activities conducted and how have these been measured?</p>
<p>3.4 The extent to which the “Promoting Women’s Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia” programme is reaching relevant development and media institutions in the region and to what extent is this leading to a strengthened focus on “Promoting Women’s Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia” programme in their activities?</p>	<p>Desk review Interviews with stakeholders Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme</p>	<p>Review of media related effort, documents and outputs</p>	<p>Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: What type of media effort has been undertaken, what has been the aim of these media efforts and what has been the impact of these efforts? How has the impact been measured?</p>	<p>Has a media effort been undertaken in your country? If yes what was the goal of such an effort and what has been the documented outcome?</p>
<p>3.5 The extent to which lessons learned through other components of the programme are used strategically in communication and media outreach?</p>	<p>Interview with programme staff, partners and stakeholders</p>	<p>Media outreach documents and relevant source documents</p>	<p>Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: How has the design of media outreach been developed? Who has designed the media outreach outputs?</p>	<p>How has the design of media outreach been developed? Who has designed the media outreach outputs?</p>
<p>3.6 The extent to which experiences and concerns from partners and stakeholders have been fed into decision-making and advocacy and vice versa, how lessons learned from the programme have benefited partners and stakeholders?</p>	<p>Interview with programme staff, partners and stakeholders Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme</p>	<p>Decision making procedures and minutes from meeting or other events that led to changes or amendments to the project documents.</p>	<p>Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: How are decisions taken? How are experiences from stakeholders incorporated in the decision making process (if they are incorporated at all)?</p>	<p>How are decisions taken? How are experiences from stakeholders incorporated in the decision making process (if they are incorporated at all)?</p>

Q 4 Identify the strengths and challenges regarding the regional dimension of the programme				
4.1 Regional research programme	Desk review Interviews with research partners and stakeholders Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme	Background and operational documentation on the regional research programme, outputs.	Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: What have you experienced thus far as the main strengths and challenges to the regional research program? Has the research program been able to capture the full regional dimension of the “Promoting Women’s Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia” programme?	What have you experienced thus far as the main strengths and challenges to the regional research program? Has the research program been able to capture the full regional dimension of the “Promoting Women’s Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia” programme?
4.2 Strengthening women’s coalitions regionally	Desk review Interviews with stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme	Background and operational documentation on the regional women’s coalitions.	Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: Who are the coalition members? What is their role? What is the objective of their role? Is it important to strengthen their role? If yes why and how?	Who are the coalition members? What is their role? What is the objective of their role? Is it important to strengthen their role? If yes why and how?
4.3 South-South exchange	Desk review, interviews with stakeholders Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme	Background and operational documents on South-South exchange.	Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: Who are the south-south exchange participating agencies/illegible individuals? What is the program aiming to achieve? Has the program achieved its objectives? How has this been documented?	Who are the south-south exchange participating agencies/illegible individuals? What is the program aiming to achieve? Has the program achieved its objectives? How has this been documented?
Q 5 Assess the efficiency and cost-effectiveness in implementation and delivery of outputs				
5.2 How effective, efficient and	Desk review,	Reports on staff and costs of	District, state and national	

economical is the programme management arrangements at district, state, country and regional levels	interviews with stakeholders Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme	running the programme. Programme management guidelines, rules and procedures	staff	
5.3 How are inputs determined, prioritised, costed and acquired?	Desk review, interviews with stakeholders Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme	Decision making structures and processes; Work plans, programme meeting minutes; procurement procedures	District, state, national staff	
5.4 What internal systems are utilised for assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of inputs to realise activities and outputs and to agreed qualitative, quantitative and timeliness criteria.	Desk review, interviews with stakeholders Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme	Internal monitoring and recording systems. Service provider reports; Reports for beneficiaries e.g. EWRs and PRIs	District, state, national staff and service providers	
5.5 Are there systems for coordination and lesson-learning/information sharing between districts/states/countries to ensure coherence, coordination and consistency, avoid duplication and secure cost effective inputs	Desk review, interviews with stakeholders Interviews by phone/questionnaires by email to other countries than India in the programme	Internal systems, websites and communications strategy	District, state, national staff	
5.6 What measures are taken to integrate/complement programme activities, outputs	Interviews	Reports, evidence of complementary programmes		

and outcomes with other district, state and national initiatives				
5.7 How effective has UN Women been in ensuring adequate human, financial and technical resources towards the programme?	Analysis of resources, organizational capacity Interview with programme staff, partners and Embassy staff	Contracts, ToR, organograms, financial distribution by task, role, etc	Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: How different departments/units relate to one another? How have the needs of the program been identified in terms of required resources? Have all the demands for human resources been met? At what stage in the program were the human resources required attained? Are there positions which still require to be filled? If yes how many and to do what? Are these distinction (above questions) by region, country, state, district??	How different departments/units relate to one another? How have the needs of the program been identified in terms of required resources? Have all the demands for human resources been met? At what stage in the program were the human resources required attained? Are there positions which still require to be filled? If yes how many and to do what? Are there distinction (above questions) by region, country, state, district??
5.2 What measures have been taken during the planning and implementation phase to ensure that resources are efficiently used?	Review of reporting, cost data and financial records Interview with programme staff, partners and Embassy staff	Documentation describing any streamlining of the human resource structure	Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: Have there been any changes to the human resources structures throughout the life cycle of the program? If yes what were they and why were these changes implemented?	Have there been any changes to the human resources structures throughout the life cycle of the program? If yes what were they and why were these changes implemented?
5.3 The extent to which activities and outputs delivered as agreed?	Review of reporting, cost data and financial records Interview with programme staff and partners	Documentation of outputs vs. planned activities	Programme staff, partners, stakeholder: Have there been any modifications made to the planned activities? If yes what were they and why did the modification take place?	Have there been any modifications made to the planned activities? If yes what were they and why did the modification take place?
Q 6 Assess the performance and management of programme support, including <i>risk management, results based management, reporting and financial management;</i>				

6.1 To what extent are the management structures of the programme adequate and effective?	Analysis of reporting, interviews with programme staff, partners and stakeholders	Organogram, ToR, project plans, procedures	Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: How are tasks attributed within the institution? To whom? And how are they implemented??who implements them? (follow the activity cycle)	
6.2 To what extent is decision making in the programme following contractual agreements?	Desk review and interviews with programme staff, partners and Embassy staff	Organogram, ToR, project plans, procedures. Program documents (contracts with partners, donors etc)	Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: What has your experience been thus far as pertains to the actual implementation of contractual agreements?	
6.3 How well has the “Promoting Women’s Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia” programme followed up risk management through the programme period from developing and updating analysis, mitigating measures and in implementing mitigating measures?	Desk review and interviews with programme staff, partners and Embassy staff	Risk management plan	Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: Please describe the risk management plan/cycle? Who is responsible for each components? Has it been implemented already?	
6.4 Assess the systems in place for ensuring a results based approach to programming, including the quality of the results framework, and identify areas of improvement	Desk review and interviews with programme staff, partners and Embassy staff	Results framework, log frame	Programme staff, partners, stakeholder: Please describe the process of developing the results framework and how this has been adapted if needed and implemented?	
6.5 The extent to which the reporting fulfils agreed requirements and to what extent does it provide adequate information regarding progress and challenges?	Desk review and interviews with programme staff, partners and Embassy staff	Reporting on activities	Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: What utility does the reporting have for you? Has the reporting been useful to you thus far? What has it been useful for? Has the	

			degree of detail been adequate for you?	
6.6 The extent to which agreed auditing procedures are followed?	Desk review, audit reports, interviews with programme staff, partners and Embassy staff	Audit reports, Audit requirement documents	Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: Do the audits meet the requirements of your institution?	
6.7 Assess the financial implementation rates as per the planned budgets and progress?	Analysis of planned budgets and expenditure reports	Budgets and expenditure reports		
Q 7 Assess the sustainability of the activities initiated				
7.1 To what extent have measures been adopted to ensure sustainability of the programme activities and achievements?	Desk review and interviews with programme staff, partners	Assessments of and plans for ensuring sustainability	Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: What do you think are the major threats to sustainability? How has sustainability been tackled in this program so far? Beneficiaries: What do you think are the major threats to sustainability? How has sustainability been tackled in this program so far?	What do you think are the major threats to sustainability? How has sustainability been tackled in this program so far?
7.2 To what extent has ownership of the programme activities been assured with the different partners and how?	Desk review and interviews with programme staff, partners	Contracts with partners	Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: Who has been involved in designing the program? Has ownership been discussed? Is ownership considered essential? Ownership by whom? Beneficiaries: Who has been involved in designing the program? How can ownership (at different level) be assured?	Who has been involved in designing the program? Has ownership been discussed? Is ownership considered essential? Ownership by whom?

			What role does ownership play in the ultimate success or failure of the program	
7.3 What are the greatest threats to the sustainability of the outcomes of the programme?	Desk review and interviews with programme staff, partners and Embassy staff	Assessments of and plans for ensuring sustainability	<p>Programme staff, partners, and stakeholder: Has sustainability been discussed with all partners/stakeholders??have you been involved in this discussion? What are the key components to ensuring sustainability?</p> <p>Beneficiaries: Has anyone discussed the sustainability of the program with you? What are they key components to ensuring sustainability.</p>	

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- UN Women. n.d. Logframe for Increasing Political Leadership and Participation Programme. .
- UN Women. n.d. Madhya Pradesh: Reporting for second quarter. Project period from November 2010 to February 2011.
- UN Women. n.d. Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Panchayat Raj Republic of India and The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development Kingdom of Norway for mutual cooperation on Local Governance.
- UN Women. n.d. Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Panchayat Raj Government of India and United Nations Women.
- UN Women. n.d. Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Panchayat Raj Government of India and United Nations Women.
- UN Women. n.d. Memorandum of Understanding between UNIFEM and The Hunger Project.
- UN Women. n.d. Minutes of the Grama Sabha in Sarjakhanpet in Kosgi mandal in Mahabubnagar district of Andhara Pradesh, India.
- UN Women. n.d. Mission to Andhra Pradesh. Project period from 16 October to 18 October 2012.
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- UN Women. n.d. Monthly Progress Report Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance MoPR, GoI – UN Women. Project period from August 2011 to October 2011.
- UN Women. n.d. Narrative report for project Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia. Project period from December 2012 to June 2012.
- UN Women. n.d. NIBR Inception Report - Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia.
- UN Women. n.d. NIRD Approach.

- UN Women. n.d. Note on Annual Consultations with the donor.
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- UN Women. n.d. Note on NPSC and SSC.
- UN Women. n.d. Note on the issues discussed in the meetings of Gram Sabhas and Gram Panchayats.
- UN Women. n.d. Note to file, Recruitment of Mr Shibabrata Kar as Project Support Officer for UN Women Programme in Odisha to be placed at SIRD, Bhubaneswar.
- UN Women. n.d. Office order of Mahila Sabha.
- UN Women. n.d. Order by district administration.
- UN Women. n.d. Order from Rajasthan Government.
- UN Women. n.d. Orissa: Reporting for second quarter. Project period from November 2010 to February 2011.
- UN Women. n.d. Partners of UN Women.
- UN Women. n.d. Position Paper Regional Center of Excellence on Women's Political Leadership and Gender Responsive Governance in South Asia.
- UN Women. n.d. Programme of the visit to Mumbai and Andhra Pradesh by the ambassadors of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Program period from 29 April 2012 to 5 May 2012.
- UN Women. n.d. Progress of GOI-UN Women Programme Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia.
- UN Women. n.d. Progress report - Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia. Project period from March 2011 to September 2011.
- UN Women. n.d. Progress Report Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia, Annual Consultation Document.
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- UN Women. n.d. Project Cooperation Agreement between the UN Women and Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration on strengthening gender responsive governance: Mainstreaming gender in capacity development and training modules.
- UN Women. n.d. Project Cooperation Agreement between the UN Women and Government of Madhya Pradesh.
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- UN Women. n.d. Promoting Political Leadership for Good Governance in India and South Asia.
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UNIFEM. n.d. Project Cooperation Agreement between the United Nations Development Fund for Women and NIRD.

UNIFEM. n.d. Project Proposal on Women’s Political Empowerment Day Celebrations. Project period from 24 April 2011 to 25 April 2011.

UNIFEM. n.d. UNIFEM Vision.

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Vizianagaram District.

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UNDAF.n.d.Annual work plan for Support for Parliamentary Democracy in Bhutan.Project period from Jan 2011 to June 2012.

UNDAF.n.d.18 Months Rolling Work Plan for UN Support for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equity.Project Period from Jan. 2011 to June 2012.

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National Commission for Women and Children. 20 March 2012.Gender and Development.

Gross National Happiness Commission,Royal Government of Bhutan.15th March 2012.Guidelines for Preperation of the Eleventh Five Year Plan.Project period from 2013 to 2018.

National Plan of Action for Gender.n.d.Gross National Happiness Commission, National Commission for Women and Children, Royal Government of Bhutan.Project period from 2008 to 2013.

Department of Local Governance with Support of the UN (UNWomen and UNDP).n.d.Workshop on Gender Responsive Governance for the Department of Local Government Officials (Elected Representatives). Project period from 8 October 2012 to 31 October 2012.

UN Women.n.d.Report on Research Preparatory and Planning Workshop.Project period from 7 June 2012 to 12 June 2012.

UN Women.n.d.Data Entry and Preliminary Analysis Workshop.Project period 22 Oct. 2012 to 29 Oct. 2012.

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National Commission for Women and Children.October 2012.Report on Women's Political Participation in 2011 Local Government Election.

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UN Women.23 December 2011. Policy Framework on Gender Equality Consultation.

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UN Women.n.d.Eliminating Violence Against Women in AJK.

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UN Women.June 2012.Women's Political Empowerment and Participation.

UN Women.11 October 2011.Concept Note for Developing National and Provincial Frameworks on Gender Equality.

Azad Jammu and Kashmir.n.d.State policy framework for empowerment of women.

Women Development Department Government of Balochistan.n.d.policy framework for gender equality and empowerment of women.

UN Women.n.d.Letter of Agreement between UN Women and NADRA, Government of Pakistan on the implementation of nationwide women identification(ID) card registration drive when UN Women serves as Executing entity.

UN Women.n.d.Letter of Agreement between UN Women and Provincial Assembly Secretariat of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) for Capacity building of provincial assembly KP to strengthen engendered legislative processes under the South Asian Governance Project.

UN Women.17 June 2011.Memorandum of understanding between the Women's Parliamentary Caucus, Pakistan and UN Women.

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UN Women.n.d.Gender and Governance Program Framework for UN Women in Pakistan.

UN Women.n.d. Annual Progress Narrative Report to South Asia Sub-Regional Office (SASRO) for Promoting women's political leadership and governance:

Working towards Women Human Rights in Pakistan. Project period August 2011 to October 2012.

UN Women. n.d. Concept Note for Promoting women's political leadership and governance: Working towards Women Human Rights in Pakistan.

UN Women. 21 December 2012. Gender and Governance Program Framework for UN Women in Pakistan.

UN Women. 9 August 2012. Steering Committee Meeting for Promoting women's political leadership and governance: Working towards Women Human Rights in Pakistan.

UN Women. 25 Feb. 2011. Result Framework and Budget for Promoting women's political leadership and governance: Working towards Women Human Rights. Project period from 2011 to 2013.

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Government of Nepal. Ministry of Local Development. *Local Governance and Community Development Programme*; (LGCDP). 2008 Undated project document received from UN Women Nepal.

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UN Women. N.d. Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in Bangladesh. Project period from January 2012 to June 2013.

NORAD. 2 March 2012. Review of proposal for UN Women Bangladesh Women's Political Leadership and Governance in Bangladesh.

UN Wome. N.d. Note to the procurement of video conference system for UN Women Bangladesh programme office.

Annex 5 List of interviewees

Annex 5.1 List of Interviewees – Andhra Pradesh

Name	Position	Place	Interview type	Date
C.R. Biswal	Principal Secretary, Department of Panchayati Raj and Rural Development	Hyderabad	Group Interview	19.11.12
Ram Gopal	Department of Panchayati Raj and Rural Development	Hyderabad	Group Interview	19.11.12
Dr. Krishna Chandramouli	Commissioner, AMR-APARD, Rajendranagar	Hyderabad	Group Interview	19.11.12
Prof. Suryanaryana Reddy Ms Sunitha Ms.	AMR – APARD	Hyderabad	Group Interview	19.11.12
Saba Hasnain	DPO, Mahbubnagar	Mahbubnagar	Group and individual interviews	20.11.12
	District Collector	Mahbubnagar	Group Interview	20.11.12
	CEO, CEO Dy, Project Director ICDS, Project Director Water and Sanitation	Mahbubnagar	Group interview	20.11.12
	MPDO Block Level Officers	Narayanpet	Group interview	20.11.12
	Meeting with women and motivators	Kotakonda	Group interview	21.11.12
Sri Krishna	DPO, Srikakulum	Vizianagaram	Individual and group interviews	22.11.12
Veeraswamy	DPO, Vizianagaram	Vizianagaram	Individual and group interviews	22.11.12
M Veerabriaiah	District Collector	Vizianagaram	Group interview	22.11.12
N Mohan Rao	CEO Zila Parishad	Vizianagaram	Group and individual interview	22.11.12
Sreeramukular Naidu	Project Director, DRDA	Vizianagaram	Group interview	22.11.12
Mr. Rabarts	Project Director, ICDS	Vizianagaram	Group interview	22.11.12
	NGO Jhansi Laxmibai Mahila Society Bapuji Mahila organization Roses Deeksha Mahila Welfare	Vizianagaram	Group interview	22.11.12

	Organization Mahila Samatha Society Uzawal Welfare Society Grameena Uikasa Kendram			
	Ex-EWRs	Vizianagara m	Group interview	22.11.12
	Motivtors	Vizianagara m	Group interview	22.11.12
	EWRs, village workers and women	Iddanavalasa	Group interview	23.11.12

Annex 5.2 List of Interviewees – Odisha

Name	Position	Place	Interview type	Date
Shibabrata Kar	Nodal Officer, Odisha	Bhubaneswar	Individual and group	26.11.12
Saroj Dash	Deputy Director SIRD	Bhubaneswar	Group interview	26.11.12
Amita Patra	SIRD Team	Bhubaneswar	Group interview	26.11.12
Ambika Prasad Nanda	SPO, UNDP	Bhubaneswar	Individual interview	26.11.12
Padmavathi Yelda	UNICEF	Bhubaneswar	Individual interview	26.11.12
Ritali and Sukant	THP	Bhubaneswar	Group interview	26.11.12
Aparajita Sarangi	Commissioner-cum Secretary, Panchayati Raj Department, Govt of Odisha	Bhubaneswar	Group interview	26.11.12
Trinath Mohanta	DPO, Dhenkanal	Dhenkanal	Individual interview	27.11.12
B. P. Panda, IAS	District Collector	Dhenkanal	Individual interview	27.11.12
Jagannath Mohanty and other district level officials	Project Director DRDA	Dhenkanal	Group interview	27.11.12
PLEASE INSERT	THP	Dhenkanal	Group interview	27.11.12
Basak Majhi Nilanjan Mishra	BDO, ABDO, Panchayat Samiti Chair Person, EWRs, Motivators	Kamakhyana gar	Group interview	27.11.12
	EWRs, women, motivators	Babandha	Group interview	28.11.12
Minaram Patnaik	DPO, Gajapati	Gajapati	Individual and group interviews	29.11.12
Basudev Bahinipati Ashok Kumar Sarangi Nandi Ram Kuldi	District Collector Project Director DRDA District Panchayat Officer Other line department officers	Gajapati	Individual and group interview	29.11.12
	THP partner Institute for Women and Development	Gajapati	Group interview	29.11.12

Annex 5.3 List of Interviewees – Rajasthan

Name	Position	Place	Interview type	Date
Mr. Madhusudan Sharma,	Additional Director Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj & Gramin Vikas Sansthan	Jaipur	Group interview	17-12-12
Dr Anita Brandon	Professor, Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj& Gramin Vikas Sansthan State Nodal Officer (Officer in Charge of all UN projects)	Jaipur	Individual interview	17-12-12
Ms. Kavita Mishra	DPO, Tonk	Tonk	Individual interview	18-12-12
Mr Kuldeep Singh Tanwer	District Project Officer, UNICEF	Tonk	Phone interview	18-12-12
Mr Jagdish Jaju	Programme Officer, Women's Empowerment, ICDS	Tonk	Individual interview	18-12-12
Mr Lalu Ram	Sarpanch, Vanasthali Gram Sabha	Vanasthali village, Tonk	Individual interview	18-12-12
Ms Rajesh	CEECODECON Presently Block Coordinator, THP	Vanasthali village, Tonk	Group interview	18-12-12
Anil Bharadwaj	CEECODECON Presently District Programme Officer, Save the Children	Tonk	Individual interview	18-12-12
Mr Muktanand Agarwal	District Collector, Tonk	Tonk	Individual interview	18-12-12
Mr Kamalram Meena	CEO Zila Parishad, Alwar	Alwar	Individual interview	19-12-12
Mr Vivek Awasthi	DPO Alwar	Alwar	Group interview	18-12-12
Mr Viplav Kumar	DPO Dungarpur	Alwar	Group interview	18-12-12
Mr Surendra Singh	District Programme Manager, NRHM (Health)	Alwar	Individual interview	18-12-12
Mr Yugal Kishore Meena	Dy Director, ICDS, Alwar	Alwar	Individual interview	18-12-12
Ms Safiya Khan	Pramukh, Zila Parishad, Alwar	Alwar	Individual interview	18-12-12
Mr Ashutosh A.T. Pednekar	District Collector, Alwar	Alwar	Individual interview	19-12-12
Ms Santosh Bhargava	Action for Women's Awareness and Rural Development	Alwar	Individual interview	20-12-12

	(NGO)			
Mr Noor Mohammad and colleagues	Alwar Mewat Institute of Education and Development (THP Partner)	Alwar	Group interview	20-12-12
Mr Manoj Kumar	Block Development Officer, Ramgarh Block Alwar	Ramgarh, Alwar	Group interview	20-12-12
Mr Har Mahendra Singh	Up Pradhan, Ramgarh Panchayat Samiti	Ramgarh, Alwar	Group interview	20-12-12

Focus group discussion in Vanasthali Gram Panchayat, Tonk district with mixed group of EWRs ICDS workers, motivators and women in Gram Panchayat meeting hall on 18-12-12.

Observed Special Gram Sabha meetings in Naugawa Gram Panchayat and Khedi Gram Panchayat in Alwar District on 20-12-12.

Annex 5.4 List of Interviewees – General (India, Norway, Other country Programs)

Name	Position	Place	Interview Type	Date 2012
Suraj Kumar	Head of Governance,	UN Women Office	Meeting	7, 8 & 23/11
Meenakshi Kathel,	Senior Program Specialist	UN Women Office	Meeting	7, 8 & 23/11
John Borgoyary,	Programme Analyst (Governance)	UN Women Office	Meeting	7, 8 & 23/11
Naresh Chopra	Finance	UN Women Office	Meeting	7, 8 & 23/11
Narendra Singh	Finance	UN Women Office	Meeting	7, 8 & 23/11
Diya Dutta, diya.dutta@unwomen.org		UN Women Office	Meeting	7, 8 & 23/11
Rachna Bisht,		UN Women Office	Meeting	7, 8 & 23/11
Anne Stenhammer,	Head, UN Women, SARO	UN Women Office	Meeting	7, 8 & 23/11 and
Sushma Kapoor,	Deputy Regional Programme Director	UN Women Office	Meeting	7, 8 & 23/11
Alka Gulati,		UN Women Office	Meeting	7, 8 & 23/11
Shreyasi Jha,	Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist	UN Women Office	Meeting	7, 8 & 23/11
Rajat Khanna,	Monitoring & Evaluation Officer	UN Women Office	Meeting	7, 8 & 23/11
Bharti Sharma	Programme Assistant	UN Women Office	Meeting	7, 8 & 23/11
Royal Norwegian Embassy				
Wadehra Renu,	Senior Advisor	Royal Norwegian Embassy	Meeting	6/11 & 7/11 & 3.12.12
Thoralf Stenvold	Councillor	Royal Norwegian Embassy	Meeting	3.12.12
Ministry of Panchayati Raj				
Dr H Panda	Principle Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR)	MoPR Office	Meeting	6/11, 9/11 and 4.12.12
National Project Steering Committee Meeting ⁷¹		UN Women	Meeting	8/11
Others				

⁷¹ Only attended the last session to participate in MTR discussions and requirements

Madhu Bala Nath	Contributed to the design of the project , 9910991289	Telephone	Telephone interview	26/11
The Hunger Project				
Rita Sarin,	VP & Country Director	THP Office		6/11, 8/11, and 4.12.12
Sriparna G. Chaudhuri	Director	THP Office		6/11 and 4.12.12
Paritosh Sasmal	Director-Finance	THP Office		8/11
Darshan S	Programme Officer (M & E)	THP Office		8/11
Bharani Sundararajan	Programme Officer	THP Office		8/11
NIRD				
Dr M V Rao	Director General	NIRD Office		22/11
Dr C.S. Singhal	Professor & Head, Centre for Women Development & Gender Studies	NIRD Office		22/11
SIRD				
Mr Chandramouli,	Commissioner	SIRD, Andhra Pradesh		19/11
Participants in Group Meeting				
District Project Officer	UN Women	Group Meeting⁷²		8/11
Trinath Kumar Mohanta	Dhenkanal			
Saba Hasnain	Mahabubnagar			
Pranab Kishore Dash	Bhadrak			
Srikrishna Paleru	Srikakulam			
Minaram Patnaik	Gajapati			
Veeraswamy Badiganti	Vizianagram			
Sushmita Samantray	Sambalpur			
Kavita Mishra	Tonk			
Vivek Awasti	Alwar			
Sunil Menon	Sehore			
Viplav Kumar Pulavarti	Dungarpur			
Rabindra Indra	Dharwad			
S.N. Fatima	Mysore			
Ansul Saxena	Jhobua			
Sandeep Ganvir	Sagar			
Shibabrata Kar	SIRD Andhra Pradesh			
Bangladesh				

⁷² Met as a group after the NSPC meeting with DPOs and Head of Governance, UN Women to discuss state visits by MTR team.

Khadija Khondker,	Coordinator – Resource Mobilisation, Communication and Governance.	Bangladesh Programme Office, UN Women	Phone Interview	
Naheed Ahmed,	National Programme Officer	Bangladesh Programme Office, UN Women	Phone Interview	
Nepal				
Ziad Sheikh	Country representative	UN Women Nepal	Phone interview	16.01.13
Gitanjali Singh	Deputy Country Representative	UN Women Nepal	Phone interview	16.01.13
Purna Shreshthaa	Program Specialist	UN Women Nepal	Phone interview	16.01.13
Puja Jha	Programme Specialist	UN Women Nepal Office	Phone Interview	16.01.13
Pakistan				
Fauzia Tariq	Programme Specialist	UN Women, Pakistan	Phone Interview	15.01.13
Norad/Norad				
Aslak Brun			Meeting	18.12.12
Janne Andressen			Meeting/ Phone and online communication	Multiple
NIBR				
Berit Aasen	Senior Researcher	NIBR	Phone and email communication	Multiple

Annex 5.5 List of Interviewees – Bhutan

Name	Position	Place	Interview Type	Date 2012
Angela Ison,	UNW/UNRCO Gender Specialist	UNDP	Briefing/debriefing	19/23.11.12
Kunzang Norbu	ARR UNDP Governance	UNDP	Briefing/debriefing	19/23.11.12
Claire Van der Vaeren, UN	Resident Coordinator	UNDP	Briefing/debriefing	19/23.11.12
Hideko Hadzialic	Deputy Resident Coordinator	UNDP	Briefing/debriefing	19/23.11.12
Dir Dorji Thinley,	Director for Research and external relations	RUB	Joint Interview	20.11.12
Changa Dorji,	Research Officer	RUB	Joint Interview	20.11.12
Tandin Wangmo,	Senior Programme Coordinator, Development Cooperation Division	Gross National Happiness Commission	Joint Interview	20.11.12
Ms Sonam Choki,	Planning Officer	Gross National Happiness Commission	Joint Interview	20.11.12
Chimi Wangmo	Executive Director	Renew	Individual Interview	20.11.12
Sonam Chuki,	Dept of National Budget, Ministry of Finance	Department of National Budget, Ministry of Finance	Joint Interview	21.11.12
Rinzin Dorji	Senior Planning officer	Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Finance	Joint Interview	21.11.12
Tshering Dendup,	Programme Officer	National Council Secretariat	Group Interview	21.11.12
Tshewang Norbu	Legal Assistant	National Council Secretariat	Group Interview	21.11.12
Tshewang Chodan	Personal Secretary	National Council Secretariat	Group Interview	21.11.12
Tshering Wangmo	Information and Media Officer	National Council Secretariat	Group Interview	21.11.12
Lhangamo	Accounts Assistant	National Council Secretariat	Group Interview	21.11.12

Dechen	Committee Secretary, Social and Cultural Affairs	National Council Secretariat	Group Interview	21.11.12
Karma	Committee Secretary, House Committee	National Council Secretariat	Group Interview	21.11.12
Sonan Todgye	ICT officer	National Council Secretariat	Group Interview	21.11.12
Aldo Kinley	House Committee	National Council Secretariat	Group Interview	21.11.12
Karma Galay,	Senior Programme Officer	Department of Local Governance	Group Interview	21.11.12
Wangdi Gyeltsen,	Programme Officer	Department of Local Governance	Group Interview	21.11.12
Melam Zangpo	Program Officer	Department of Local Governance	Group Interview	21.11.12
Sonam Penjor,	Programme Officer	NCWC Women's Division and selected inter-ministerial gender focal points	Joint Interview	22.11.12
Tsewang Lhamo,	Asst Programme Officer,	NCWC Women's Division and selected inter-ministerial gender focal points	Joint Interview	22.11.12
Tsheten Zangmo	Magmi, EWR	Paro	Joint Interview	22.11.12
Phub Dolma	Magmi, EWR	Paro	Joint Interview	22.11.12

Annex 6: India Case Study reports

Annex 6.1 Andhra Pradesh

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Mahbubnagar and Vizianagram

Field visit: November 19-24, 2012

1. Background and context

1.2 The Panchayat System in Andhra Pradesh

Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) were established as part of the local democratic system through the Andhra Pradesh (AP) Gram Panchayat Act, 1959 that dealt with the constitution, staffing, functions and control of panchayats. Subsequent laws enacted in 1964 and 1986, provided for 22 and 25 percent reservation for women respectively.⁷³ As this shows, AP has had a history of implementing reservations for women at the Panchayat level, long before the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution was effected. Pursuant to the 73rd Amendment, the AP Panchayat Raj Act of 1994 (APPR Act) was enacted to *inter alia* provide 33% reservation for women.

The last Panchayat election in AP was held in 2006. In 2011, prior to holding fresh elections, the AP government issued an order seeking to amend rules on reservations relating to various social groups,⁷⁴ these amendments included increasing the reservations for women to 50%. This government order was challenged in the High Court soon thereafter. In September 2012, the court passed an order directing the state government to fix reservations for various groups (including women) at 50%. Due to the pending proceedings and other alleged political considerations, Panchayat elections in AP have been delayed for over a year now. However, pursuant to the court order on reservations, AP is now preparing for elections, which are expected in the coming months.

The three-tier local rural governance system in AP is composed of Zilla Praja Parishad (ZPP) at the district level, the Mandal Parishad (MP) at the sub-district block level, and the Gram Panchayat at the village level. There appears to be no clear provision on a gram panchayat's (GP) ambit in AP, although it usually covers 2-5 villages.⁷⁵ According to a 2010 Central Government circular there were 21,843 GPs in AP covering more than 55 million people in 21,843 villages.⁷⁶ The members of a GP range from 5-21 depending on the population that resides in the territory of the GP. GP members (referred to as Panch or Ward Member) are directly elected by the people for a five-year term. Each GP is headed by a Sarpanch or President who is directly elected.

The APPR Act provides for the conduct of 'Gram Sabhas', which is an assembly to which all registered voters are members. Procedures to be followed for the conduct of Gram Sabhas are laid down in guidelines issued by the Panchayati Raj (PR) and Rural Development (RD) Department. To encourage effective participation at the community level, ward sabhas, which represent a unit of smaller habitation or cluster, are also held, although this is not mandated by statute. Unlike in Odisha and Rajasthan, there is no quorum requirement for

⁷³ <http://www.mahilaraj.org/Study%20on%20EWRS%20in%20Panchayati%20Raj%20Institutions.pdf>

⁷⁴ <http://www.thehindu.com/news/states/andhra-pradesh/article2109074.ece>

⁷⁵ Populations covered by GPs range from 300 to more than 30,000.

<http://www.cgg.gov.in/publicationdownloads2a/Grama%20Panchayat%20Finances%20in%20AP.pdf>

⁷⁶ <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=68196>

Gram Sabha in AP to have legal standing. Gram Sabhas are organized by the Panchayat Secretary⁷⁷ and convened by the Sarpanch. A Gram Sabha may also be convened when either 10% of the members of the Gram Sabha or 50 persons of the Gram Sabha (whichever is more) make a requisition.

The APPR Act mandates that a minimum of two Gram Sabhas are held each year. For administrative convenience, Statutory Gram Sabhas are scheduled for April 14 and October 3 respectively. Additional Gram Sabhas may be convened on a needs basis as many times as is required.

Since currently there are no elected representative in AP,⁷⁸ many of the powers of GPs (and of Mandal Praja Parishads and Zilla Parishads) are being exercised by executive officers in Mandal and Zilla Parishad offices. Statutory Gram Sabhas, and Gram Sabhas that are necessary for other reasons such as for selection of NREGA beneficiaries, are being held, but are being convened by a Special Officer nominated by the Mandal office.

1.2 Socio-Economic Context

AP was considered one of the backward regions in India until the years 2000s, when it recorded impressive economic growth. In the five year period between 2007-08 and 2011-12 AP registered an average Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) growth rate (at 2004-05 prices) of 8.33% even surpassing the All-India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate of 7.94% during the same period.⁷⁹ However, despite the state's economic growth and positive investment climate and the state's targeted interventions for inclusive development and improvement in the status of women, AP exhibits backwardness and high levels of social disparity.. AP has 33 tribal (Adivasi) communities, which constitute 6.47% of the state's population. Development indicators amongst the Adivasi communities are significantly lower than for the state as a whole. The average literacy rate of Adivasis is 17.16 percent, of which 25.25 percent of men and 8.68 of women are literate. It is estimated that about 89 percent of the Adivasis are living under the poverty line, and many Adivasis live either nomadic or migrant lives.⁸⁰ AP is also one of few Indian states with persisting devadasi practices.⁸¹ The state has seen the social and political mobilization of women against alcoholism, but the problem persists and remains an issue of importance mentioned during women's meetings in Panchayats and Self-Help Groups (SHGs), along with health, discrimination and gender based violence (GBV).

Mahbubnagar district is close to the state capital of Hyderabad. The district is considered one of the most backward districts in AP. The mostly rural district has a population mix of Hindus and Muslims, along with 7.4 percent Adivasis.⁸² In 2006 Mahbubnagar was listed by the national government as one of the country's 250 most backward districts (out of a total of 640 districts nationwide). Mahbubnagar is one of 13 districts in AP currently receiving Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) funds from the national government. The district has a sex ratio of 975 females per 1000 males, which is higher than the national average of 940, but had a declining child sex ratio of 932 girls per 1000 boys noted in the 2011 census as

⁷⁷ Official attached to the Gram Panchayat. In Andhra Pradesh, several Gram Panchayats may share on Panchayat Secretary.

⁷⁸ The terms of elected representatives expired in August 2011.

⁷⁹ Andhra Pradesh Socio Economic Survey Report 2011-12, accessed at <http://www.aponline.gov.in/Apportal/AP%20Govt%20Information/APES%20New/APSES.html>.

⁸⁰ Quoted from <http://andhra.ozg.in/2010/06/development-of-adivasis-in-south-india.html>.

⁸¹ Devadasi practices are a form of ritualized prostitution by which young girls are dedicated to the temple.

⁸² Including the Chenchu whom are classified as a primitive tribal group.

compared to 952 girls per 1000 boys registered in 2001. The average literacy rate is 56.05 percent, of which male literacy is 66.27 percent and female literacy is 45.65 percent.

Vizianagaram district is in the coastal region of AP. It is in the northern part of the state and borders with Odisha State. The district is like Mahbubnagar district also one of the 13 most backward districts in the state and part of the BRGF list of 250 most backward districts in the country. According to the 2011 census It has a positive and increasing sex ratio of 1016 females per 1000 male compared to 2001 census figure of 1009. However, Vizianagaram also has a declining child sex ratio of 955 girls per 1000 boys in 2011 as compared to 980 girls per 1000 boys in the 2001 census. The average literacy rate of Vizianagaram in 2011 was 59.49 percent compared to 51.07 of 2001. Male and female literacy were 69.04 and 50.16 respectively.

1.3 Self Help Groups in Andhra Pradesh

AP has used women's self help groups (SHGs) as a primary tool for poverty alleviation and empowerment since 1976. A SHG is a small group of persons who come together with the intention of finding a self-sufficient solution to a common problem such as medical issues, livelihood generation or watershed management. However, in AP, the groups are often the conduit through which micro credit is routed to the poor in the belief that it will serve as a catalyst for helping them out of poverty.⁸³

While the main focus of SHG interventions is livelihoods, the government SHG campaign⁸⁴ also supports capacity building, mobilisation and empowerment activities for women. Women's health, gender and social issues feature in the government's outreach to women in SHGs. The Velugu programme is managed by the Society for the Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP), which is an autonomous society under the Department of Rural Development. Self-managed grassroots institutions have been federated into village level and sub-district level groups. These groups provide an organizational identity to help SHGs realize the benefits of a larger organization without losing the advantages of a small organization.

AP's SHG interventions have made significant achievements in terms of economic inclusion and social change. Studies and evaluations have however indicated that SHGs are less successful in including the poorest of the poor than the non-poor.⁸⁵ What is undeniable however is the depth and reach of the AP SHG interventions, which presently reach 4,76,930 federated into 28,080 Village Organizations (VO) and 700 Mandal Samakhyas (MS).⁸⁶

There are close operational linkages between SHGs and Panchayats, though the institutions are not formally linked. Officials may use SHG federation meetings as a forum to promote other government development initiatives, parts of the training curricula and training personnel for SHGs and Panchayat. Most importantly, women who gain experience of participating and leading SHG activities may also be more likely to participate in other government programmes and outreach initiatives. The mid-term review mission learned that many of the women involved with the programme as motivators had previous experience

⁸³ Joy Deshmukh-Ranadive, "Women's Self Help Groups in Andhra Pradesh – Participatory Poverty Alleviation in Action", from *Scaling Up Poverty Reduction: A Global Learning Process and Conference* Shanghai, May 25-27, 2004 (World Bank).

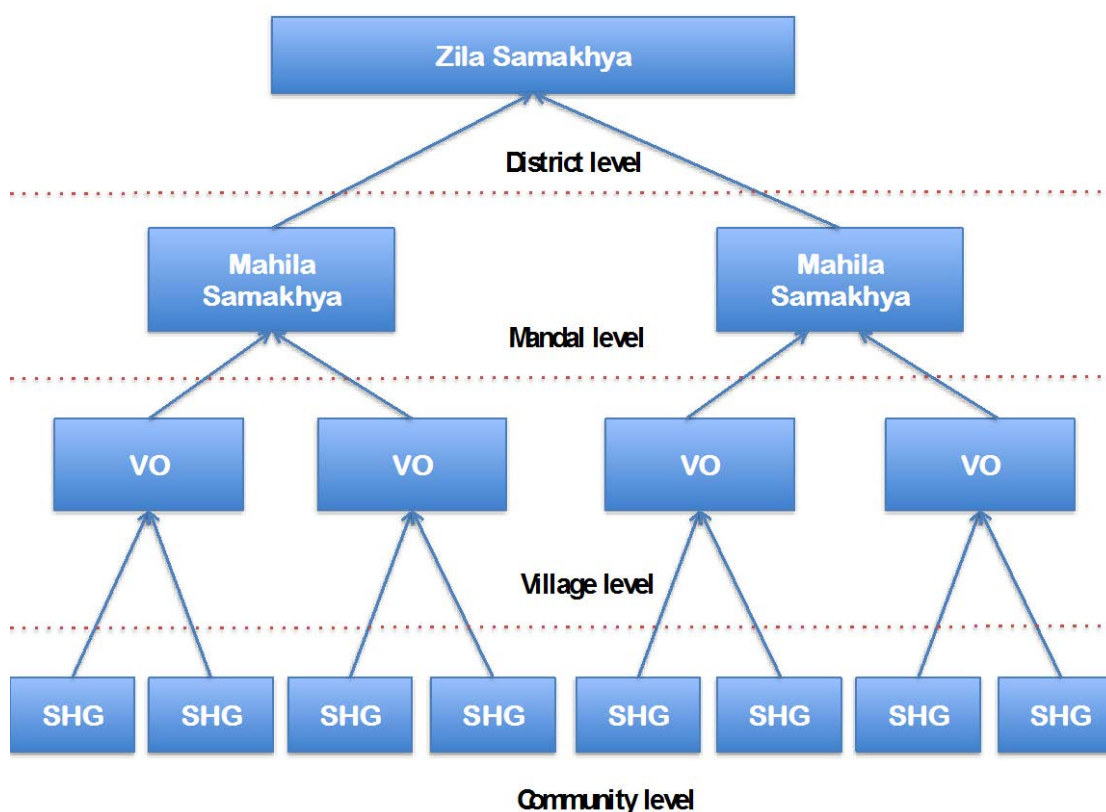
⁸⁴ now titled *Velugu*

⁸⁵ Deshmukh-Ranadive (2004). Also Howard White, "Self Help Groups in AP: Some Preliminary Findings from an IEG Study", Feb 2011, presentation available at <http://www.aponline.gov.in/apportal/HomePageLinks/IndiraKantiPadham.htm>.

⁸⁶ <http://www.aponline.gov.in/apportal/HomePageLinks/IndiraKantiPadham.htm>

with SHGs. Our meetings with groups of women in block and Panchayat offices also included several women from SHGs. In response to our question about the possible overlap between capacity building and empowerment activities of Velugu and of the Gol-UN Women programme, respondents usually stated that Velugu programme focused on economic empowerment whereas this programme was oriented towards other aspects of empowerment.

Figure 1: SHG federation structure



1.4 Women and the Panchayati System

When the policy of reserving 33% of seats for women was put into effect, women contesting these seats were usually family members of political candidates. During the course of interviewing elected women representatives (EWR), a number reported to have faced discrimination. They were of the opinion that in a majority of cases an EWR does not get any recognition unless she was married to someone with, or belongs to a family with, a political background.

Illiteracy amongst EWRs was also cited as a reason why EWRs are under their husband's control and not given any importance. A telling instance of men's domination over EWRs was unearthed during group discussions in Vizianagaram when a number of women reported that there have been several instances where the EWR's husband's would attend State Institutes for Rural Development (SIRD) trainings in Hyderabad on their behalf, even if the invitation was specifically for the EWRs.

However, the district administration in Vizianagaram reported that increasing numbers of women without political a background were contesting elected seats as a result of the gains made under the SHG initiative. It was also observed that in some cases, women without a political background were urged to contest elections by people who had been impressed

with their work in other development areas, particularly those already engaged under government programmes/schemes to provide services or implement such schemes (e.g., members of SHG groups, anganwadi workers, etc). It was not possible for the team to verify this information as it appears to be related to the 2006 election, as no Panchayat elections have been held since then.

It was also reported by ex-EWRs in Vizianagaram that agendas for Gram Sabha meetings were set by the Panchayat Secretary and they were unable to influence the agenda in a manner that would ensure that their issues were adequately reflected. This happened particularly in cases where the EWRs issues were in conflict with other interests. For instance, while EWRs were successful in restricting sale of arrack alcohol, they were unable to do the same with government licensed alcohol shops, as the latter are allowed under Government policy. Even so, there were also some reports from the same group on issues successfully tackled by them such as building of sanitary toilet, conducting public development projects such as water works and carrying out targeted schemes such as pensions for seniors all of which were funded through State Government schemes.

In so far as participating in Gram Sabhas is concerned, several women interviewed by the MTR team stated that they did not have knowledge of such meetings (in spite of the presence of the GOI-UN Women programme). Other women who stated that they were aware of Gram Sabha meetings also said that they did not want to come out of their homes to attend meetings. In cases where they attended, they rarely participated in the discussion due to their inability to speak openly in front of men. During the interviews conducted in connection with this Mid-Term review, women stated that their engagement with the PRI system was limited to interactions with EWRs (Sarpanch and ward members), who they felt more comfortable speaking to about their problems.⁸⁷ Problems that women commonly brought to the attention of EWRs related to domestic violence, particularly as a consequence of alcohol abuse; other issues of concern included: sanitation, water, road connectivity, education, etc. It was reported in interviews that reconciliation was the preferred method of resolving domestic violence cases, which were brought to the attention of EWRs.

2. Programme Description

The GOI-UN Women programme is being implemented as the 'Samabhaga'⁸⁸ programme to allow for easier identification, particularly at the field level. The Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with the Government of AP was signed in August 2011. The key implementing agency of this programme is the State Institute of Rural Development, which in AP is named the Andhra Pradesh Academy of Rural Development (APARD). A State Steering Committee guides the work of the programme at the state level. District level activities are monitored by the District Collector.

The programme is being implemented in phases in three districts – Mahbubnagar, Vizianagaram and Srikakulam. In Mahbubnagar, the programme was initiated in December 2011, while in other districts the programme activities commenced in August 2011, immediately following the signing of the PCA. In each of these districts, lesser-developed GPs with sex ratios favoring women were selected.

Project coverage

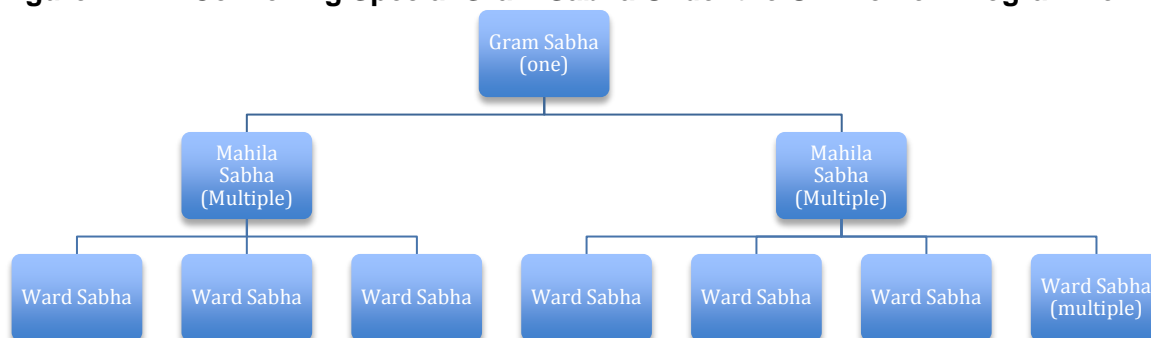
- *Mahbubnagar*: 50 Grama Panchayat (GPs) from 13 of the 64 Mandals were selected for project implementation in two phases of 25 GPs each.
- *Vizianagaram*: 75 GPs in 12 of the 34 Mandals, with 25 GPs being covered in the first phase (August 2011-March 2012) and the remaining covered during the second phase scheduled to end in March 2013.
- *Srikakulam*: 76 GPs were covered in two phases ending in December 2012.

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For the purposes of this report, Mahbubnagar and Vizianagaram were visited. This report also has benefitted greatly from interactions with the District Project Officer of Srikakulam, although the MTR team did not visit the district.

According to the programme target, two special Gram Sabhas have to be organized for each GP. Each of the Gram Sabhas have to be preceded by two Mahila Sabhas, which in turn must be preceded by approximately 10 Ward Sabhas covering all the wards in the selected GPs. Here it must be noted that special Ward Sabhas organized under the programme may be attended by both men and women, whereas Mahila Sabhas can only be attended by women.

Figure 2. Convening Special Gram Sabha Under the UN Women Programme



Accordingly, meetings to be organized in AP under the current annual work plan are as follows:

Table 1: Meeting under current annual work plan

	Gram Sabhas	Mahila Sabhas	Ward Sabhas
Mahbubnagar	100	200	1000
Vizianagaram	150	300	782
Srikakulam	152	304	1520

Motivators have been appointed to organize these meetings. Each motivator is paid 500 INR- for the conduct of each meeting, which they receive after they submit a report on the meeting conducted. Motivators in all the districts have received training in APARD. We were informed that motivators in Vizianagaram and Srikakulam are assisted in their tasks by 'Women Empowerment Volunteers,'⁸⁹ (WEV) who have also been trained by APARD. The state nodal officer in APARD also informed us that the state planned to deploy Bharat Nirman Volunteers⁹⁰ to perform the role of the motivators.

⁸⁹ No WEVs were met during the course of the field visit.

⁹⁰ Bharat Nirman Volunteer (BNV) is an initiative of the national government's Ministry of Rural Development, but Andhra Pradesh is one of the leading states in taking up this initiative. In terms of the programme guidelines, a BNV is an individual who comes voluntarily from a rural household to act

District Programme Officers (DPO) appointed in each district coordinate efforts at the district level, working closely with motivators, district and Mandal level officials. APARD has organized two-day workshops for all DPOs and other district-level officials from each of the three districts where the GOI-UN Women Programme operates. The workshops focus on aspects of 'Women Empowerment and Governance.' In the absence of EWRs, the APARD has been conducting TOT (Training of Trainers) Programmes designed for EWRs in preparedness ahead of the coming elections.

APARD monitors programme implementation by reviewing reports from DPOs and conducting review meetings with DPOs. To strengthen its monitoring function, the State Steering Committee has decided to organize workshops for DPOs and Motivators on 'Documentation and Report Writing' and to hold bi-monthly review meetings with the DPOs. Another initiative taken in AP is the creation of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials on a number of issues related to government welfare and entitlement schemes as part of a pre-election campaign to encourage women's participation.

3. Stakeholder Capacity

3.1 APARD

APARD is the State Institute of Rural Development equivalent in AP. APARD conducts 3-4 rounds of training for every 5-year term of elected representatives to Panchayats. To maximize its outreach, APARD uses a combination of strategies: these include 'Extension Training Centers' covering 4-5 districts each, although there are plans to have one center per district; at the Mandal level 'receive-only terminals' or distance learning centers have been instituted to conduct refresher courses for targeted audiences; between the Mandal and panchayat level are the 'Outreach Centers' for roll out of training. Training strategies used by APARD include face-to-face training as well as distance learning, which is sometimes conducted through video conferencing.

The APARD receives funding from a number of State and Central Government sources. We were informed that of the total amount of funds they receive, 25-30% is earmarked for training EWRs though this estimate could not be verified⁹¹. Members of SHG also receive several trainings.

APARD functionaries are of the opinion that the successful implementation of the GOI-UN Women programme in AP is due to their high level of preparedness. The APARD did not have to wait for NIRD produced training manual as they had developed their own materials and training modules before NIRD modules were ready. Indeed, APARD has not found the NIRD prepared manual useful and regards said manuals as content heavy and as reflecting local issues inadequately.

According to APARD functionaries the main advantage of implementing this programme is that it allows for the tracking of Gram Sabhas and decisions taken therein⁹². Another side

as an organic link between a group of families and hosts of various line departments with a purpose to ensure the unreached households to access benefits under various government sponsored programmes.

⁹¹ Moreover, we were not able to check how the funds are being used in the current budget cycle in the absence of any EWRs.

⁹² This should be contextualised. In other states, Gram Sabha deliberations and resolutions are tracked by the executive branch of sub-district and district panchayat offices, which is responsible for responding to demands, resolving issues etc. In addition, motivators and DPOs seemed to be recording activities in GOI-UN Women supported Gram Sabhas and Ward Sabhas. In AP, in the absence of elected Panchayats, and with executive powers of Panchayats abrogated, it seemed

benefit of the programme is the development of IEC and training materials, which can be used as soon as EWRs are elected and even after the Gol-UN Women programme comes to an end. IEC materials are also useful in the training and awareness raising amongst audiences who are not covered by APARD. APARD has been involved in closely working with DPOs and reviewing their work on a regular basis. In fact all district level plans are prepared by APARD.

In conclusion, it is observed that APARD has extensive outreach and effective organization to reach large numbers of elected representatives. However, given that APARD is already working with EWRs, there appears to be some extent of overlap between APARD's regular training activities and activities under the Gol-UN Women programme. The important addition made to existing APARD programmes is the training of motivators, whose roles are considered crucial by APARD in terms of increasing women's participation at Gram Sabhas.

3.2 Administration

At the district levels, a number of state and central schemes and programmes aiming to support women are implemented through line departments. Government interventions for ending discriminatory cultural practices such as child marriage, caste based violence, the *devadasi* system⁹³ are also implemented at district and sub-district level. SHG activities have lead to the economic empowerment of women and have had an impact on increasing literacy levels among women. Regular meetings held under the Gol-UN Women programme also provide opportunities for interaction between SHG members and administration at the block and district levels.

Interactions between people at the GP levels and administration functionaries most often take place in one of two ways: First, district and block level officials from different line departments attend Gram Sabhas (including those conducted under the Gol-UN Women programme) to receive complaints and petitions from the people directly. In the absence of elected representatives, the Mandal Parishad Development Officer (MPDO), who is the chief official of the sub-district office, supervises the conduct of such meetings and may nominated officials from his or her office to attend meetings. MPDOs may also compile a list of issues that arise at these forums and coordinate with the district administration for further action (though DPOs claim that they have to follow up on issues that are brought up in meetings supported by the Gol-UN Women programme). MPDOs play a key role in organizing special meetings under the Gol-UN Women programme and funds for conducting such meetings are disbursed directly to the MPDO's official account. MPDOs are also required to ensure that issues that they are unable to resolve at their levels are brought to the attention of district-level functionaries.

In both districts, District Project Units (DPU) have been set up to review the work conducted under the programme. Although District Collectors are appointed Chairpersons of such units, those interviewed had little idea of the details of the programme and had never participated directly in Gram Sabha or other local level activities of the programme. Derspite their limited knowledge of the programme, in the districts visited, they appeared to have played a significant support role by guiding the selection of GPs and Motivators, issuing notices and circulars urging women to attend special meetings organized under this programme, ensuring that line department officials take action on petitions/complaints received, etc.

motivators and DPOs were tracking activities and resolutions from GOI-UN Women Ward Sabhas and Gram Sabhas, without any direct role for the Panchayat Secretary or Mandal Office in recording or following up.

⁹³ See Section 2 for further details.

3.3. District Programme Officers (DPOs)

As in all other project sites, DPOs are responsible for coordinating and implementing programme activities at the field level. DPOs work in close coordination with MPDOs at the Mandal Parishad level. They are required to report regularly to the District Collector at the district level, APARD and the State Level Steering Committee at the state level, as well as to the UN Women programme office staff. In addition to their project activities, which include ensuring that special meetings are organized, DPOs have been attending conferences and training/orientation programmes at APARD, in other states, as well as participating in the National Level Steering Committee meetings. DPOs have also been organizing and attending block sensitization programmes for MPDOs, Extension Officers, Panchayat Secretaries, Mahila Samakhyas and SHG members, to create synergies between the Gol-UNWomen programme and other existing government initiatives.

DPOs in AP have been able to meet their targets and perform according to work plans created. In AP the DPOs are closely involved with the manner in which special meetings under the programme, particularly Mahila and Ward Sabhas, are conducted. DPOs play a major role in providing hands-on support to Motivators in organizing the meetings. This allows for a fair amount of practical on the job training for motivators and the electorate on the usefulness and role of Mahila and Ward Sabhas.

Further, in the absence of EWRs and other elected representatives, DPOs have had to play a more substantial role in supporting motivators to ensure that agendas reflect the concerns of women. Motivators, filling in for EWRs, are not taken as seriously when creating agendas because they do not have a legal status, therefore the support of DPOs becomes very important. This is particularly true with regard to influencing the agenda of regular or statutory Gram Sabhas. The Vizianagaram DPO mentioned that prior to the conduct of such meetings, he is flooded with telephone calls from motivators seeking his intervention to ensure that special agenda items (e.g., those arising from special meetings or which are related to issues that women have raised) are included. DPOs also play a crucial role in ensuring that complaints/petitions arising at meetings supported by the GOI-UN Women programme are brought to the attention of relevant administration functionaries who can take action complaints made. In this regard, particular mention must be made of the activities undertaken by the Mahbubnagar DPO—who reviews reports of special meetings (Ward Sabhas and Mahila Sabhas particularly) held to cull out common grievances and petitions. She then brings these issues to the attention of Block and District level functionaries so that they may take necessary action. Her reports show that, while she has been able to address a number of issues by applying this method, the administration is not always willing to respond to her requests - a shortcoming that she must overcome with repeated visits and follow-ups. In some instances, issues have been followed up by DPOs to the state and national levels. In short, DPOs in AP are engaging in advocacy as part of their regular functions under the programme. This strategy has the positive effect of bringing local issues to the state and national levels, which may influence and inform policy-making processes.

3.4. Motivators

Motivators have been appointed to work in all districts where the programme is active. Over 300 motivators have received training from the APARD. Motivators are chosen amongst women at the village level. Most motivators have prior experience in implementing government schemes at the ground level (i.e., ASHA workers, Anganwadi workers, etc.). This means that Motivators have experience working at the community levels, and have already established trust with the community members.

The motivators interviewed understood their role as:

Arranging Mahila Sabha and Ward Sabha meetings and encouraging women to attend Gram Sabha meetings.

Facilitating discussions at the meetings they organize.

Providing information on various government schemes and legal entitlements at these forums.

Recording the proceedings at special meetings.

Assisting women to bring issues of importance to the attention of MPDOs, and in some cases to petition district level functionaries for further action.

Reporting to DPOs on activities undertaken.

Significant levels of attendance have been observed in special meetings organized with the assistance of motivators. The following strategies have been used by Motivators in AP to ensure the attendance of women at special meetings:

Beating drums to announce special meetings and provide information on date and venue.

Door-to-door intimation of meetings.

Approaching family elders to explain the importance of such meetings and seek their support to allow the women to attend these meetings.

Working with the Panchayat Secretary and village women to fix dates that are suitable for women attendees.

In so far as participation and follow-up is concerned - the role of the motivator in facilitating discussions is considered to be of great value as it trains women to speak in public and raise the issues they face. Another benefit of the role a motivator plays in providing information and facilitating discussions is that they are able to provide such information in a simple and locally suitable manner that is understood by community women. To illustrate, at a village level meeting in Vizianagaram, some women mentioned that they were not aware that the *anganwadi* center in their village was for their use and benefit. Hence as a result of attending a Mahila Sabha meeting that they learned about the scheme and how they could individually access the benefit from it.

As mentioned earlier, motivators are paid 500 INR pursuant to the conduct of each meeting (Ward Sabhas, Mahila Sabhas and Gram Sabhas). The advantages of having Motivators are: first, they have a fixed mandate and specific deliverables based on which they are entitled to payments, which allows for efficient monitoring. Second, as they are not public servants they are able to take up issues that may be in conflict with state policy. To illustrate, while the state has severely restricted the availability of home made alcohol, government licensed alcohol shops have not been discontinued. Motivators are in a better position to question this dual approach, as they are more autonomous than public servants. Third, since they are drawn from the community they can mediate disputes better and tailor solutions to meet local exigencies.

Motivators have found APARD meetings very useful, particularly in order to gain baseline knowledge on government schemes so that they may later share this information. Such training also facilitates interaction between Motivators and Mandal office functionaries. However, a need for more locally accessible and hands on training was also expressed. Some Motivators felt, that while the training had enabled them to negotiate with Mandal level authorities, they would require more trainings to approach and engage with district level functionaries.

In the absence of EWRs, Motivators have primary responsibility for influencing how agendas are set as well as taking follow up action relating to GOI-UN Women supported meetings. However, in interviews with Motivators, it was apparent that they face a number of hurdles in performing these functions, as they do not have any legal or official recognition. The

difficulties faced in the setting of agendas have been discussed above. The lack of an officially recognized position also makes Motivators more vulnerable to violence, particularly while taking forward issues that conflict with local vested interests. To illustrate, a motivator interviewed in Vizianagaram mentioned an incident where she had collectivized women to demonstrate in front of a licensed alcohol shop to demand its closure. She and the women who went to demonstrate with her, were threatened with violence by the owner and other locals. She was, therefore, forced to back down as she did not want to jeopardize the safety of the other women accompanying her. A number of Motivators suggested that identity cards be issued to them or any other proof of official recognition be accorded to them so that they can conduct their work with more visible authority.

4. Programme Activities

4.1 Training and capacity building

Since elections have yet to take place, the component of training and building capacity of EWRs has not been initiated. However, all functionaries involved with the programme, as well as administrative officials associated with the implementation of the programme have received training. It was evident from interactions with functionaries and administrative officials that they were aware of what the programme is, what it is aimed at and the opportunities it presents. The involvement and training of government functionaries has had the added advantage of facilitating convergence in terms of planning and implementing different government schemes and programmes at the field level. However, DPOs and Motivators feel there is a need for government functionaries to be more responsive when issues are brought to their attention. Hence, in addition to trainings provided on the scope of the programme and issues of women and governance, it is also essential that trainings be used to further sensitize administrative functionaries and to provide added emphasis on means and methods that can be used to ensure that welfare benefits reach appropriate beneficiaries in an efficient and effective manner.

4.2. Encouraging participation of women

As has been mentioned earlier, women members of the electorate rarely attended regular/statutory Gram Sabhas. The aim of this programme has been to increase participation in such meetings. However, even before increasing participation, a crucial step forward will be to increase women's attendance at these forums. The holding of special meetings is the methods applied under this programme to improve attendance and participation levels, which in the long term, will also encourage women to come forward and contest elections at the local level.

It is evident that Mahila Sabhas have been very useful and regarded positively by all, particularly women. The efficiency with which these meetings have been organized has been taken note of even by the administration. For instance, in Srikakulam, the Collector has issued instructions that preparation of all regular Gram Sabha and Ward Sabha meetings must be organized and prepared for in the same manner as special meetings convened under the programme⁹⁴. Instances were reported where the community has actively supported special meetings and the decisions taken therein.

The review mission was informed that in Vizianagaram a lawyer also attended the interactions between EWRs and Motivators. This lawyer has been taken on board by the administration to regularly attend Mahila Sabhas under this program to provide legal advice at and take on legal aid cases from these forums, particularly cases on maintenance. The availability of legal advice at these forums has proven extremely useful as there is low legal literacy in these areas.

⁹⁴ Though without the mobilising support of Motivators and DPOs. It is possible other government workers, including anganwadi workers may be pressed into service to implement such an order.

Based on feedback from the field visit, the usefulness of Mahila Sabhas include:

It allows women to speak freely about their issues and concerns, something that they are unable to do in the presence of men.

It provides a common forum to receive information on various government plans and schemes. Women are able to understand information imparted at these meetings, as they are delivered in a simple and context relevant manner.

Attending Mahila Sabha meetings offers opportunities for women's collectivization – which is useful not only to lobby for changes or better implementation but also to withstand threats of violence.

Mahila Sabhas help women prepare and rehearse for Gram Sabhas - hence it provides an opportunity for hands-on and practical training.

Mahila Sabhas provide an apolitical forum to discuss and take forward women's issues without the divisiveness brought about by party politics.

It allows for the creation of a forum, which has wider economic diversity and representation than SHG forum (that are comparatively more homogeneous). Holding of frequent meetings invigorates the community and provides enhanced visibility to PRI forums.

The presence of representatives of line departments and other members of district and Mandal level administration at these meetings allows face to face interactions and provides women the opportunity to present their grievances to the relevant officials directly. There have been instances where attending officials have taken immediate action on petitions received at these forums.

It provides a forum to advocate against discriminatory social and cultural practices and develop perspectives on gender justice.

The main expectation that women have in attending special forums is that their issues will be taken up for further action. However, if this expectation is not met there will be a huge negative impact—women will lose faith in meetings such as this and all the successes made under this programme will be reversed. The apathy with which the electorate views regular Gram Sabha meetings is also witnessed in these special meetings.⁹⁵ This was something brought to our attention by a motivator in Mahbubnagar. It is, therefore, essential that state structures are appropriately responsive to issues raised at such forums and that petitions/complaints raised at such forums do not go unaddressed.

Although special meetings under the GoI-UN Women programme have attained high level of visibility there appears to be some confusion with regular meetings as per the law and special meetings under the programme. Hence efforts must be made to delineate these meeting clearly and ensure that issues discussed at special meetings are also taken up for consideration at regular meetings. Additionally, specific efforts must be made to encourage women to attend and participate in regular meetings.

One aspect observed while conducting interviews in Vizianagaram pertains to the legality and appropriateness of the solutions that are arrived at by local women. For instance when the Mid-Term Review team asked when a Mahila Sabha meeting was used effectively to address a local level issue, the women gave the example of dealing with alcoholism in the village. Alcoholism is a common and urgent concern of all women at the village level. At one of the Mahila Sabha meetings a resolution was passed that if any inebriated man was found, he would be tied to a tree and punished. Women then carried out this resolution collectively with support from the community in a few instances. While this method may have been

⁹⁵ During the course of the field visit, a member of the MTR team attended a Gram Sabha in Vizianagaram district and found that it was mostly attended by elderly citizens, as the young, productive members of the family were away at work.

effective, measures must be taken to ensure that special meetings, particularly Mahila Sabhas do not give rise to any form of vigilantism.

5. Overall observations

From the field visit, it appears that programme implementation in AP is more efficient when compared to other programme states. However, the major drawback in AP is the absence of Panchayats in the programme implementation period – as a result of which there have been no EWRs and almost no Panchayat system in which EWRs and women may participate (barring a reduced role for Gram Sabhas). In real terms this has resulted in a focus on Motivators and work done by them. This approach has limitations, as motivators cannot be expected to have the same kind of impact as EWRs who are backed by legal status and authority. On the positive side, the impact of some of the work done in this programme may be felt after the next round of Panchayat elections is held.

The other significant aspect to be borne in mind while reviewing work done in AP are existing schemes that appear to overlap with the current programme, namely the SHG initiative and the Bharat Nirman Volunteers Scheme. The SHG initiative has been successful in empowering women economically and SHG forums already provide some scope for advocacy on gender and social issues. However, more consideration must be focused on how initiatives on economic and political empowerment can synergize and the extent to which lessons learnt from each initiative be applied to the other. This type of effort would serve to guard against the duplication of efforts.

Annex 6.2 Odisha

Author: Asmita Basu⁹⁶

Special focus on Dhenkanal, Gajapati
(26th November-1st December, 2012)

1. Background and context

1.1 The Panchayat system in Odisha

In Odisha, the Panchayati system was established in 1950 through the enactment of the Orissa Grama Panchayat Act, 1948. ('Odisha GP Act'). This law was amended a number of times before its last amendment in 1997, after the 73rd amendment to the Constitution of India was effected. Panchayat elections in Odisha have been held in 1997, 2002, 2007, and most recently in 2012. There are currently 18,67,000 elected Panchayat members in the state. The policy of reserving seats for women in local bodies has been implemented in Odisha since 1990, even before the 73rd Constitutional Amendment. Odisha is also one of the first few states to have provided for and implemented reservation of 50% of seats for women in the Panchayati system in the 2012 elections.

As per Section 3 of the Odisha GP Act, a Grama Panchayat (GP) must be constituted for populations of not less than 2000 and not more than 10,000. This means that each GP may have jurisdiction over one or more villages depending on the population size in each village. The number of elected GP members varies between 11 and 25. The GPs are further divided into wards. The GP is headed by the Sarpanch and is constituted by the Naib Sarpanch and ward members (elected ward representatives). In addition to these elected members, a GP Secretary and an executive officer are appointed to provide support to the GP. There are currently 6234 GP across the 30 districts that form part of the State of Odisha.

Gram Sabha meetings are compulsorily held on annual, half yearly⁹⁷ and quarterly basis.⁹⁸ Additionally, there may be needs-based Gram Sabha meetings based on a requisition made by 1/3rd of the local electorate or as decided by the GP. The quorum for a Grama Sabha is 1/10 of the local electorate out of which 1/3rd must be women.

The law provides for the constitution of 'Palli Sabhas' in addition to Grama Sabhas and lays down the procedure for the conduct of such meetings. Voters of a revenue village, which may comprise one or more wards, constitute the 'Palli Sabhas'. Meetings of Palli Sabhas must compulsorily be held once a year in February. Additional needs based meetings may be held as decided by the GP or if a requisition is made by 1/5th of the electorate. The quorum of a Palli Sabha meeting is 1/10th of the electorate, of which 1/10th must be women.

1.2 Socio-economic context

1.2.1 Women and the Panchayati system

Despite the long history of reservations for women in Odisha, numerical strength has not been an indicator of women's effective participation in local governance. The main reason behind this is women's unequal status vis-à-vis men both at the level society and within the family. Low socio-economic status (e.g., low literacy rates, lower income/ earning capacity, etc.) and traditional norms that keep women in subordinate positions are also factors that impede women's effective participation. The low position of women in society is evident from

⁹⁶ Small additions regarding the THP have been made by Ananda Millard because one group interview with EWR who attended THP training(s) was conducted by Ananda Millard alone.

⁹⁷ Annual and half yearly meeting are held in February and June

⁹⁸ 26th January, 1st May, 15th August and 2nd October

declining sex ratios in the state. However, contrary to commitments made at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), on discarding targeted population control policies /measures, Odisha implements a 2-child policy. This provides for the disqualification from elected office of persons with more than two children. This policy has a disproportionate impact on already marginalized women candidates.

Women participate in the Panchayat system in two ways – as elected representatives and as part of the electorate participating in Gram Sabhas and Palli Sabhas proceedings. In the case of the former, EWRs, a number of challenges are faced in ensuring their effective functioning- ‘proxy leadership’ being the main challenge. ‘Proxy leadership’ means that in practice, male family members of the EWRs act on their behalf. In Gajapati, respondents estimate that in 70% of the cases there is proxy leadership.

Due to their subordinate status as women, EWRs are often subject to familial and societal controls that affect their work. For instance, family members may be resentful if performing EWR functions keep women away from their household tasks or in cases where decisions taken by EWRs are in contradiction with the wishes of their families. They may insist on physically accompanying EWRs in conducting their activities or EWRs require permission from their families prior to attending meetings and perform their tasks. Further, time spent in discharging EWR functions may impact on much needed income generation activities.

At the societal level, EWRs are not taken as seriously as their male counterparts, particularly when they approach the local administration with complaints and petitions received. Additionally, low literacy levels and the lack of practical hands-on training severely impact on EWRs’ effective functioning. There have been reported instances of violence against EWRs both within the domestic sphere as well as outside it. In practical terms, the efficacy of an EWR is much dependent on individual capacity and commitment. However, it is also observed that EWRs in their second or later terms are more confident and assertive than first timers⁹⁹.

In so far as the participation of women members of the electorate is concerned, the Odisha GP Act explicitly requires the presence of women in Gram Sabha and Palli Sabha to achieve quorums. However, this has had limited impact on ensuring women’s participation in such meetings.¹⁰⁰ Women have little awareness of Gram Sabha meetings being held. Their reluctance to enter public spaces, due to superstitions and gender stereotypical roles and attitudes, have resulted in low to nil attendance levels over the past years. In fact, the Collector of the comparatively developed district of Dhenkanal observed that until 2010, Gram Sabhas were attended solely by men. In rare instances where women attended such meetings, they were unable to participate effectively in the proceedings due to their inability to speak publicly and embarrassment experienced when putting forth their demands concerning intimate aspects of their lives, particularly aspects of reproductive health and domestic violence. In the past, women might be more likely to approach the Sarpanch or EWR (who could be a ward representative or a Sarpanch) with her problem than to bring it up in a Gram Sabha or Palli Sabha meeting.

The State has a number of schemes/initiatives aiming to empower women, which are funded by either the central or state governments. Each of these schemes is administered through a

⁹⁹ However, an election seat is seldom reserved for women for two consecutive terms, this would generally refer to EWRs who fought and won from an unreserved seat in at least one of two consecutive elections.

¹⁰⁰ Another reason for the limited impact of this provision is a loophole that exists in the law, which dispenses with quorum requirements for the second day of Gram Sabha meetings. This loophole allows decisions to be taken in the Gram Sabha without the requisite participation of the electorate.

nodal agency or line department, which engage separate personnel for implementation and service delivery. To illustrate, the National Rural Livelihood Mission of the Ministry of Rural Development, which aims to increase household income and skill development through self managed 'self help groups' (SHG) is implemented by the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA). Another illustration is the centrally sponsored 'Integrated Child Development Services' Scheme aimed at providing crèche, nutrition, health, and education services. The Women and Child Development Department implements this scheme and 'anganwadi' workers engaged to deliver services at the local level. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005, (and the national government scheme by the same name) guarantees 100 days of paid work in a year, and gives preference to women seeking employment. Projects to be funded by this this scheme (generally small local environmental improvement or public infrastructure projects) are meant to be identified in Gram Sabha meetings, and job cards for eligible beneficiaries are to be allotted in Gram Sabha meetings. In addition to central and state government schemes there are also a number of laws and legal provisions to address violence against women. However, women, particularly in rural areas, lack awareness of available government schemes and of these laws and have inadequate access to legal services and advice.

1.2.2 Other initiatives

In Odisha, there has been some degree of women's collectivization through memberships in SHG and federations ('Mahila Samitis'), but coverage is limited when compared to the neighbouring state of Andhra Pradesh. However, this initiative maintains a focus on the economic empowerment of women. There have been few initiatives aimed at the political empowerment of women.

In October 2012, the state government undertook the "Grama Sabha Sashaktikaran Karyakrama" (GSSK) - a campaign aimed at generating awareness about various government schemes and the functioning of the PRI, as well as to prepare annual action plans. This campaign entailed the conduct of Palli Sabha and Gram Sabha meetings throughout Odisha on designated dates during the month of October. Although this campaign was aimed at a male and female audience, one of its focus areas was to promote a gender-balanced approach in all planning processes concerning aspects of women and children as well as rural development. It is planned that this campaign shall be repeated annually (i.e., every year in October).

Other than government initiatives, UNDP and UNICEF maintain a strong presence at the state level, although they do not have any direct presence at the district and community levels. UNDP had developed 5 training modules for first generation PRI members under its 'Capacity Development for Local Governance Program' (CDLG), which covers a total of seven Indian states including Odisha.¹⁰¹ This program was targeted at all PRI members without a specific focus on EWRs. UNICEF, on the other hand, focuses on the delivery of basic services such as health, immunization, water, sanitation, education, etc.

2. Project Description

The Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between UN Women and the Odisha Panchayati Raj Department was signed in July 2011. The implementing agency of this project in Odisha is the SIRD. The project was initiated in Dhenkanal and Gajapati districts. These districts were chosen due to their less developed status. In September 2012, the districts of Bhadrak and Sambalpur were added to the project. For the purposes of this report, only Dhenkanal and Gajapati districts were visited.

¹⁰¹ Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and Odisha.

2.1. Project Implementation

With the signing of the PCA, District Program Officers (DPOs) were appointed in the first two districts. However, funds were transferred to the state in October 2011, which delayed the start of project activities. Activities were stalled again from December 2011 to March 2012 on account of elections in March 2012. In this time the Election Commission imposed the 'Model Code of Conduct' in December 2011, thus halting all activities impacting on electoral processes. The field level work under the project, therefore started only after the elections were completed and elected representatives put in place, but some activities not impeded by the Election Code were taken up earlier, such as training of stakeholders and planning of strategies.

Project implementation in Odisha takes place at two levels - the state and field level. At the state level, the State Project Steering Committee (SPSC) reviews and guides work undertaken. The SIRD provides trainings and builds capacity of EWR, motivators and line department officials. The SIRD also monitors the work of DPOs conducted under this project.

Second, is at the field level where DPOs work in close coordination with District Administration to -- on the one hand aid, support and guide the work of motivators. On the other hand to organize Mahila Sabha meetings and provide support to take forward agendas or forward complaints / petitions received to relevant authorities. While organizing Mahila Sabhas is clearly within the DPO's mandate, there appears to be some amount of confusion about the DPO's role in organizing Palli Sabha and Gram Sabha meetings. The latter are statutory in nature and can be called after following the necessary procedure. In fact, the Commissioner of the PR Department had advised DPOs in a Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting (October 11, 2012) to not involve themselves in organizing either Palli Sabha or Gram Sabhas, as it is the responsibility of the PRIs as well as of the Panchayati Raj Department. This appears to be somewhat in contradiction with the GOI-UN Women MOU, which lists the conduct of at least special¹⁰² 100 Gram Sabha and Ward Sabha as a specific deliverable. (

While there is some participation recorded in national level conferences and visits under the aegis of the program, (e.g. participating in NIRD organized meetings on the development of training modules, exposure visits to other states); there is limited knowledge of the Regional Center for Excellence all around. Similarly, there is limited awareness of research initiatives undertaken under the project.

THP also has block level programs in districts where its partners are based. They have maximum presence in Kalahandi, where they cover 6 blocks. In others, e.g. Khandemal and Dhenkenel, they cover 2 blocks each. The THP programs aim to empower EWR by providing hands on training and capacity building. Advocacy campaigns are also undertaken to encourage women contest and participate in elections. There are no synergies between THP activities and other activities conducted under the project and most government functionaries are unaware of THP and its programs. THP works in close cooperation with local NGOs which are well known and respected by the target audience. The THP approach is based on a very hands on participatory approach to building capacity. A limited number of EWR interviewed had attended both government and THP trainings and noted that the approach taken was fundamentally different. They highlighted that the training provided by the government was less participatory and less simulation based than the THP approach.

¹⁰² Non statutory and needs based.

3. Stakeholder capacity

3.1. At the State Level – SIRD

Established as a training institute under the Ministry of Panchayat Raj (MoPR) in 1984, the SIRD is mandated to build capacity amongst elected representatives, to undertake research and prepare publications on various aspects of local governance. The SIRD is located in Bhubaneswar and has three Extension Training Centers (ETC). It creates and implements training programs for government officials at all levels, elected representatives of the Panchayat system as well as non-governmental organizations and rural youth.

The SIRD has a capacity of providing direct in-house training to 10,000 persons per year. In order to increase its outreach, it has instituted a system of empanelling trainers and entering into arrangements with district level civil society organizations as logistics partners.¹⁰³ By taking this initiative the SIRD seeks to increase its outreach to 100,000 beneficiaries per year. Empanelled trainers and members of NGOs receive training at the SIRD first and are provided with resource tools prior to conducting trainings at the field level. The work of resource persons are managed and monitored by the SIRD through financial disbursements to the district administration, designation of in-house staff to monitor districts, using District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) officials to verify training and through e-monitoring systems.¹⁰⁴

Post election *all* PRI elected representatives are required to undergo an induction training covering aspects of PRI governance and available government schemes. They are also required to undergo two thematic trainings. These trainings are provided primarily at the field level and are 3-day one-time trainings. There is no scope for continuous or long-term trainings.

In addition to SIRD's own training materials/modules, resource tools for training elected representatives were developed primarily under the UNDP CDLG program. These tools were prepared after incorporating feedback received from 'training for trainers' sessions. The tools appear to be content heavy and it is not clear how useful they are for imparting information, as there have been no systematic evaluations conducted of the same.

Prior to the GOI-UN Women project, there was no specific focus on training EWRs. The first special trainings for EWRs at SIRD under the GOI-UN Women project were organized recently in December 2012. The focus of the special training was to develop women's leadership skills, but it also covered other issues including aspects of trafficking, health, livelihood and nutrition. The impact of these trainings has yet to be assessed. However, as with the training resource material, there appears to be no systematic method for evaluating the usefulness of trainings conducted. Additionally, with regard to training EWRs, it must be noted that the NIRD developed training module to be used under this project has been found to be 'very difficult' and is being worked on to reduce its size and make it more locally specific.

According to government guidelines, each Elected Representative (ER) must receive a minimum of 15 days of training. Given the large number of ERs in the state, this is a significant training load. Although the SIRD has used different methods (i.e., domain trainings, exposure visits, sit-down trainings, digital literacy trainings) to impart trainings and increase outreach, meeting the 15 days of training requirement is a major challenge. Further, even with publicity and awareness initiatives (such as printing newsletters, putting up

¹⁰³ Such organizations provide logistical support and are involved in organizing trainings at the field level.

¹⁰⁴ Under the e-monitoring system, partners are required to upload activity reports, photographs, etc. in the requisite template on SIRD's database.

information on websites) it is difficult to get people at the grassroots level connected to the system to avail of information made available due to illiteracy, socio-economic marginalization, etc. These circumstances call for the further decentralization of training services and strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems of the SIRD.

The SIRD has put in place a number of monitoring systems. Particular to the context of this project, DPOs are required to report on a monthly basis and a log frame to monitor the work of DPOs is under development. However, there appears to be limited initiatives to assess the impact of activities undertaken.

3.2. At the Field Level

3.2.1 District Administration

According to the PCA, a DPU consisting of *inter alia* the Collector and other line officials working on issues involving women, must be established to prepare workplans and reports, guide the election of motivators and monitor and supervise project implementation.¹⁰⁵ In addition to facilitating project implementation, involvement of the district administration is responsible for ensuring that petitions and complaints arising out of project activities are forwarded to relevant authorities and due action is taken. In turn, the establishment of such committees aid in achieving convergence at the district level due to the representation and involvement of different line departments. However, in both Gajapati and Dhenkanal, DPUs have not been formally set up. In Dhenkanal the Collector and the Zila Parishad CEO call for regular briefings, while in Gajapati we were informed that a 'District Coordination Committee' chaired by the Collector reviews the implementation of this project along with implementation of other projects and activities in the district. District Collectors in both districts are aware of the program although they do not seem to have in-depth knowledge of its functioning. In both places the DPOs, offices are located in the DRDA office, work closely with this agency and note that they receive the necessary support from the government.

The MTR noted a perception of difference in state capacity in the two districts. In Dhenkanal, which is in a more developed part of the state, state officials tend to be posted for longer periods when compared to Gajapati. During the Gajapati DPO's tenure thus far the Collectors have been changed four times and there have also been numerous changes of the in line department officials.¹⁰⁶ As a result, the Gajapati DPO relies more on long time serving civil society organizations for support with implementing project activities.

3.2.2. District Program Officers

DPOs are responsible for district level coordination and implementation of project activities. DPOs in Dhenkanal and Gajapati were appointed in July and August 2011 respectively. As mentioned earlier, both DPOs receive support from the district level administration to perform their duties. They also work closely with block level officials.

At the district level DPOs report to the Collector and head of the DRDA. They also report to the Program Analyst UN Women SARO, who works under the supervision of the Head of the Governance Unit UN Women, on a day-to-day basis. From September 2012 the SIRD has been monitoring their activities at the state level. DPOs are required to report on a weekly basis using prescribed formats, in addition to attending review meetings. DPO performance is assessed on the basis of district level annual work plans.

¹⁰⁵ Article 1(k) of the PCA- this provision mentions a committee in its definition of the 'District Project Unit (DPU)', however this is a very ambiguous definition and it is not clear what the committee is meant to do. UN Women resources, on the other hand mention a 'district steering committee' to guide work undertaken.

¹⁰⁶ This could be because Gajapati is backward region, and considered unsafe on account of Maoist activities, and therefore an unpopular posting for government officials.

It was observed that though the nature of assignments of both DPOs are the same, performing tasks assignments require more effort in a district like Gajapati as the villages are more dispersed and geographically remote. In some remote tribal areas, DPOs may experience language barriers. According to SIRD functionaries, DPOs require secretarial support given their significant workload. Overburdening DPOs will impact the quality of their work, in that they will not be able to provide the much needed hands-on support to EWRs and motivators, particularly in terms of organizing effective Mahila Sabha meetings and taking follow up action. However, government officials, EWRs and motivators interviewed in Dhenkanal and Gajapati appear to be satisfied with the DPOs' work performance. Further, the outputs achieved by DPOs are in consonance with annual work plans and log frames.

As has been observed by PRI Commissioner Smt. Aparajita Sarangi, the DPO's role lends focus to the program and ensures accountability. According to the Gajapati DPO, his position has led to the formation of a district level forum and the establishment of an NGO network, which will continue to serve EWRs and women even after the program is completed.

3.2.3 Motivators

As per their terms of reference (TOR), motivators are required to provide information on forthcoming Gram Sabha meetings and motivate people, especially women, to attend and participate in these meetings, and to record proceedings and facilitate follow up actions. They are also required to interact with Block level officers. Currently, 50 motivators have been appointed in each district, one for each of the 50 GPs taken up by the project in the district.

There appears to be some ambiguity with the method of selecting motivators, as the TOR for DPOs state that motivators must be chosen in accordance with decisions taken at the Gram Sabha or by a committee (although there's no guidance on the constitution of this committee). The TOR for motivators, on the other hand, states that motivators must be chosen by GPs. In both the districts visited, motivators are nominated by the GP. This has had mixed results, as in some cases it was observed that GP members nominate their friends and relatives to this post or other unsuitable candidates. In one instance in Dhenkanal, the DPO requested the removal of a motivator as she was found to be speaking against women's interests. However, the advantage of the GP or Gram Sabha's involvement with the appointment of motivators is that there is already a relationship of trust established between the motivator and the community.

The role of the motivator is considered crucial due to their role in ensuring women's participation in Gram Sabhas and thereby strengthening these forums. The motivator achieves this by providing door-to-door intimation of such meetings and urging women to attend Panchayat meetings. . Notably each Gram Sabha arranged under the project must be preceded by Palli Sabhas, which in turn must be preceded by a Mahila Sabhas.

Figure 1. Cycle of Special Meetings



Motivators are paid a total of Rs. 1500/- for completing each cycle ending with a Gram Sabha. Motivators consider this inadequate compensation for the number of work hours spent in organizing each meeting, particularly since each house in the village has to be visited thrice to complete each phase of the cycle culminating in the Gram Sabha. The payment currently given to motivators has serious implications for the sustainability of the motivator post, if unpaid motivators may not be able to afford to remain fulfilling the demands of this post. Inadequate compensation may lead to personal income losses, thus reducing their will to perform their role as motivators in the long term.

However, it has been observed by state level functionaries that this role can be taken over by other voluntary programs of the government, namely the Bharat Nirman Abhiyaan Volunteers or by the EWRs themselves after they have been empowered. An EWR who had previously received THP training (but was not from a UN Women project district) mentioned that she was able to effectively campaign for women to participate in Gram Sabhas. She encouraged women to attend Gram Sabha meetings to access information about schemes and benefits, and to raise their issues directly.

4. Project activities

4.1. Capacity building of EWRs

Given that EWRs have only recently taken office and special SIRD trainings were conducted only in December 2012 (after the field visit conducted in connection with this Mid-Term Review), it is too early to assess the impact of these trainings. However, it appears that the outreach conducted through SIRD trainings are uneven across the districts—in Dhenkanal, all EWRs interviewed mentioned that they had undergone trainings, whereas in Gajapati none of the EWRs interviewed has received any trainings either at the district or state levels.

In terms of the usefulness of the trainings, EWRs interviewed in Dhenkanal mentioned that they found SIRD organized trainings useful. However, SIRD trainings are one time in nature and while they are useful in imparting information, they are limited in terms of how this information is to be applied and used. There is a felt need for hands on practical training, particularly for first timers—something that is being done successfully by the THP. Unfortunately, as mentioned earlier, there is no synergy between the government supported program and the THP. Here it must be noted that the THP has limited coverage. Even so, the GOI-UN Women program can benefit greatly by examining methods used by THP to provide lessons in practice. [

4.2 Encouraging women's participation

This aspect of the project has been considered vital by respondents at all levels, specially the conduct of Mahila Sabhas. Respondents noted the following advantages of conducting Mahila Sabhas:

They provide, for the first time a forum exclusively for women where they can voice their concerns freely.

They serve to enable women to familiarize themselves with the workings and utility of Gram Sabhas and Palli Sabha.

They provide a single platform to impart information on different government schemes that are administered by different line departments. Hence it is a step towards achieving convergence.

Issues concerning women, which are not usually addressed at Palli Sabhas and Gram Sabhas are now being taken up at these forums as a result of discussion held during, and resolutions emerging from, Mahila Sabhas. .

In addition to allowing individual petitions, Mahila Sabhas enable women to collectively demand their entitlements and take collective action. The later has been particularly useful in taking action against illegal alcohol shops.

Women have widely attended, and effectively participated, at special Palli Sabhas and Gram Sabhas organized under this project. Concerns arising from these forums have been forwarded to relevant line departments for further action and resolution. Some of the concerns raised have been effectively resolved, particularly in terms of eligible candidates being provided access to relevant government schemes and benefits. Examples of these successes include the provision of pensions to elderly eligible candidates; the provision of sanitary facilities; the building of roads, etc. However, some issues are pending resolution - such as ensuring water supply to some villages in Dhenkanal. While these issues may take time, the cycle involved in conducting Gram Sabhas, have served to successfully link the administration to the community level.

It was noted that women raise a broad range of issues: Including, for example, general community concerns such as need for roads, water and sanitation, etc. Other issues raised are individual in nature, such as domestic violence, need for maintenance support, inability to access government sponsored entitlements, etc. Additionally, these meetings are used to discuss general issues pertaining to women's rights in an effort to create awareness of said issues, including for example: trafficking, declining child sex ratios, etc. Hence a significant positive outcome of conducting these meetings, particularly Gram Sabhas and Palli Sabhas, is that the scope of issues discussed at these meetings has been considerably broadened. Here it is interesting to note the observation made by the UNICEF official interviewed—that in recent years NREGA related work has become the main focus of Gram Sabha meetings, and that it is a challenge to look beyond livelihood issues. The modality used in this project has clearly addressed this challenge.

One aspect requiring consideration is the payment of Rs.15/- to women attending Gram/Palli/Mahila Sabha meetings. This is a nominal amount paid instead of serving biscuits and tea at these meeting as is the wont. However, it is noted that this acts as an incentive for women to attend such meetings—the 15 INR payment is not available for attending statutory meetings. This has led to some disagreement amongst functionaries at the field level. Some believe that, although nominal the amount is considerable given an impoverished context. For instance, rice is available at 2 INR a kg. under some government scheme. This, in their view diminishes the voluntariness of the attendees, thus impacting on long-term attendance. The opposing view was that attendees give up work hours to attend such meetings and hence, if the means are available within the program, participants should be compensated.

However, despite the overall success of this strategy, there are also some disadvantages that require caution and prior planning. First, confusion is rife amongst the women about statutory Gram Sabha and Palli Sabha meetings conducted and those conducted under GOI-UN Women program. This was what was observed during interviews conducted with village women organized by the DPOs in both districts visited. When asked whether they attend Gram Sabhas, the response was an almost universally 'yes'. However, upon probing further it was evident that the Gram Sabhas being referred to were the special Gram Sabhas conducted under the GOI-UN Women Project. Women were unable to distinguish between regular or statutory Gram Sabhas and special Gram Sabhas. This distinction must be clearly explained to women attendees and women must be encouraged to attend regular or statutory Gram Sabhas, which will continue even without specially facilitated Gram Sabhas as per the GOI-UN Women Project.

Second, while special Gram and Palli Sabhas under this project are widely attended by women, it is unclear whether women's participation in statutory Gram Sabhas and Palli Sabhas has increased. In a related vein, it is unclear whether issues discussed at special Gram and Palli Sabhas have been reflected in regular Gram and Palli Sabha meetings. These aspects may lead to a ghettoization of women's issues and concerns. During interviews with District level officials it was observed that many of them were of the opinion that special meetings under the GOI-UN Women Project were conducted to discuss 'women

issues' and 'social issues', which were more advocacy related rather than more general issues relating to livelihood and access to public goods. This misconception must be addressed, particularly in light of the fact that most issues raised by women even at special meetings are related to more general livelihood issues and issues related to accessing public goods and services. These issues must be accorded the same priority as other such issues raised at regular or statutory forums. It is also essential that this program's impact – of increased women's participation—is not limited to special sessions and efforts must be taken to ensure that women's attendance and participation in regular meetings is also improved.

5. Overall Observations

It has been observed that the GOI-UN Women program has attained high visibility in a very short period of time. On the whole the project is perceived to supplement government efforts to empower women politically at the local levels and there is a felt need for it. All interviewees unanimously urged that the program be expanded and continued for a longer period.

However, if the program is able to achieve its objectives - of politically empowering women, then there is huge potential for backlash and increased violence against women. To illustrate, in a Mahila Sabha organized in Gajapati, a woman raised a complaint of not receiving equal remuneration under NREGA. The NREGA worker also present at the meeting, immediately rose to threaten and shout down the woman complainant. Although this situation was diffused by the DPO attending the Mahila Sabha, it demonstrates the potential for violence, especially when issues of individual accountability and corruption are exposed at public forums.

Additionally, numerous instances of domestic violence were also described during meetings between the mid-term review team and EWRs, organized by THP. It appears that domestic violence exacerbated in situations where EWRs gained autonomy and engaged more with public affairs, thus allegedly spending less time on household chores. In some cases domestic violence was faced by the EWR when she dared counter the wishes of her family or prominent men in the community in relation to taking decisions in her capacity as a EWR, in other more extreme cases EWR noted that they had been subjected to violence by family members simply because upon their election they intended to take up their role rather than allow a member of their family to fulfil the post on their behalf. Unfortunately, there appears to be no effort or initiative as part of the program to deal with backlash. Significant to this aspect is women's limited awareness of legal rights and access to the criminal justice system. This far this program has targetted women beneficiaries only while making no attempt to engage with men within the community and the home from whom such backlash is expected.

In conclusion, the following points require to be highlighted:

There appears to be some amount of confusion about the role DPOs can play in calling Gram Sabha or Palli Sabha meetings. This must be clarified by state authorities so that these activities under the program can be undertaken with official sanction, and in order that official support is available for follow up and implementation of decisions taken at such forums.

Stakeholder capacity-

SIRD - Although various steps are being taken to enhance SIRD's coverage, its outreach at the field level remains uneven. There also appears to be a significant difference between trainings received at SIRD Bhubaneswar and at the lower, district and block, levels. It is, therefore, essential that SIRD's outreach program be strengthened, particularly in terms of

the quality of trainings provided at the field level. Further, modules and resource materials prepared by SIRD appear to be content heavy. It is essential that these modules be tested to ensure user friendliness and ensure that they achieve what is expected of them.

District Administration - District level administrative officials are generally supportive of this program and wish to have it extended. However, in Gajapati it was noted that repeated and frequent transfers of administrative officials impede the progress of this project, as each new person requires fresh briefing prior to performing the activities required.

DPOs - DPOs are considered important in program implementation as they provide a focus and ensure accountability. Workloads of DPOs are dependent on having accessibility to the areas covered by the project. Hence, work in remote areas of Gajapati, for example, is more labour intensive than other less remote areas.

Motivators - Motivators play a significant role in ensuring attendance at specially organized meetings under the GOI-UN Women project. They also record minutes and in some instances follow up cases with block level authorities. However, they do not feel that they are receiving adequate compensation for the work they do under this program, as repeated visits to every village home for each Gram Sabha cycle, consumes significant amounts of their work hours.

Project activities

Capacity building of EWRs - As mentioned earlier, SIRD's outreach at the field level remains uneven. However, EWRs who have attended SIRD trainings in Bhubaneswar found them useful. The need was expressed for further hands on practical training to be provided at the local levels to enhance the capacity of EWRs.

Encouraging women's participation

Comparing strengths and weaknesses of special meetings held under the GOI-UN Women Project	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>It allows women to speak freely It provides a platform for disseminating information on all issues and schemes related to women and on accessing public goods. The scope of issues discussed at Gram Sabhas is broadened due to the issues brought up by women. It allows for the collectivization of women. Holding of such meetings and pursuing action thereafter, connects the district level administration to the community.</p>	<p>Women are not able to easily distinguish between special meetings under this program and regular/statutory meetings. Women's awareness of and attendance at regular meetings remains low. There is a possibility of a ghettoization of 'women's issues', since Mahila Sabhas are perceived by some - to be useful only for discussing 'women issues' and social issues – and hence as issues that do not require immediate action.</p>

Under these circumstances, it is recommended that the distinctions between special and regular gram sabhas be clearly elucidated upon to women attendees of special meetings. It is also essential that due recognition is given to such forums for their potential to enable discussion of local governance issues of all kinds, and hence that these meeting not be used exclusively to discuss what is narrowly construed as being 'women's issues'.

Overall recommendation

Overall the program is well appreciated in the project sites visited. However, there appears to be no preparation for the backlash that may arise due to women's enhanced participation in public spaces, particularly violence against women in both public and private spaces. There is limited work done to engage with male members of the community to sensitize them on gender issues. There are also limited efforts at increasing awareness on the laws on violence against women and means of accessing legal remedies. Since, in most cases these services are far too remote for women to access, beyond making women aware of what is available to them, it is recommended that special meetings organized under this program are used to also provide legal aid and advice to women attendees.

Annex 6.3 Rajasthan

Author Arkaja Singh

Special Focus on Tonk and Alwar districts

17-21 Dec 2012

1. Background and Context

1.1 The Panchayati Raj System in Rajasthan

Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in Rajasthan are established under the Rajasthan Panchayati Raj Act, 1994 (RPR Act). The three tier Panchayats structure consists of Gram Panchayats at the lowest level, Panchayat Samitis at the sub-district block level and Zila Parishads at the district level. Gram Sabha's are directly elected, with one Panchayat member (a "Panch") for every electoral Ward. Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads consist of a mix of directly elected members, nominees from lower tiers of PRIs in addition to ex-officio members who are State Legislative Assembly members in the Panchayat Samiti and Members of Parliament in the Zila Parishad (all referred to as "Panchayats" in the report, unless specified otherwise). The Gram Panchayat has an indirectly elected President and Vice President, who are referred to as the Sarpanch and Up-Sarpanch respectively. Panchayat Samitis have indirectly elected President and Vice President, who are referred to as the Pradhan and Up-Pradhan respectively, and the Zila Parishad has indirectly elected President and Vice President, who are referred to as the Pramukh and Up-Pramukh respectively.

Significantly, the Rajasthan legislation also includes Ward Sabhas, in addition to Gram Sabhas. A Ward Sabha consists of all the registered voters in the Panchayat election list who reside in the Ward, and a Gram Sabha consists of all the registered voters of a Gram Panchayat area. In terms of the RPR Act, it is mandatory to hold two Gram Sabhas for every Gram Panchayat and two Ward Sabha for every Panchayat Ward every year. In addition, additional Gram Sabhas and Ward Sabhas may be called. The RPR Act mandates a quorum for Gram Sabhas and Ward Sabha meetings. A minimum of one-tenth of all the members of Gram Sabha and Ward Sabha should be present for a valid Sabha meeting to be held, and of this one-tenth, Scheduled Castes and Tribes and women should constitute a percentage which is equal to their numbers in the overall membership of the Gram Sabha or Ward Sabha respectively.

Women's reservation was introduced into the RPR Act by amendment in 1994 itself, but brought into effect in a subsequent election cycle. It was reported to us that the state is currently in the third election cycle with reservation for women. The RPR Act provides for reservation of one-half of the total number of Panchayat seats for women, and also provides that at least one-half of the total number of seats reserved for Schedule Castes and Tribes should be reserved for women from Schedule Castes and Tribes respectively such that the total number of seats reserved for women should be one-half of the total number of seats of the PRI. One-half of all Panchayat Presidents and Vice-President seats are also to be reserved across the state, including one-half reservation for women within reservations for Schedule Castes and Tribes. The number of seats reserved for Schedule Castes and Tribes is meant to be in proportion to their total numbers in the population of the Panchayat area (for seats within the Panchayat) and in proportion to their total number in the state (for Panchayat President and Vice President seats).

The last elections to PRIs in Rajasthan were completed in Feb 2010, and the term of these panchayats will continue till 2015. In this period, Rajasthan has implemented important Panchayati Raj initiatives which include decentralisation of funds and functions related to Women & Child Development Department, Health Department, Social Justice Department, Education Department and Agriculture Department. An indicative mapping of the roles and

responsibilities of Panchayats in relation to these departments is provided in Table ____ below¹⁰⁷:

Table 1 Panchayat Roles and Responsibilities in Devolved Departments

S. No.	Nodal Department/ Scheme	Institutional set up in relation to PRIs	Roles and Responsibilities of PRIs (Indicative list)
1.	<p>Women & Child Development Department</p> <p>Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), also smaller schemes for health and well-being of adolescent girls and mothers</p> <p>Anganwadi centres set up at village and settlement level to provide integrated services to pre-school children, pregnant women and lactating mothers</p>	<p>Deputy Director, ICDS (District Level)</p> <p>ICDS Project Officer/ Assistant Project Officer</p> <p>ICDS Supervisor Anganwadi Worker Helper ASHA Worker</p>	<p>ICDS officials and workers to report to PRIs, and accountable to PRIs at Zila Parishad, Panchayat Samiti and Gram Panchayat respectively.</p> <p>Panchayats to supervise the activities of Anganwadi centres and monitor attendance of ICDS workers.</p> <p>ICDS workers are meant to attend Gram Sabha and Panchayat meetings, and inform the meeting of their activities and programmes. If there are issues in the management of anganwadi centres, these are to be placed before the Panchayat, and any solutions proposed to the Panchayat. Monthly action plans and progress reports under the scheme are to be prepared under the supervision of Panchayats.</p> <p>Panchayats to support campaigns, awareness generating activities, and PRI members to convene and attend special meetings and mobilisation activities organised under the scheme.</p>
2.	<p>Women & Child Department</p> <p>Domestic Violence Act, 2005</p> <p>Women's Support Committees at district and sub-division level, to provide counselling, support and</p>	<p>District officer of Department of Social Justice</p> <p>Roles also for Police Department, Family Court NGO representatives and technical experts</p>	<p>District Committee to meetings convened every 3 months by the District Collector or the Zila Parishad President.</p> <p>PRIs to supervise and monitor implementation of the law, and to provide guidance and support where required.</p>

¹⁰⁷ Based on course materials prepared for Panchayati Raj Refresher Training Campaign 2012-13, prepared in May-Jul 2012 by Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj and Gram Vikas Sansthan, Rajasthan with support from UNDP and UNICEF.

	guidance to women and to support legal action in cases of VAW		
3.	Health Department National Rural Health Mission Health Sub-Centres, Primary Health Centres and Community Health Centres Village Health and Sanitation Committee	ANM worker (Auxillary Nurse and Midwife) ASHA worker (Accredited Social Health Activist) Medical (doctors, nurses and technical staff)	Annual health plans to be approved by the Panchayat Supervision and monitoring of field level workers, monitoring attendance in health centres (and to take disciplinary action in case of non-attendance). In cases where health centres are not being run properly or health workers are not performing their duties adequately, Panchayats can pass a resolution for action to be taken, which is forwarded to the concerned department.
4.	Social Justice and Empowerment Department Multiple schemes for economic empowerment, social justice and welfare of Schedule Castes and Tribes, backward and extremely backward communities and widows etc.	Officials of Social Justice Department posted in District Collectorate and Zila Parishad offices	Implementation and monitoring responsibilities with respect to approximately 50 schemes of the Social Justice Department were handed to Panchayats in Rajasthan in Oct 2010. Local budgets for some of these schemes have been transferred to Zila Parishad accounts. Other schemes are to be implemented by the district administration, with the support of ORIs.
5.	Education Department Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA, Primary Education for All Campaign) Right to Education Act, 2009 Education committees at village, block and district level headed by Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti	Education Department officials Teachers	Monitoring and taking stock of activities under SSA twice in every year. Inspection of schools and education department offices Social Audit of activities under SSA at Gram Panchayat level Approval of annual action plans. Participating in, and supporting campaigns for school enrolment, literacy. Implementation of activities funded through budgets of village, block level

	and Zila Parishad Presidents		education committees
6.	Agriculture Department	Deputy Director, Agriculture; Assistant Director, Agriculture Assistant Officer, Agriculture Supervisor (village level)	Monitoring attendance, leave, permission for inspection tours and travel. Identification of projects – where Agriculture Department projects should be implemented.

The state also has an initiative called “village sachivalaya” (literally village secretariat), by which Gram Panchayat offices are required to remain open for business, with attendance of elected representatives, local officials and ICDS workers on certain appointed days of the month.

However, Panchayati Raj reforms in Rajasthan are by no means complete or universally applied. Some of these reforms have remained on paper, and quorum requirements in Gram Sabha and ward Sabha meetings not always satisfied. However, initiatives of the state government signal its commitment to decentralisation and devolution of powers, and provide a context for this programme’s work with EWRs and women in Panchayats.

1.2 Two-Child Norm

Rajasthan introduced a two-child norm in 1992-95, and has subsequently applied this policy to PRIs and government posts. It has been introduced by amendment in the RPR Act in 2000 and is now a qualifying criteria for being a member of a Panchayat in Rajasthan. In terms of this law, having a third child after 1992 disqualifies a person from contesting panchayat elections. Similarly, the state has a laws that prevent persons with more than two children from consisted elections to the state legislative assembly. In government jobs, officials are denied increments and promotions if they have more than two children after 1992. This rule is applied equally to men and women who seek to contest elections or have government jobs.

A large number of disqualifications in Panchayats on account of the two-child norm have been documented in Rajasthan in other studies.¹⁰⁸ Some of our interviewees also mentioned instances of panchayat aspirants being disqualified on account of this policy. None of the interviewees were aware of any discussions in the government or social mobilisation to oppose the policy.

1.3 Women and the Panchayat System

The review team interacted with several EWRs who candidly explained how in the first year after they were elected they learned how to proactively take up leadership roles. In their own versions of the story, they see the process of stepping out of traditional household roles into community leadership as something that came to them *after* being elected to PRI office. EWRs reported that training and orientation programmes, and activities of NGO workers helped them understand their roles and responsibilities.

However, from the limited interactions of the team with EWRs, officials and NGO workers, it seemed that many of the more prominent EWRs were from ‘forward’ castes and communities. Local officials and NGO workers explained that economic status together with social exclusion might have quite a strong influence on the participation of women in PRIs. Backward caste women may be under more pressure to earn their livelihoods, and may continue to do farm labour or other work even after they have been elected. This affects their participation and engagement in Panchayat activities. Women from socially excluded

¹⁰⁸ For example, see Nirmala Buch, *The Law of Two Child Norm in Panchayats*, (New Delhi, 2006).

communities are also less likely to be accepted in leadership roles by the village community. However, in spite of these challenges, instances of EWRs from backward and excluded castes and communities instances of proactive participation by EWRs from excluded and backward castes and communities were not unknown.

1.4 Description of Project in State

The PCA with the Government of Rajasthan was signed in June 2011. The nodal department is the state Department of Panchayati Raj, and the State Nodal Officer appointed from the Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj and Gramin Vikas Sansthan (IGPRS), which is the State Institute of Rural Development. The first instalment of project funds was received in Dec 2011.

Under the programme the following training activities have been completed:

- Training needs assessment (TNA) of EWRs in three programme districts through multi-stakeholder consultation was completed in May 2011
- TNA presented to NIRD in May, 2011 and a framework for module development was prepared
- Chapter Scheme, methodology for training modules prepared at NIRD with inputs and chapter inputs from IGPRS
- Participation in national Training of Trainers (TOT) at NIRD
- Three district TOTs conducted for Tonk, Dungarpur and Alwar respectively in Feb 2012, in which a total of 100 trainers were trained
- Training materials and modules were prepared and published in Nov 2012
- State level TOT in Nov 2012, in which 47 trainers were trained in modules prepared for the programme
- State level training of EWRs in Nov 2012, in which 20 EWRs from the programme districts were trained
- SATCOM based training (remotely, over satellite link) for motivators in Dungarpur district in Nov 2012, for mobilising women's participation in Gram Sabhas and Mahila Sabhas
- Mahila Sabha Guide Book prepared by IGPRS at the request of the state government.
- Preparatory workshop in Oct 2012 for participating EWRs and UN Women project teams who had come to Rajasthan for UN Women International Summit.

Motivator selection completed in Dungarpur and Tonk districts (completed Jun 2012 in Tonk) and is expected to be completed in Alwar district in Jan 2013.¹⁰⁹ Motivators have been selected in Tonk through Gram Sabha meetings, after which they were interviewed by the CEO, ZP, BDO and DPO. Most of the Gram Sabha selection was confirmed, but a few were changed. There were criteria for selection, which included basic literacy. Many of the women selected to be motivators in Tonk were already contract workers of the Gram Panchayat, such as anganwadi workers (ICDS) or ASHA workers (Health). It was felt that motivator honoraria, without a regular monthly wage, would be too small an amount to keep motivators engaged with the programme.¹¹⁰ In this regard, we learned that the view of the programme implementing team in the district was that selecting women who are associated

¹⁰⁹ We learned that motivator selection was delayed in Alwar because there was no DPO for the district in the period Jan-Aug 2012.

¹¹⁰ Motivators get INR 500 for each Ward Sabha and INR 500 for each special Gram Sabha. As the number of Wards is different at each GP so the total honorarium that a motivator may get differs.

with other Panchayat activities has the additional advantage that it converges their pre-existing training and experience with what will be acquired through this programme. Post-training, Motivators have been assigned the task of monitoring the participation by women in meetings and they have also collected some information from the Gram Panchayat such as population, sex ratio, literacy, health facilities, nutrition, quality of services and problems of women.

Special Mahila Sabhas (at Gram Panchayat level) were convened in all Gram Panchayats in the state (including in programme districts) in Nov 2012, in which it was resolved that Mahila Sabhas would be held on a quarterly basis preceding all regular Gram Sabhas. Executive instructions to this effect have also been issued by the state government, which are applicable only to blocks taken up for implementation of this programme in Dungarpur, Tonk and Alwar.

The State Nodal Officer informed the review team that IGPRS proposes to roll out training materials and modules developed for this programme to all PRIs in the state, which will be funded through GOI's PMEYSA¹¹¹ programme.

In field visits the review team also learned that District Project Units, chaired by the District Collector, has been constituted in Tonk and Alwar only recently and we were told it will have its first meeting soon.

The review team learned from field visits that issues relating to programme expenditure and coordination with the Zila Parishad, have not been completely resolved. In our experience, it is not uncommon for programmes and projects to face these problems at early stages, but should not persist for a year after project funds have been received and 18 months after the partnership agreement with the state government was signed. In this connection, we were also informed that the state government does not have an active day-to-day link with DPOs, and that issues communicated to the state nodal agency are not resolved through direct communication between the state nodal agency and the district implementing agencies. These field level issues have been communicated through UN Women SARO team in Delhi, and have also been raised in the last Project Steering Committee meeting in Sept 2012. This discussion pointed to a possible need for changes in the programme governance structure, which would make state nodal departments and nodal officers more directly responsible for implementation, not just for training activities at the SIRD, but also for implementation activities in the field.

THP also has block level activities through its partners in Alwar and Tonk districts. In Tonk the THP partner is working in some blocks in which are also part of the UN Women intervention.

2.0 Stakeholder Capacity

2.1 At the State Level

The main implementing agency of the programme in the state is IGPRS. IGPRS was set up as an autonomous institution in 1984 as the apex institution in the state for human resource

¹¹¹ Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan was launched by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in 2007. Aims of PMEYSA are to organize the Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) in a network and through group action to empower themselves, so that both their participation and representation on local governance issues improves. The EWRs are expected to enable themselves to articulate their problems as women Panchayat leaders and discuss issues regarding the institutional mechanisms for their empowerment, to build the confidence and capacity of EWRs, so that they get over the institutional, societal and political constraints that prevent them from active participation in rural local self governments and to enable them to come up with a charter of issues to be mainstreamed into policy and advocacy support so that their concerns are addressed by the process of development adopted by the State and the three-tier PRI System.

development in PRIs and rural development sector. It was formally nominated as the State Institute of Rural Development in 1999.

In 2004-06 IGPRS participated in roundtable discussions leading to the development of the National Capacity Building Framework¹¹² of the MoPR. A cascading training structure, with a series of TOTs and roll out at district and sub-district level were developed in Rajasthan in following this framework. Training inputs are concentrated in the first year after Panchayat elections are held, and in the year up to 125,000 elected representatives may be trained. A training campaign may be preceded by a systematic Training Needs Assessment and preparation of a training calendar.

IGPRS has satellite link facilities through which training can be provided in remote locations. IGPRS also has three extension centres in Ajmer, Dungarpur and Mandhore (Jodhpur).

As an SIRD, IGPRS is supported by grants from the national Ministries of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, both through recurring and non-recurring grants. Training programme costs may be supported other schemes of the national government¹¹³, and donor programmes such as UNDP's Capacity Development for Local Government (CDLG).

IGPRS has a substantial on-going commitment to training of elected representatives and local officials. Gender focussed training for PRI representatives and functionaries are an element of the National Capacity Building Framework, and features in regular training modules developed by the IGPRS.

IGPRS capacity on gender is exceptionally high, as a result of the orientation, experience and commitment of the state nodal officer, Dr Anita Brandon. She was part of the Indian delegation to the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, where she presented a paper on women's perspectives. She trained the Indian delegation for the 4th World Conference on Women in 1995. She has been associated with panchayats and decentralisation policies, and made contributions to the National Capacity Building Framework of MOPR in 2004-2008.

However, IGPRS role in overall implementation of the programme is not very active. There is no direct monitoring of DPOs, and the nodal agency is not in touch with district implementing agencies on a regular basis. In part, this could be because the SIRD has limited resources to spare for the project, but the issues needs to be further investigated in consultation with the SIRD and the state government. The state nodal officer was previously assisted in implementation of this programme by two project officers who were funded through the UNDP CDLG programme.¹¹⁴ However, as the term of the UNDP project ended in Dec 2012, IGPRS has made a request to UN Women for two technical officers who will support the

¹¹² *National Capacity Building Framework for Panchayati Raj Elected Representatives and Functionaries*, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India, available at http://www.pri-resources.in/OverView/NCBF_Report_02-01-10.pdf.

¹¹³ The Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF), under which the Govt of Rajasthan receives 100% grant assistance from the Govt of India for certain development and PRI related activities in 12 districts. Other districts may be supported through Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Yojana Funds, which 75% grant is received from the national government. IGPRS proposes to support roll out of GRG modules developed under this programme to other districts with funds from Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan (PMEYSA).

¹¹⁴¹¹⁴ In contrast, the SIRD in Andhra Pradesh had 3-4 members of staff who were involved with the implementation of the programme, and Odisha SIRD had nominated one full time project officer in addition to the state nodal officer.

implementation of this programme¹¹⁵. This could promote day-to-day linkages between district level implementation and the state nodal officer, and help make the state government responsible for dealing with field level issues.

2.2 At the Field Level

2.2.1 District Administration

The Zila Parishad is the main implementing agency of the programme in districts and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Zila Parishad is the district nodal officer. The Zila Parishad office is also the main executive agency linked to PRIs – funds, functionaries and files relating to Panchayat matters are handled by the Zila Parishad office. Resolutions and demands from Gram Sabhas and Panchayat meetings are also routed through the Panchayati Samiti (Block Office) to the Zila Parishad.

In one of the districts, the Zila Parishad CEO who had been in office for the entire term of the programme was quite directly involved in the implementation of the programme, and in this he was supported by the elected President of the Zila Parishad as well. However, in another district we learned that the Zila Parishad CEO had recently been changed, and that the previous CEO had not provided much support for the programme.¹¹⁶

The District Collector's role in implementation of the programme is more limited, but is supposed to chair a DPU which is expected to approve annual work plans and oversee programme expenditures and implementation. In both the districts visited as part of the review mission, DPUs had been recently constituted. The first DPU meeting had been held in Tonk in Aug 2012. District Collectors in both districts were aware of the programme, but did not have any in-depth knowledge or understanding of the programme.

We learned however that the ICDS office, housed in the district collectorate, was actively involved with local implementation of the programme¹¹⁷. In the absence of motivators hired by the programme, ICDS workers had been deployed to mobilise women for Mahila Sabha meetings and to organise their participation. This put an additional burden on ICDS workers, but helped ensure participation of women in Mahila Sabhas.

2.2.2 District Programme Officers

DPOs play a critical role in liaising with the Zila Parishad for coordinating various aspects of programme implementation and expenditures. Their tasks include coordinating with ICDS office, and other agencies of state (as well as some non-state agencies like the local UNICEF office in Tonk), to organise village level mobilisation before ward sabha, mahila sabha and gram sabha meetings. DPOs cannot arrange dates for ward sabha, mahila sabha and gram sabha meetings or fix agendas, but they liaise with officials (and in some cases with elected representatives) to have meeting dates and agendas fixed.

DPOs are also primarily responsible for training of village motivators. Selection of motivators has been completed in two districts, and is underway in Alwar. Motivator training has not been completed in any district.

In both Tonk and Alwar districts, DPOs have been unable to have some basic expenditure items approved by Zila Parishad CEOs, such as the hire of cars for their own transport. DPOs also reported that there have been issues with having expenditures approved for

¹¹⁵ We were provided with a copy of a letter dated 5 Dec 2012 from Director, IGPRS to Regional Programme Officer, UN Women SARO requesting that two technical officers (Training and Monitoring) to be hired to support implementation of the programme by IGPRS.

¹¹⁶ This was confirmed by the Collector of the district, though we were unable to meet the present CEO who had been called to the state capital for a meeting on the day of the review visit.

¹¹⁷ The ICDS scheme is run by a district project director, and has a local network of block and village level officials and activist-workers (anganwadi workers).

other programme activities.¹¹⁸ This was unfortunate and has implications for the effectiveness of DPOs in the districts. For several months now, DPOs have had to rely on stop gap arrangements, or temporary day-hire of cars when they have to go to the field, and often find themselves out of pocket when these bills are not reimbursed by the Zila Parishad CEO.

Lack of regular contact and communication between DPOs and the State Nodal Officer is an issue that has been raised in state meetings, and some directions to submit quarterly reports have been issued. However, for DPOs to be managed effectively by IGPRS would require transfer of this function from UN Women to state nodal agencies, with a counterpart structure in the nodal agency with a full time project officer.

2.2.3 Motivators

Recruitment of motivators was completed in Tonk district in Jun 2012. In 27 out of 50 Gram Panchayats, motivators were selected in Gram Panchayat meetings. In the remaining Gram Panchayats, motivators were selected by the Gram Panchayat. Motivators whose names were proposed by Gram Sabhas and Gram Panchayats were interviewed by a committee consisting of the CEO Zila Parishad, Block Development Officer and DPO. Most of the Gram Sabha selection was confirmed, but a few were changed.

There were criteria for selection, which included basic literacy. Many of the women selected to be motivators in Tonk were already contract workers of the Gram Panchayat, such as anganwadi workers (ICDS) or ASHA workers (Health). It was felt that motivator honoraria, without a regular monthly wage, would be too small an amount to keep motivators engaged with the programme.¹¹⁹ In this regard, we learned that the view of the programme implementing team in the district was that selecting women who are associated with other Panchayat activities has the additional advantage that it converges their pre-existing training and experience with what will be acquired through this programme.

Motivators recruited in Tonk were trained in Jul-Aug 2012.

We learned that motivator selection in Alwar was initiated in 2011, but the process was not completed as the DPO appointed for the district resigned in Jan 2012. After this, the present DPO was appointed only in Aug 2012, and the process of motivator selection was re-started. Motivator selection is underway and expected to be completed in Jan 2013.

2.2.4 Role of the THP

THP works through two NGOs, CEEDECON and AMEID in Tonk and Alwar district respectively. The review team interacted with both NGOs, but was not able to participate in any separate NGO facilitated meetings with EWRs.

CEEDECON in Tonk is a well-known NGO, and has worked in Tonk district on panchayats, EWRs, transparency (jan sunwais) and livelihoods activities for several years. With the support of an earlier programme, CEEDECON set up Mahila Panch Sarpanch Sangathan (Association of EWRs) in several blocks. EWRs in Vanasthali Gram Panchayat mentioned that they have attended Sangathan meetings, where they discuss women's issues and also to gather with other EWRs in order to collectively approach block or district offices.

In Alwar however, the local partner has recently been selected and does not have previous experience of working with EWRs or PRIs.

¹¹⁸ One of the DPOs has reported that "But when it came to transfer the funds or organizing the WS/GS/MS problems were faced with previous CEO & present one. There is a problem of lack of documents such as government orders for organizing the Sabhas and transferring the funds, participation of officials in meetings/workshops. Officials need everything in black and white from ministry."

¹¹⁹ Motivators get INR 500 for each Ward Sabha and INR 500 for each special Gram Sabha. As the number of Wards is different at each GP so the total honorarium that a motivator may get differs.

At the field level, THP activities appear to be well integrated with the programme in Tonk. Project teams interact on a regular basis and work together in some blocks. On the other hand, neither NGO nor DPO was aware of the activities of the other in Alwar.

3.0 Programme Activities

3.1 Gram Sabha, Mahila Sabha and Ward Sabhas

Three types of Sabhas are conducted under the programme in Rajasthan:

- Ward Sabha – at the Panchayat Ward level. These are statutory meetings under the RPR Act, and open to men and women. More women attend Ward Sabhas convened with the support of the programme, on account of advance efforts to mobilise the participation of women and as the agenda focusses on women's issues. Participation in the Ward Sabha is open to men and women. The Ward Sabha meeting is convened by the Panchayat member elected from that Ward, and attended by ICDS workers, Panchayat Secretary and other local officials from government programmes and schemes. At the time of the review mission 3 Ward Sabhas had been conducted in Tonk. No Ward Sabhas had been conducted in Alwar.
- Special Gram Sabha or UN Women Gram Sabha: Gram Sabha is a Panchayati Raj Institution with powers and functions vested under the RPR Act. Gram Sabha meetings are open to men and women. However, more women may attend UN Women Gram Sabhas as a result of pre-meeting efforts to mobilise their participation and as the agenda may focus on women's issues. Gram Sabha are convened by the Sarpanch (Panchayat President), and attended by the Panchayat Secretary and other officials and functionaries. Gram Sabha resolutions are recorded by the Panchayat Secretary and forwarded to the Block Development Officer (Panchayat Samiti) and Zila Parishad for further action. At the time of the review mission, 27 UN Women Gram Sabhas had been held in Tonk and 9 in Alwar.
- Mahila Sabha – at the Gram Panchayat level. These are special Gram Panchayat level meetings only for women. Mahila Sabha meetings may be attended by officials (Block Officer), and other local officials and programme workers, but they are not statutory meetings. The main purpose of Mahila Sabhas is to organise the participation of women in the Gram Sabha, and to make them aware of Panchayat institutions, structures and powers. Mahila Sabha meetings may also be used to promote awareness of gender issues, and of government schemes and programmes. At the time of the review mission, 2 Mahila Sabhas had been held in Tonk and 3 in Alwar.

4.0 Overall Observations

4.1 Decentralisation Reforms form the Context of the Programme

Decentralisation reforms provide a positive context for a greater role of EWRs and women in Panchayat activities in Rajasthan. Decentralisation reforms have created an important role for Panchayats, and vested powers and responsibilities. The state government has involved Panchayats in the implementation of major government programmes and schemes, and also created a role for Panchayats in issues relating to maternal and child health, discrimination against women and girls, and violence against women. This creates an incentive to participate amongst EWRs, and also an expectation on the part of the community of that their elected representatives will support improvement of public facilities and ensure better functioning of government programmes and schemes. In interactions with a mixed group of women including EWRs, ICDS workers and women from the community in one Gram Panchayat in Tonk, the review mission learned that village-wide issues raised by women in previous meetings (though not necessarily UN Women supported meetings) had been

satisfactorily resolved – this included installation of drinking water supply facilities, and cleaning and unblocking of drainage channels. Women had previously raised an issue relating to misappropriation of NREGA wages, which had also been resolved after their intervention. Two Gram Sabha meetings attended by the review mission in Alwar were well attended by women, and women had come prepared with papers and documents to present applications and pursue claims under various programmes and schemes. EWRs also stated that issues related to domestic violence were frequently brought to their attention, and would be discussed in women's meetings – after which groups of women led by EWRs may try to mediate a local solution. Domestic violence and other women's issues may also be taken up in Women's Support Committee meetings at Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad level. Women in Tonk informed us that they participate in Mahila Panch Sarpanch Sangathan meetings at the Panchayat Samiti office, from where they may gather with other EWRs to collectively present their issues before the Block Development Officer.

In interviews with Block and Zila Parishad officials in both districts, we learned that issues raised in Gram Sabha meetings are recorded and taken up for action in the Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad office. Local demands for small works (drinking water, drains etc.) that are raised in these meetings are routinely addressed through sanction of projects, and that powers and funds for the same are available with the Block Development Officer and the Zila Parishad CEO.

From all our meetings and interactions in the state, we learned that EWRs and women participate in regular Panchayat activities in the state, and EWR leaders had come up and become locally recognised for their leadership in Panchayats. However, women participated much less than men in meetings that were dominated by men. EWR participation was also mixed – some EWRs continued to act as proxies for dominant men, while others might learn to take up leadership roles and become quite active in their participation. EWRs from poorer and backward caste backgrounds may be less able to devote time and attention to Panchayat activities because of pressure to continue with wage labour work, and might also suffer from lower levels of literacy and negative perceptions about them.

On their part, EWRs stated that they often came to Panchayat office quite unprepared, but as a result of training and capacity building support they were able to learn how to play an active role in the Panchayat. Guidance from DPOs and NGO workers had helped them learn about accounts and funds, and they asked Panchayat Secretaries to show them the Panchayat accounts books.

4.2 Programme Implementation Issues

Programme implementation in Rajasthan has been slow to take off – in one district motivators are still being selected, and on another motivator selection was completed only recently. The programme in Tonk has had very few activities in Gram Panchayats selected for the programme. Special Gram Sabhas for introducing the programme were held in 27 Gram Panchayat, where motivators were selected through the Gram Panchayat. In others, only meetings with the Gram Panchayat have been held. Additionally, a few activities run by the motivators have been initiated after motivator training was completed in Aug 2012. In Alwar, motivator selection has not been completed, so the footprint of the programme is still more limited. In part, this is on account of the fact that there was no DPO posted in Alwar between Jan-Aug 2012.

On the other hand, IGPRS commitment to rolling out training modules developed under the programme to the rest of the state, and state government support for holding Mahila Sabhas regularly across the entire state are positive aspects of the programme in the state.

However, the programme could be substantially strengthened by a more active role played by IGPRS in monitoring implementation activities and resolving local issues relating to funds release and work plan schedules. As the programme goes into its next phase, it needs to consider ways to secure greater commitment of the state government for the programme.

Annex 7: Governance and Accountability Findings

- 1.1 Process & methodology
- 1.2 Baseline documents
- 1.3 Observations concerning baseline documents
- 1.4 Observations: Governance & Project Design
- 1.5 Project Inception Phase
- 1.6 Observations: Project Inception Phase
- 1.7 UN Women South Asia Regional Office (SARO) mandate for the project
- 1.8 Observations: UN Women's Mandate
- 1.9 Project Management Governance and Accountability
- 1.10 Challenges faced during implementation due to gaps in project design
- 1.11 Accountability framework: Pakistan and Bhutan
- 1.12 Accountability framework: India
- 1.13 Observations on accountability framework in India
- 1.14 General observations on governance and accountability
- 1.15 Observations on the reporting lines of the District Project Officer
- 1.16 UN Women's Capacity to administer the project

1 Governance and Accountability

This annex provides the findings from a study of the governance and accountability framework in operation. It provides a broad canvas for the next annex in the report which deals with the monitoring and evaluation and budgeting and financial management systems and processes. As there is some overlap in the analytical framework there could be some data/information that be covered by both annexes.

1.1 Process & methodology used:

- Literature/Document Review
- Data Analysis
- Meetings with key stakeholders in India
- Attended closing session of NPSC held on 8 November;
- District Project Officers at the NPSC to plan State/District Visits;
- State and District Visit: Andhra Pradesh (AP) Mehabubnagar
- Visit to NIRD

1.2 Baseline documents used for the MTR:

- a) Cost Sharing Agreement (CSA) (4 November 2009) supported by Framework Agreement with UNDP signed between UN Women and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA, Norway) and implemented through the Royal Norwegian Embassy (the Embassy);
- b) UN Women Project Document (February 2010) containing information on project phases, logframe¹²⁰, budget, institutional arrangements and risk/assumption matrix;
- c) Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed on 18 March 2011 between MoPR, Government of India (GoI) and UN Women;
- d) State PCAs with Andhra Pradesh (9/08/11), Karnataka (14/09/11, Madhya Pradesh (9/08/11), Odisha (15/07/11) and Rajasthan (04/05/2011)
- e) MOU between UN Women and the Hunger Project (22/12/09)
- f) PCA with 'The Hunger Project' (10/07/10)
- g) PCA between UN Women and National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD) (16/11/2010)
- h) Letter of Agreement between UNDP Bhutan and UN Women (1/03/2011. and amended 4/09/12)
- i) Concept Note¹²¹ of 19 April 2012 revised 13 August 2012 sets out the project strategy and activity areas; Letter of 13 July 2011 to UN Women Pakistan sets out project details; there no formal agreement between UN Women South Asia Regional Office (SARO) with UN Women Pakistan
- j) Support provided through the One UN Agreements in Bhutan and Pakistan
- k) No agreements with Nepal and Bangladesh

1.3 Observations concerning baseline documents¹²²

- a) CSA was signed three months before the Project Document was finalised: The CSA includes information on donor funding, budgets, project framework, institutional, governance and monitoring and evaluation (M & E)
- b) The project document is a UN Women document signed by UN Women Headquarters; contains information on funding sources, budgets, project logical framework and

¹²⁰ Logframe in Annex 8, appendix 1

¹²¹ "Promoting women's political leadership and governance: Working towards Women Human Rights"

¹²² Timeline of key project events and meetings in Annex 8, appendix 2

- governance arrangements; Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs not a signatory of the project document; the CSA not updated to reflect changes brought about by the project document
- c) A non-financial MoU between UN Women and 'The Hunger Project' (THP) signed (12/09) before the project document was approved; no reference to the project document or CSA in the MoU.
 - d) Significant time lag between CSA (16 months) and the project document (12 months) and non-financial MoU between MoPR and UN Women.
 - e) The MoU with MoPR makes no reference to the project document or CSA;
 - f) Objectives in MOU are not aligned to logframe in Project Document
 - g) Almost 18 months after project document was approved PCAs signed with 5 State Governments (signed between May and September 2011)
 - h) State PCAs are a financing agreements and to be read alongside the MoU with MoPR.
 - i) PCA signed with NIRD in November 2010 for one year. Subsequently there were four no-cost extensions; reasons for high number of short term extensions unclear; NIRD PCA objectives not in alignment with project logframe
 - j) Project document and logframe primarily concerned with implementation in India
 - k) Project document envisaged three phases: inception phase (6 months); Implementation phase covering 6 states in India and building regional cooperation systems ; phase 3 – years 4 and 5 was about scale up learning from implementation in India to other four countries

1.4 Observations: Governance & Project Design

The project was designed by UN Women after extensive consultation with the main partners. However, partner country stakeholders (e.g. MoPR) were not invited to approve the project document prepared by UN Women. Securing ownership by the stakeholders during implementation has been difficult and has also contributed to the inception phase taking longer than envisaged and misunderstanding between UN Women and its primary government partner in India – MoPR.

Problems encountered during implementation that could have been alleviated had approval been sought before implementation includes:

- The project logical framework is not used by Pakistan, Bhutan and India; only the Norwegian Embassy and UN Women use it for monitoring progress during the annual consultations.
- MoPR considers the project document¹²³ too complicated; has not signed up to the project logframe; and does not accept the inclusion of THP as an implementing partner in the Project¹²⁴
- MoPR has articulated seven specific deliverables expected from the project in the MoU. The primary ones are: training and advocacy for EWRs; and establishment of a regional centre of excellence and research partnership. Departure from these two core activities during project implementation has been the cause for misunderstandings and deterioration in relationship between UN Women and MoPR.

Regional dimension of the project: The rationale for a regional project is less well articulated in the project document. It was envisaged that learnings from implementation in India would be scaled up and transferred to the other four countries. In reality there is very little that has been transferred, or could be transferred. At the local level which this project is primarily concerned with the political and social systems are different. In Bhutan and Pakistan where sizeable contributions have been made available through the project the

¹²³ Communicated by Additional Secretary, MoPR at the meeting with the MTR team

¹²⁴ Communicated by Additional Secretary, MoPR at the meeting with the MTR team

funds are being utilised for the implementation of country specific priorities and results frameworks. The Bangladesh proposal is also country specific and awaits approval and funding. There is no project in Nepal.

1.5 Project Inception Phase

The Project Document sets out deliverables (box 1) for the 6 month inception phase. In reality, the start-up tasks associated with formalising agreements and selecting the state governments in India took considerably longer. This left little time for other critical activities associated with: reviewing the budget and formally agreeing country and partner allocations; establishing the M & E and Performance Management Systems; putting in place project management and results-based reporting systems; and developing needs based annual work plans. Secondly, many aspects of the detailed design of the project envisaged in the inception phase e.g. producing operational work plans could only have started after agreements were reached with state government partners.

Box 1: Inception phase tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formalise agreements with country partners, select and formalise collaborations with partner state governments based on assessment studies undertaken during the inception phase,• Forge collaborations with civil society partners, international and national research and capacity development institutions• Map the current reality with regard to training to EWRs• Establish project management operations including recruitment of team and project steering arrangements• Produce operational work plans, develop M & E framework including a performance monitoring framework• At end of inception phase conduct an experience sharing workshop to ensure cohesion in monitoring and reporting frameworks and for sharing experiences. Participants expected were representatives from state governments, state and national training institutions ,MoPR, Ministry of Women and Child; and NGOs

1.6 Observations: Project Inception Phase

There were several departures from what was envisaged in the project document for the inception phase which had an overall impact on project effectiveness and efficiency.

- Inception phase took between 15 -18 months (instead of 6 months);
- M & E and Performance Management Systems not established and baselines not commissioned
- Although implementation in the other countries was envisaged for phase 3, projects in Pakistan and Bhutan began during the inception phase
- THP in India began implementation in the states before agreements were signed between UN Women and state government agreements. One of the consequences of not considering project sequencing issues was that THP's activity in Bihar could not be accompanied by project interventions through the state government for the realisation MoPR MoU objectives as Bihar government did not sign the agreement with UN Women.
- UN Women Project Unit (PU) expanded from 6 staff (as indicated in the project document) to 11 staff and includes 2 M& E staff. The rationale for the increase is not documented in any of the minutes of the Annual Consultations. Secondly, although there is two M & E staff in the PU there is no systematic process for monitoring the components of the project within an umbrella framework.

- There could have been an effective and cohesive M & E framework and a platform for sharing experiences had the workshop envisaged for end of inception phase taken place

Much time was lost and project funds utilised in securing agreements with national and state government partners during the inception phase. Secondly, the donor appears to have taken a significant risk by: a) agreeing to fund outcomes and outputs in the logical framework and a budget statement that were silent on country and regional results and allocations; and b) without prior agreement from country partners and other institutions to deliver the results expected.

Project resources could have been utilised more efficiently and effectively if partners were agreed before inception. Secondly it would have: allowed for the development of a context-based logframe and project management arrangements; and enabled establishment of project management systems including performance management and M & E;

More attention was needed during implementation for ensuring the correct sequencing of activities and knowing the dependencies between activities. This information would have contributed towards the development of a critical path for project based activities and led to a realistic project plan and risk management matrix.

1.7 UN Women South Asia Regional Office (SARO) mandate for the project

The mandate is derived from two documents the CSA and the project document:

- **Cost Sharing Agreement:** For the implementation of the Project UN Women is to: a) administer the contribution from MFA on a cost sharing basis; and designate an Executing Agency or under the harmonised operational modalities an Implementing Partner
- **Project Document:** UN Women is the Executing Agency with responsibilities for: management of donor contributions and institutional arrangements; disbursement of funds to participating organisations; responsibility for Regional Centre of Excellence (RCoE) under UN Women guidance; development of a joint work plan in partnership with all stakeholders; all project management (SC meetings, project staff, monitoring against work plan; timely production of consolidated progress and financial reports

In addition, UN Women also has technical assistance responsibilities for: a) as co-knowledge hub together with the RCoE; and b) regional advocacy on making governance responsive to gender issues. Under the management structure for steering the Project, UN Women's role is 'Oversight and Quality Assurance'

MFA Norway and/or the Norwegian Embassy are not named as the donor in the project document. Only reference is as a member of the National Project Steering Committee

The Project is implemented through a shared mandate between UN Women headquarters staff in New York and UN Women SARO office in Delhi, India. However, the project document makes no reference to the institutional and accountability arrangements within UN Women and the interface rules and requirements for donors

1.8 Observations: UN Women's Mandate

The mandate makes provision for UN Women to shape the design based on the needs and priorities of the Embassy and the expected deliverable of other stakeholders. In India, this has enabled UN Women to utilise funds for objectives outside the agreement with MoPR, thereby allowing for considerable resources to be directed through THP and other activities.

As a consequence, on occasions the Embassy/UN Women objectives and priorities have been in conflict with those expressed by MoPR in the MoU.

UN Women's dual role as executing and implementing agency could have compromised its ability to provide impartial oversight and quality assurance. As project implementer, UN Women may have taken implementation tasks in areas beyond the responsibilities defined in the project document. For example: in the five Indian states where the State Governments have nominated the SIRD as the nodal institution responsible for implementation of the Project and the District Administration has responsibility for the project funds disbursed. However, in the PCA with state governments UN Women shares responsibility for implementation with state government and has directly contracted 16 District Project Officers (DPOs) to implement the project. Motivators are supposed to be appointed by the Sarpanch. However, there is provision in the ToR for DPOs to appoint motivators in cases where Gram Panchayats have delayed appointments¹²⁵. DPOs are also jointly responsible with the district administration for the project funds.

There could be potential conflict of interest as UN Women are actively engaged in advocacy work in the districts on issues that are also part of the advocacy agenda of THP. Funding advocacy activities by two institutions may not be the most economical utilisation of resources and secondly, assessing the performance of these individual initiatives and collectively can also be a challenge

At an institutional level the functions relating to the implementation of the project and those concerned with conducting regular reviews and reporting progress are undertaken by staff in PU. There is no separation of implementing and monitoring functions.

Under the current arrangements UN Women as an implementing agency is not in a position to provide the 'oversight and quality assurance' function specified in the project document. In reality and drawing on the minutes of the Annual Consultations and NPSCs, the oversight and quality assurance is provided by the Embassy and MoPR.

The additional processes and transaction costs resulting from the shared mandate between UN Women's headquarters staff and the SARO office, and the peculiarities of the corporate financial management systems and practices only unfolded during implementation. In addition to the annual consultation extra-ordinary meetings were required to address the issues arising. This was particularly relevant in the treatment of UN Women's 7% support charge. The charge is levied on the work plan and not on the expenditure. As UN Women has never utilised all the funds budgeted for in the annual work plans, the pre-charging system meant that UN Women were gaining financially from pre-charging.

UN Women's corporate systems are not set up for project based financial management. As a consequence has been difficult for the Embassy to follow the money and results collectively during implementation. The financial reporting is completely outside the progress reporting against the logframe and annual work plans and budgets (AWP&Bs).

1.9 Project Management Governance and Accountability

The overarching management and direction setting comes from the annual consultations between UN Women and the Embassy in Delhi; the focus is primarily on country projects with limited discussions on outputs and outcomes and effectiveness of fund utilisation. With

¹²⁵ Annex 8, appendix 4 of NPSC minute of 16 August 2011 on terms of reference for motivators

the exception of India where the Embassy participates in the NPSCs, accountability for the programs in Bhutan and Pakistan are routed through UN Women SARO to the Embassy

At the country level governance arrangements for managing the project and for setting direction operate at several levels in India and as part of the One UN agenda in Bhutan and Pakistan. In Pakistan and Bhutan a representative from UN Women SARO participates in the project steering meetings on a 'as needs basis'.

1.10 Challenges faced during implementation due to gaps in project design

There is a disconnect between the outcomes and outputs in the logframe and country specific work plans. One of the reasons for this is the paucity of analysis in the project document on country context regarding the project's location within the country's government programs, donor strategies, the One-UN Agenda, the different political and program cycles in the region and within countries.

Another problem experienced during implementation was in the interpretation of the regional strategies outlined in the project document. They cover a wide agenda and extend beyond the results framework in the logframe. There have been instances where UN Women has drawn on the areas identified in the regional strategies to inform decisions on activities to be undertaken by the project. Some of these were perceived by the Embassy¹²⁶ to be outside the scope of the logframe. There were similar frustrations expressed by MoPR at NSPCs and in letters to UN Women¹²⁷.

As highlighted earlier in the report, the departure from the project logframe in the agreements by the implementing partners has made the task of reviewing progress against the logframe very difficult. Multiple results and reporting frameworks have led to a more complex and transaction intensive implementation. For example, there are two different reporting formats for EWR empowerment used by the participating districts and by THP. The capacity building of government officials is undertaken through agreements with a number of institutions. However, the results framework and reporting format is agreement specific and not designed for a collective report on capacity building. As a consequence activity level reporting is the only meaningful system and one that has been used by UN Women. Some examples that illustrate these issues are:

Another implementation challenge that stemmed from a weakness in project design concerns the establishment of the Regional Centre. The project document refers to it as the 'Regional Centre of Excellence on Gender Responsive Governance'. The MoU with MoPR frames the RCOE as having a narrower focus i.e. 'Empowering Elected Women Representatives in Local Governments'. What should the RCOE focus on? The MoPR is very clear on this. It does not want the RCOE to tackle the wider agenda implied by GRG it sees the project as focusing on governance and women's issues at the local level. The project document does not spell out the rationale, purpose and institutional arrangements for setting up and sustaining an RCOE.

1.11 Accountability framework: Pakistan and Bhutan

Although the UN Women SARO has a regional mandate, implementation of the mandate through country specific activities in Bhutan and Pakistan could only be undertaken through the UN systems in operation at the country level. In this context accountability for delivery in

¹²⁶ Minutes of Annual Consultation

¹²⁷ Letters dates; NSPC Minutes of 18 November 2012

both countries is diffused and there is no built in performance monitoring systems to minimise the risk associated with shared accountability.

For example the direct involvement of UN Women SARO in the implementation in Bhutan by employing a gender expert who is accountable to UN Women SARO dilutes accountability to the local institutions e.g. UNDP, Bhutan. It also makes it difficult for the PU staff based in Delhi to manage and oversee the work of the gender expert.

1.12 Accountability framework: India

In India, the project has two accountability frameworks:

- Partnership with the GoI which operates through a MoU signed between UN Women and the MoPR on 18 March 2011 and supporting PCAs with five state governments signed subsequently during second and third quarters in 2011; and
- MoUs/PCAs/Contracts between UN Women and other institutions covering project objectives considered to be outside the scope of the MoU e.g. the MoU with THP and PCAs with LBSNAA and IIM.

The MoU with MoPR covers several levels of the government system in India and is a non-financing agreement. Accountability for the implementation of the Project is shared between: MoPR, UN Women, 6 State Governments; 16 districts; and NIRD and SIRDs in the partner states. The MoU can be terminated at any time by either party subject to a three month notice period. Key

Features of the MoU

- Implementation is overseen by a national project steering committee (NPSC) that is expected to hold meetings at least every four months. The ToRs for the NSPC are set out in the MoU¹²⁸.
- State level steering committee (SPSCs) arrangements are a requirement under the agreement in the MoU and must meet at least once every three months
- NIRD is the core agency for research and training in cooperation with resource institutions at regional and state level.
- Reference is made to the District Implementation Unit and Motivators. There is no reference to District Project Officers

The state PCAs operate within the accountability framework established by the MoU with MoPR and are expected to be read in conjunction with the MoU. Unlike the MoU, the PCAs are financing agreements and require funds to be transferred directly to state governments. At the NSPC on 16 August 2011 the modality for transferring and accounting for funds to the states was agreed. PCAs do not contain state specific information on project content, expected deliverables, performance management and risk mitigation. Unlike the MoU, the PCAs terminate on 31 March 2013 with a provision for an extension should this be required.

- Accountability for the project at the state level extends beyond the state government and includes: District Project Units (DPUs) in partner districts;
- SIRD – in most instances they have responsibility for implementing the project at state level;
- District Project Officers (DPOs);
- Motivators; and
- Sarpanches for appointing motivators

1.13 Observations on the implementation of the accountability framework in India

¹²⁸ Subsequently amended at the Annual Consultations on 30 March 2012

Governance of the Project has not run smoothly. The minutes of Annual Consultations and NPSC meetings and correspondence from the MoPR to UN Women highlight a number of issues that illustrate problems in exercising accountability for delivery.

The Embassy has spent considerable more time than envisaged overseeing the administration of the project. In addition to the three annual consultations there were four supplementary/extraordinary meetings since the first Annual Consultation in April 2010. The additional meetings were called for by the Embassy to address issues relating to: a) partnerships and project activities; and b) UN Women's procedures, rules and regulations on financial management of the project.

There were several major concerns about the content and process of the implementation of the Project including:

- UN Women's financial management systems for applying service charges and accounting for advances made to partners;
- Timeliness, accuracy and quality of presentation of budgets and financial statements;
- Absence of results based reporting and risk management;
- Taking on activities under the project that were outside the scope defined in the project document; Concerns about the strategy and implementation arrangements for Regional Centre of Excellence and the role of NIRD;
- Unacceptable proposals for implementing Performance Management and Evaluation Frameworks; Significant delays in the submission of project direction setting documents including the media and research strategies; and
- Annual Work Plans requiring several iterations before approval.

The main concerns experienced by MoPR are highlighted in three letters (9/7/2012, 8/0/2012 and 9/11/2012) from the Additional Secretary, MoPR to UN Women and their responses. Many of these were reiterated by the Additional Secretary, MoPR when interviewed by the MTR team. They include:

- Steering Committee Meetings not being held as agreed i.e. every four months (schedule in Annex 8, appendix 2)
- Undertaking activities that are outside the scope of the MoU
- MoPR does not wish to be associated with the project document which it considers complicated and covering too wide an agenda.
- MoPR does not wish to be associated with THP in the publicity material, reports and correspondence and had formally communicated disapproval of THP involvement;
- Inadequate consultation with MoPR in determining the direction of the project and in taking critical decisions;
- UN Women departing from the model for capacity development of DPOs and recruiting staff that may not have the desired qualities
- Considers that NIRD and SIRDs are being marginalised

Responses from UN Women to MoPR and subsequent meetings between UN Women, the Embassy and MoPR have helped to clarify some issues. Some of the problems with the management of the project by UN Women may be attributable to the gap in the senior management post in the PU from January – August 2012. This coincided with the period when the project was most active

1.14 General observations on governance and accountability

The Project has an accountability framework and governance structure that has expanded over time from what was envisaged during design. Much of the expansion and the resulting complexity has come from the agreements reached between UN Women and the institutions in partner countries during the inception phase. Although designed as a regional project, the

partners accountable for implementation have focused primarily on the implementation of country specific projects.

There is no clear 'line-of-sight' between the objectives (expected results) in the Project Document and the individual country agreements; As a consequence reporting country level activity against the results framework in project document is a challenge. The absence of an integrated project plan and an associated critical path analysis has led to sequencing problems and added to the project risks and partner frustration. Risk management and reporting were not mainstreamed at any level

The MoU with MoPR and the PCAs with the five State Governments introduced significant changes in the Governance of the project. The State PCAs made UN Women jointly accountable for implementation. In addition, UN Women contracted DPOs to implement the project in the partner districts although this was not envisaged in the MoU with MoPR and there was no budget provision for these posts.

At the state level accountability for delivery is shared between the State Institutes of Rural Development, District Administration, UN Women appointed DPOs and motivators appointed by the Sarpanches collectively shared accountability for delivery. DPOs have specific accountability for delivering 100 special gram sabhas annually.

A way of assessing the effectiveness of the accountability framework at the state level is by tracking and assessing performance of gram sabhas, special gram sabhas, mahila sabhas and ward sabhas and the performance of motivators, DPOs and SIRDs. However, this is a significant labour intensive task and systems and processes not factored in during project design and only partially considered during implementation.

1.15 Observations on the reporting lines of the DPO

DPOs conditions of service are governed by UN Women's rules for persons contracted as expert on mission'. The terms of reference (ToR) does include reporting lines other than stating that monthly reports should be submitted to the District Collector, Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad, SIRD and UN Women. The ToR is silent on accountability for managing the performance of the DPO and on who is responsible in the district for their operational requirements in the delivery of the ToR.

Secondly, DPOs are expected to generate weekly and monthly reports based on templates provided by the PU¹²⁹. It is unclear as to who is accountable for monitoring the quality of DPO reporting and building their capacity in cases where the reporting is weak. It is also unclear as to who follows up for missing reports as there appear to be a significant number that are missing.

An examination of the 30 monthly progress reports submitted to the MTR team showed that less than 50% of the reports could provide meaningful data for case studies, analysis and lesson learning. A closer study of the 11 reports submitted in November 2012 showed that 3 reports were very weak, 3 had basic data, 2 were acceptable, and two were good. Mahabubnagar was rated as being very good. It was also the district which had submitted the highest number of monthly progress reports. Based on 16 DPOs there should have been a much larger collection of reports for 2012. However, only 30 out of a possible 176 were available.

¹²⁹ The reporting template was revised for November 2012.

1.16 UN Women's Capacity to administer the Project

This project is the largest and most complex project UN Women, SARO has taken on and considerable effort has gone into delivering the responsibilities associated with executing and implementing the project. However, three factors have compromised the performance of the project. These are: an over-complicated and vaguely defined project; major inadequacies in UN Women's corporate systems and processes for program based financial management; absence of results focused project/program management systems and expertise. Bringing in program management expertise and adopting sound project management principles and practices may not be difficult. However changing the financial system of reporting at this stage in the project may be too challenging a task. Simplifying and streamlining the project is also very feasible.

Annex 8: Monitoring Evaluation and Reporting: Budget, Expenditure and Logframe

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- 2.2 M & E Requirements in Project Document
- 2.3 Monitoring and Reporting Findings: General Observations
- 2.4 Monitoring and Reporting the Budget and Expenditure: Review Findings
- 2.5 How has the budget been operationalized?
- 2.6 The wider monitoring and reporting systems
- 2.7 Monitoring Partner Agreements
- 2.8 State Level Monitoring and Reporting Financial Flows
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2 Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting: Budget, Expenditure and Logframe

2.1 Introduction

Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) are fundamental aspects of good project management at all levels (regional, national and local). Monitoring is an integral part of a day-to-day management. It embodies the regular tracking of inputs, activities, outputs, and reach of development activities of the project at all levels. Monitoring provides:

- Provides information by which management can identify and solve implementation problems and assess progress towards the project's objectives;
- Allows accountability to stakeholders including funders;
- Provides data to plan future resource; and
- Data useful for policy making and advocacy

An M & E plan needs to be in place at the beginning of any new project and include the identification of clear and staged objectives and indicators that will enable program/project staff and other stakeholders to track progress toward achieving these objectives.

The MTR Team has used the M & E as the platform for reviewing the processes, systems and institutional arrangements for monitoring the budget and expenditure and progress against the inputs, activities and outputs in the project document logframe.

2.2 M & E Requirements in Project Document

There is a dedicated section (8) in the Project Document on M & E and an allocation of \$500,000 (5%of total budget) for M & E. Monitoring is described as an active participatory process integrating monitoring with learning, communications, media and dissemination. Evaluation is considered a separate activity undertaken on project completion using the UN 'Norms for Evaluation in the UN System'.

Reporting is an integral part of monitoring systems and the project document sets out broad parameters for narrative and financial reports with the expectation that the details would be determined as part of agreeing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the donor.

This section of the report contains the review team's findings on the monitoring and reporting systems, processes and institutional arrangements within the financing framework set out in the CSA between UN Women and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs acting through its Embassy in New Delhi and the project document designed by UN Women.

The project document sets out three components for the monitoring system:

- Results tracking through Performance Management Framework
- Output, Milestone and Activity and Activity Monitoring through:
 - Half Yearly Program Steering Committees
 - Field Visits by the Program Management Unit and UN Women Staff
 - Third party monitoring visits
- Atlas based Monitoring within UN Women

The monitoring system should have been developed during the inception phase through a process requiring refinement of the performance management framework (i.e. the logframe) and in consultation with partners. The inception phase was also expected to identify sources of data collection, commission baselines and assign responsibilities to parties for data collection.

The principles guiding the development of the monitoring system were envisaged as:

- Using a quantitative and qualitative monitoring system that is participatory, simple and user friendly;
- Integrating knowledge generation and institutional change; and
- Incorporating two way information flows of evidence between local (Panchayat or their equivalent in other countries), meso and macro to assess and maximise the gender equality impact of the program on policy actors and institutions at all levels

The Project Unit (PU) in UN Women has the responsibility for supporting partners develop systems for data collection that feed into national monitoring frameworks. An institution such as the Regional Centre of Excellence (RCOE) was seen as critical to be able to gather the data, undertake the analysis and feed the results upstream as policy recommendations.

The Monitoring System is expected to track:

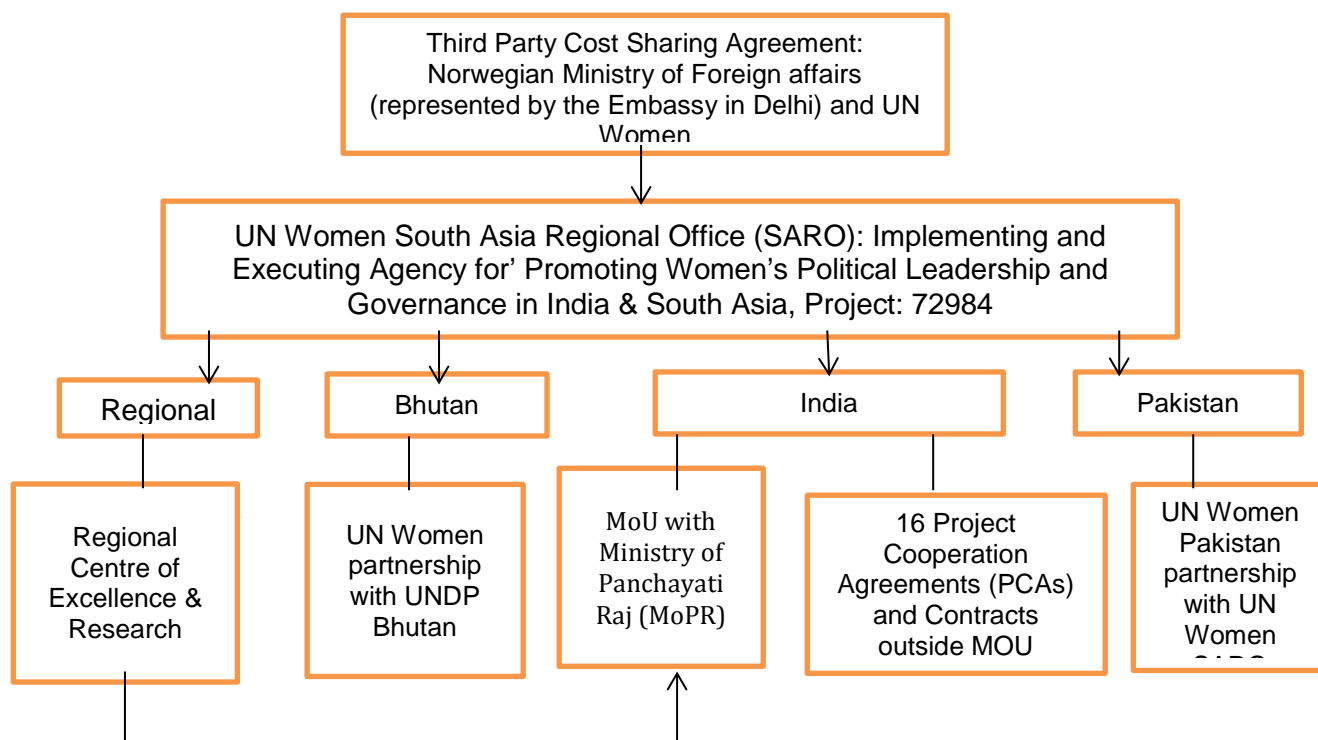
- EWRs and types of decisions taken by them and their re-election status
- Capacity delivery mechanisms in place to allow EWRs to determine content of trading
- Tracking of work at the Gram Sabha, Panchayat, Block and the Zila Parishad level to assess the change effected by EWRs as they build their capacity
- Tracking of changes in national and regional discourses, making governance more gender responsive
- Tracking of use of and feedback on tools and knowledge products produced at the local, national and regional level
- Operational tracking of program, including disbursement of funds, follow up of significant milestones and timely reporting

2.3 Monitoring and Reporting Findings: General Observations

This is a program designed by UN Women, funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and administered and implemented by UN Women SARO. The Royal Norwegian Embassy, New Delhi acting on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for ensuring the effective, efficient and economical utilisation of the funds in the delivery of the outcomes set out in the logical framework (Annex 8, appendix 1) of the project document.

The project is multi-dimensional and multi-layered with many partnerships as reflected in Diagram 1. Monitoring of the project is primarily country and contract based and designed as context specific manually operated reporting systems. There is no overarching performance monitoring framework for the region.

Diagram 1: Program Partnership Framework



At the regional and national level for India the UN Women reporting system has evolved over time through a process of dialogue and consultations with the Embassy. Annex 8, appendix 2 provides the timeline of key events associated with the design and implementation of the project. It also provides a schedule of the meetings held between the main partners. The annual work plans and budgets and the progress reports have changed from a narrative format to output and outcome based content. In addition to annual progress reports, UN Women submit annual work plans and budgets to the Embassy for review and approval. Outcomes of annual consultations are recorded in the minutes and used by UN Women in the preparation of the Action Taken Reports (ATRs). The ATRs are used for monitoring and tracking the implementation of decisions taken during the annual consultations.

Observations: A review of the status of the monitoring in line with the requirements outlined in the Project Document indicates that:

- Results tracking through a performance management framework has not been implemented;
- Budget monitoring is constrained by limitations in UN Women's financial reporting systems
- Activity monitoring through Program Steering Committees, field visits by the program Unit and UN Women staff has been partially implemented
- Output monitoring can be implemented when the current system of activity based reporting¹³⁰ is replaced by an output based system and there are agreed performance indicators

¹³⁰ As produced in October 2012: Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia Progress Report

- The only third party monitoring has been the financial audit conducted by an external agency for 2010 - 2011. The Audit Report was shared with the Embassy in October 2012.
- The modular Atlas-based monitoring within the UN system is operational for recording project expenditure. The module in the Atlas system for analysing expenditure by project activity, output and outcome has not been implemented.

There are a number of commonly practiced project/program management procedures and practices that could have been operationalized during the start-up/inception phase. These include: a) using project planning tools to correctly sequence activities, analysing and understanding the dependencies between project activities and outcomes, and to ascertain the critical path; b) reporting against the quantitative and qualitative indicators in the logframe; c) assessing value for money through program-based financial management accounting and reporting systems and d) having a basic risk management, mitigation and reporting and monitoring system.

2.4 Monitoring and Reporting the Budget and Expenditure: Review Findings

The financial monitoring baselines are contained in section 10 of the Project Document. This provides a year wise (2009-12) analysis of the budget by component and for program support and reproduced in table 1. The budget of \$10 million is supplemented by contributions from UN Women for \$500,000 and NIRD for \$104,000. The main donor is the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (contribution is \$10 million). The UN Women contribution was intended towards meeting personnel costs and other human resource and information technology support. The NIRD contribution was intended for project activities and was expected to be reflected in the project budget when details are finalised.

Table 1: Project Budget in Project Document approved February 2010				
	\$ (%)	%	Component Total \$	%
Outcome 1: Research & Policy Advocacy				
Output 1.1: Body of Knowledge –Gender Responsive Governance in South Asia	660,000	6%		
Output 1.2: Advocacy on select issues	457,000	4%		
Total Outcome 1			1,117,000	10%
Component 2: Capacity Development (CD)				
Output 2.1: CD of Elected Women & Men Representatives	1,500,000	14%		
Output 2.2: Coalitions of women in politics	300,000	3%		
Output 2.3: Dialogue between Civil Society and Political Parties	300,000	3%		
Total Outcome 2			2,100,000	20%
Component 3: Strengthen Capacity Development Structures				
Output 3.1: Regional Centre of Excellence in Gender Responsive Governance (GRG)	2,300,000	22%		
Output 3.2: CD of Government Officials	475,000	4%		
Output 3.3: Incentive mechanisms – support to women in Governance	100,000	1%		
Total Outcome 3			2,875,000	27%
Program Support				
Personnel	1,500,000	14%		
Preparatory Activities	500,000	5%		
M & E	500,000	5%		
Other Program Support costs	754,000	7%		

Table 1: Project Budget in Project Document approved February 2010				
	\$ (%)	%	Component Total \$	%
Total Program Support			3,254,000	31%
UN Women 7% Program support Fee			654,000	6%
Total to be funded by Embassy			10,000,000	
UN Women Contribution for program support			500,000	5%
NIRD Contribution			104,000	1%
			10,604,000	

Observations – the budget: This is a project with a relatively high allocation for program support (37.6%). In terms of project outputs, the single most significant component allocation (22%) is directed to the establishment of the regional centre of excellence (RCOE). Capacity development (CD) is another major component (24%) and Annex 3 of the project document contains qualitative and quantitative CD indicators. However, these indicators have not been implemented. There is a separate and sizeable allocation for M & E (5% of the project budget) reflecting the importance attached to the need for timely and effective monitoring.

Some other observations:

- The outputs and sub outputs in the Budget do not align with the logframe. For example the logframe has outputs 1.1 - 1.3. The budget only has provision for 1.1 - 1.2. Output 2.2 in the logframe comes under output 3.2 in the budget.
- The Budget is silent on allocations for the 5 countries covered by the program or for the participating states in India;
- There is no information on the manner in which the contributions from UN Women and NIRD should be received and expenditure accounted for.
- There is a similar issue concerning the rules for applying the UN Women support fee.
- The basis of arriving at the budgets for the individual line items for sub-outputs is not shown i.e. locations, size and scale of implementation, cost of inputs
- Information on types of inputs required for delivery of activities is missing

2.5 How has the budget been operationalized?

Implementation of the program budget has been on the basis of annual work plans and budgets (AWP&B) prepared by UN Women for review and approval by the Embassy during the Annual Consultations (ACs). The AWP&Bs have also been subject to scrutiny by UN Women Headquarters staff through processes internal to UN Women.

There are several reports that collectively contribute towards monitoring of the project (Table 2) and overseeing the implementation of the budget. The minutes of the Annual Consultations (ACs) and the ATRs provide a record and an audit trail of the outcome of the monitoring undertaken by the Embassy and the actions taken by UN Women in response to issues raised by the Embassy at the ACs. In addition, UN Women also submits a narrative report and a financial report for monitoring and review by the Embassy. With the exception of the first narrative report which provides comprehensive expenditure data, subsequent narrative progress reports do not contain expenditure related information. The outcome based expenditure report is a relatively new report introduced in April 2012 and covering 2010 – 2012. The financial report comes from the Atlas financial management system used by UN organisations.

Monitoring Reports	Dates
Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWP&B)	2010, 2011,2012 and Jan-June 2013
Minutes of Annual Consultations including 3 Extra Ordinary Consultations and one Special Meeting	April 2010, March 2011, October 2011, February 2012, May 2012, June 2012, August 2012
Action Taken Reports	April 2010, March 2011, October 2011, February 2012 -
Project Narrative Reports	Jan-Dec 2010; April 2012. October 2012
Project Financial Statements	Jan-Dec 2011 fourth revision submitted on 27 June 2012
Outcome based expenditure reports	2010,2011, 2012 (up to 10 November) submitted to Embassy between April and December 2012

The AWP&Bs provide the platform for directing the program in line with the project document. However, the AWP&Bs do not draw on, or makes reference to the budget allocations in the project document. Under the circumstances, monitoring the effectiveness of the implementation of the budget as set out in the project document is not possible.

At a macro level, decisions taken on allocations by country, or for the states in India are not recorded in any of the monitoring reports listed in table 2. As the project document does not contain this information, it is assumed that the AC would be the forum for decisions concerning allocations and departures from the budget in the project document.

Monitoring and tracking of the finances and outputs of the project based on the AWP&Bs has not been a smooth operation for the Embassy. The lack of detail in the project document and the challenges associated with operationalising the project logframe added to the transaction and management costs for administering and monitoring the program. This has been compounded by inadequate program-based reporting. An analysis of the minutes of the ACs (summary in Annex 8, appendix 3) shows how the reporting and monitoring process and content has evolved, thereby making it almost impossible to track progress, assess cumulative results and conduct effective financial scrutiny. Some of the major issues that have compromised the quality of monitoring that could be traced from the AC minutes include:

- There was a deviation from the logframe and budget in the project document in the 2010 AWP&B. A course correction was requested by the Embassy at the second annual consultation and all subsequent AWP&Bs have been aligned to the February 2010 logframe.
- At the March 2011 AC, the Embassy had to remind UN Women that the 2 February project document was the reference document for the program
- At the October 2011 meeting the table section of the progress report containing the indicators was not approved by the Embassy as it was not in alignment with the project document
- At the February 2012 meeting the Embassy requested reports based on results and not activities
- The 2011 financial report was submitted 5 times before approval

- Four ATRs were submitted in May 2012 covering 2010 - 2012 – a brought forward system with a single ATR would simplify the task of tracking actions arising from ACs;
- The annual financial statement submitted by UN Women to the Embassy presents expenditure under heads of analysis¹³¹ generated by UN Women's corporate systems. They have no relation with the outcomes and outputs of the project.

Allocations and commitments: The MTR team with support from the UN Women Program Unit staff has compiled a status report of the budget utilisation as at 10 November 2012 (Table 3) based on: a) the financial commitments contained in PCAs; b) financial commitments in country letters of agreement; and c) third party contracts. UN Women Program Support Costs and the UN Women Fee of 7% have been added as commitments.

	Allocations/ Commitments	India breakdown	% based on budget of \$10,604,100
Bhutan	1,067,552 ¹³³		10%
Pakistan	900,000 ¹³⁴		8%
Nepal	50,000 ¹³⁵		.5%
Bangladesh	39,809 ¹³⁶		.4%
India	5,479,375		52%
• India MoU with MoPR,		1,951,430 ¹³⁷	(18%)
• India non-MOU PCAs & Contracts		3,142,721 ¹³⁸	(30%)
• India: small value contracts		385,224	(4%)
UN Women SARO Program Support ,	2,770,704 ¹³⁹		26%
UN Women Fee India	654,000		6.1%
Total	10,961,440		

This is the first consolidated statement of country-wise commitments. Based on the agreed budget of \$10,604,100 for the project, the analysis reveals an over commitment of \$357,440. The over-commitment will need to be reduced. Options that may be available include: in several ways: final amounts disbursed against

¹³¹ Capacities of GE Experts and Organisations; Capacities of NWM; Capacities of Service Delivery Institutions; Culture/Capacity for Results; Data & Statistics on women Political Participation; Mechanisms for Dialogue on NDS; Organizational Systems Improvement; Participation of GE Advocates; Partnerships with UN Organisations; Support Costs

¹³² Based on budget, results and expenditure statement and contractors list as at 10 November 2012 provided by the PU

¹³³ Excludes \$306,240 UN Women SARO program support costs; includes NIBR (200,000) and RUB(29,567) contracts

¹³⁴ Excludes \$63,000 (7%) UN Women fee

¹³⁵ NIBR Study

¹³⁶ Program Support and Country Study

¹³⁷ Covers 5 states (1,602,619), NIRD (333,115) & \$15,696 for two third party contracts.

Madhya Pradesh \$324,167, Rajasthan \$470,862, Andhra Pradesh \$427,551, Orissa \$298,429 and Karnataka \$294,593

¹³⁸ Covers 18 Contracts including THP, NIBR, LBSNAA, IIMB, ICRW, RUB, NRMC – list in annex x

¹³⁹ Includes M & E study \$193,760 and Audit \$7,543

contracts come under the contract values; exchange rate gains; reduction in the size of the PU; under spending by partners with whom there are PCAs.

On other factor that requires serious consideration concerns sustainability. Under the current system of work planning and budgeting limited attention has been given to going beyond activities to delivering outputs and making them sustainable. This process will inevitably lead to a requirement for additional inputs to deliver a few outputs by the end of project in a sustainable and cost effective way. .

Some other observations concerning the allocations/commitments:

- The share of the India allocation reveals that allocation/commitments to the states and NIRD within the context of the MoU with MoPR are significantly lower than funds directed for non-state activities (18%:30%)
- Although there is a 22% allocation in the project document for the RCOE and the MoU with MoPR stipulates NIRD as the nodal institution, the agreement with NIRD (PCA) is only 3% (\$333,115) of the budget for one year. The PCA has subsequently been subject to 3 short term no cost extensions for a list of services that does not include the RCOE
- Although program support remains high, there is a reduction from the provision made in the budget (\$3,254,000).
- The Bhutan budget was increased by \$644, 225 in September 2012 from the allocation of \$361,553 agreed between UN Women and UNDP Bhutan in February 2011. The amendment in September 2012 also extended the duration by one year to December 2013 – i.e. beyond the duration of the agreement between UN Women and the Embassy (which is December 2012).
- If the program support costs and UN Women fee are included in the allocations/commitment for Pakistan and Bhutan, their share of the total funds would be \$963,000 and 1,373,792 respectively.

The deliverables of the project are centred on three ‘Outcomes’ for which the project document provides information on the outputs expected and their budgets. A comparison of the budgets in the project document logframe with the budgets in the AWP&Bs (table 4) agreed by the Embassy shows significant departures from the baseline fund allocation set out in the project document.

Changes in allocation - key observations:

- Outcome 1 increased by 70%
- Outcome 2 increased by 22%
- Outcome 3 decreased by 26%
- Program support decreased by 22%
- RCOE has been cut back from \$2.3 million to \$1.3 million
- Strengthening capacity of state government officials increased by 73%.

Project Document: Logframe	Budget in project document	2010 AWP&B	2011 AWP&B	2012 AWP&B	2010-2012 AWP&Bs	% change from budget
Output 1.1: A body of knowledge on legal, budgetary, and policy frameworks, that promote and/or act as barriers to women’s effective participation in institutions of local governance in South Asia	660,000	192,061	627,339	318,500	1,137,900	72%
Output 1.2: By 2011, consensus on	457,000		235,000	800,000	1,035,00	126%

Table 4: Comparison of Budgets in AWP&Bs with Project Document Budget						
Project Document: Logframe	Budget in project document	2010 AWP&B	2011 AWP&B	2012 AWP&B	2010-2012 AWP&Bs	% change from budget
legal and policy reforms necessary in the area of governance decentralization and devolution of financial powers to promote women's effective political participation in India identified					0	
Output 1.3: Coalitions of women in politics articulate a common agenda for gender responsive governance in India and South Asia by 2015	300,000			265,000	265,000	-12%
Sub Total Outcome 1	1,417,000				2,437,900	72%
Output 2.1: Competencies of women and men representatives in 6 states (now 5 states) in India enhanced on public speaking, understanding budgets, understanding how to link with the constituencies i.e. gram sabhas etc in gender responsive	1,500,000	714,539	492,582	740,000	1,947,121	30%
Output 2.2: Capacities of civil society enhanced to engage with major political parties in India to ensure affirmative actions for party positions and election tickets for women by 2015.	300,000		160,000	80,000	240,000	-20%
Sub Total: Outcome 2	1,800,000				2,187,121	21%
Output 3.1: Regional institutional system (consisting of Regional Centre of Excellence and satellite institutions) for demand-driven capacity development of EWRs in South Asia on gender responsive governance in place and strengthened by 2015.	2,300,000		700,000	605,500	1,305,500	-43%
Output 3.2: Capacities of government officials at state, districts, and block levels strengthened to monitor capacity development efforts aimed at women PR members.	475,000		500,000	322,000	822,000	73%
Output 3.3. Incentive mechanisms developed within national and state government systems to promote decision-making of women in local governance	100,000			10,000	10,000	-90%
Sub Total: Outcome 3	2,875,000				2,137,500	-26%
Program Support	3,254,000	385,276	1,286,000	848,000	2,519,276	-22%
UN Women Program Support Fee	654,000				654,000	0
	10,000,000	1,291,876	4,000,921	3,990,000	9,282,797	

The AWP&B analysis for 2010-2012 has shown significant shifts in allocations between budget lines from what was originally envisaged in the project document. The reasons for these changes are not documented in any of the reports, minutes and other relevant documents used for monitoring and directing the program. For example, the reduction in the allocation for the RCOE is contrary to the priorities

expressed by MoPR in the MOU with UN Women. Secondly, the rationale for increasing the budget for building government official capacity is unclear.

A deeper analysis of the execution of the AWP&Bs (table 5) highlights over ambitious work plans and budgets. Overall only 63% of the funds planned in the AWP&Bs were utilised. The biggest single underspend was in 2011 where there was a shortfall of \$1.66 million. Although there was a slow start due to the efforts required in securing agreements with governments, the latter half of 2011 and 2012 could have seen acceleration in project activity leading to higher spend. Problems with the changeover in the UN Women accounting systems and processes and complex procurement rules and procedures impacted on the level of effectiveness and efficiency overall.

	Budget in project document	2010-2012 AWP&B Budget	Expenditure from AWP&B statements				% Utilisation against budget
			2010	2011	2012	Total	
Output 1.1: A body of knowledge on legal, budgetary, and policy frameworks, that promote and/or act as barriers to women's effective participation in institutions of local governance in South Asia	660,000	1,137,900	126,396	235,409	103,511	465,316	40.8
Output 1.2: By 2011, consensus on legal and policy reforms necessary in the area of governance decentralization and devolution of financial powers to promote women's effective political participation in India identified	475,000	1,035,000		95,704	171,745	267,449	25.8
Output 1.3: Coalitions of women in politics articulate a common agenda for gender responsive governance in India and South Asia by 2015	300,000	265,000			8,348	8,348	3.1
Output 2.1: Competencies of women and men representatives in 6 states (now 5 states) in India enhanced on public speaking, understanding budgets, understanding how to link with the constituencies i.e. gram sabhas etc in gender responsive	1,500,000	1,947,121	774,519	531,090	511,404	1,817,013	93.3
Output 2.2: Capacities of civil society enhanced to engage with major political parties in India to ensure affirmative actions for party positions and election tickets for women by 2015.	300,000	240,000				0	0
Output 3.1: Regional institutional system (consisting of Regional Centre of Excellence and satellite institutions) for demand-driven capacity development of EWRs in South Asia on gender responsive governance in place and strengthened by 2015.	2,300,000	1,305,500		143,699	702,713	846,412	64.8
Output 3.2: Capacities of government officials at state,	475,000	822,000		697,396	92,696	790,092	96.1

Table 5: Year wise expenditure analysis & budget utilisation

	Budget in project document	2010-2012 AWP&B Budget	Expenditure from AWP&B statements				% Utilisation against budget
			2010	2011	2012	Total	
districts, and block levels strengthened to monitor capacity development efforts aimed at women PR members.							
Output 3.3. Incentive mechanisms developed within national and state government systems to promote decision-making of women in local governance	100,000	10,000				0	0
Program Support	3,254,000	2,519,276	360,110	634,126	718,995	1,713,231	68.0
			1,261,025	2,337,424	2,309,413	5,907,862	63.6
Total Budget in AWP&Bs		9,282,797	1,291,876	4,000,921	3,990,000		

2.6 The wider monitoring and reporting systems

The institutional and organisational systems for monitoring and reporting the multi-dimensional and cross-country South Asia program have been shaped by the partnership agreements made by UN Women during the inception phase. The partnerships in India, Pakistan and Bhutan also altered the direction of the project set by the project logframe. For example:

- In India the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UN Women and MoPR makes no connection with the project document. There are seven specific deliverables (Annex 8, appendix 4) in the MoU which the MoPR views as the focus of the monitoring and reporting system;
- The PCA between UN Women and THP India and supporting work plans, budgets and reports are framed around THP's objectives and performance indicators set out in their phases one and two proposals;
- The partnership with UNDP Bhutan comes under the One UN country operating model. The objective is to contribute to the implementation of the Common CPAP 2008-2013 and UN Women South Asia Regional Strategy, 2008-2010. More specifically, the project is contributing to three components each with its own logframe: a) multi-donor¹⁴⁰ local governance support program; b) UN Support for Women's empowerment and gender equality in Bhutan; and support for parliamentary democracy.
- The contribution to the Pakistan program is also part of the One UN country operating model with UN Women Pakistan as the implementing agency. Although the budgets and work plans have been aligned to the logframe, the activities are concerned with enhancing the capacities of federal and provincial women parliamentarians to advocate gender responsive laws and policies. In contrast, the focus in the project document is very much at political systems and processes at the local level.

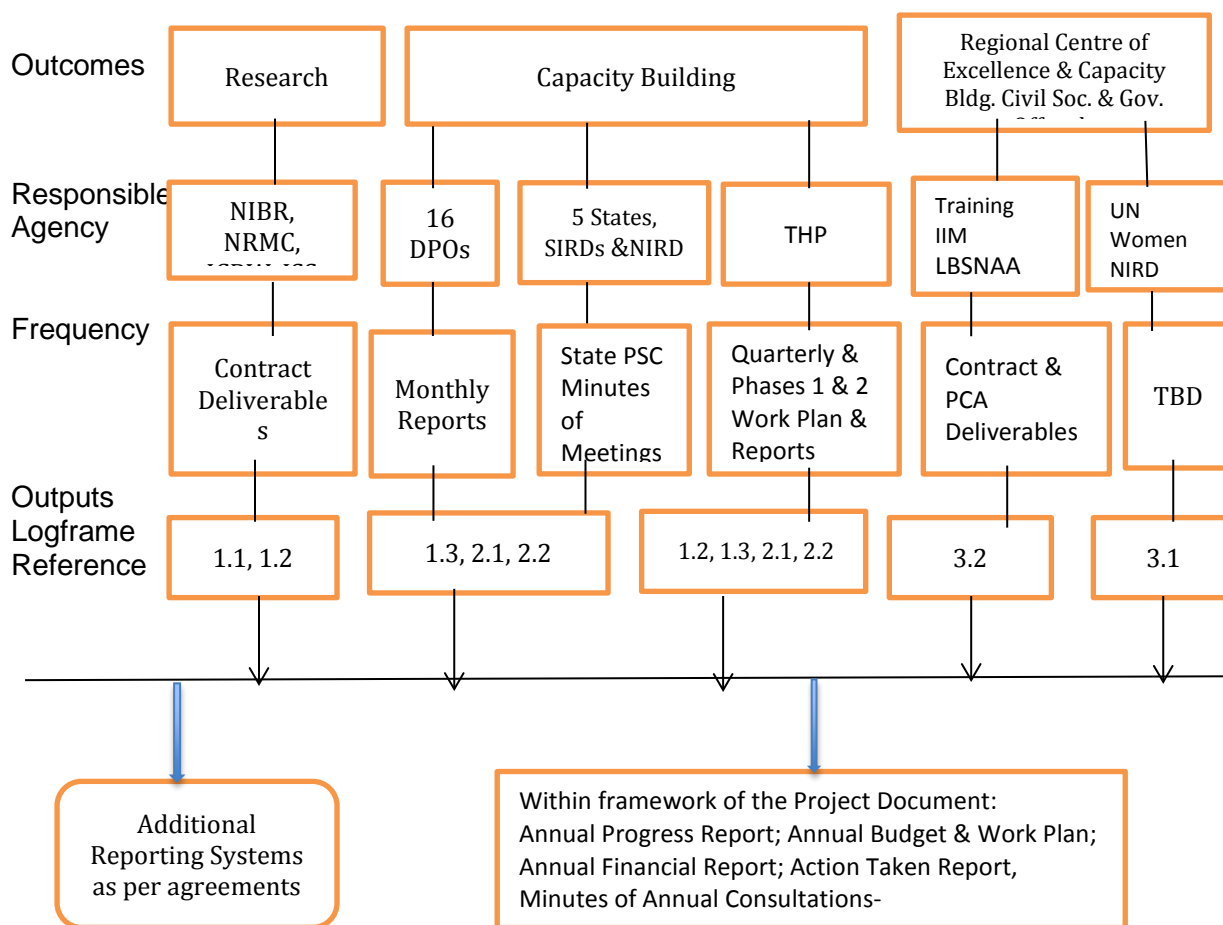
¹⁴⁰ Source Bhutan Work Plan for 201-2012, Local Governance Support program: Denmark: Nu. 70.67m (LGSP); EU: Nu. 86.80 m; UNDP: Nu. 16.60 m (RR -\$181,101.31; OR-\$187,700]; UN Women: Nu. 5.89 m (OR - \$130,849-provided through UNDP); UNCDF: Nu.14.00 m (\$311,143.70); SDC: Nu. 54.00m

The departure from a common logframe has led to a situation where it was no longer feasible to produce a common monitoring and reporting framework. Nevertheless, as the Embassy wished to avoid multiple reporting systems what has evolved during the course of implementation is a compilation of activities in a two part progress report: a narrative section; and an outcome based table. The report is submitted to the Embassy and to the India national project steering committee co-chaired by MoPR and UN Women. There are several issues with the reporting model:

- There is no trail linking inputs, activities with the reported progress
- The progress report does not draw on the commitments made in the AWP&B
- As the report includes activity in areas outside the MoU with MoPR e.g. support to THP, LBSNAA, the MoPR has questioned on several occasions the rationale for the inclusion of these partnerships; MoPR may not be fully aware of the multi-dimensional nature of the India component;
- The MoPR does not receive a report that is oriented towards the seven specific deliverables in the MoU e.g. the development of a pilot and NIRD as the nodal institution for the RCOE;

Another factor that has complicated implementation in India relates to multiple partnerships for building capacity. For example, NRID, SIRDs, THP and DPOs are all involved in EWR capacity building. In addition there has been an increased focus on capacity building of government officials. It may have led to a dilution of focus, probably overlapping mandates and several relatively small value partnerships requiring transaction intensive processes for administration, management and oversight. Diagram 2 provides an indicative mapping of the partnerships and logframe outputs primarily for the India component of the program.

Diagram 2: Outcome-wise Monitoring Framework¹⁴¹



2.7 Monitoring Partner Agreements

The program is being implemented by UN Women through three types of agreements - PCAs, Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and Contracts with 24 institutions and organisations (annex 8, appendix 5). In addition, there is a non-financing MoU with the MoPR. The financial value of the agreements is 53% of the project budget with most agreements below \$400,000 (table 6).

Financial Range US \$	Number of Agreements	Comments
In excess of 1million	1	The Hunger Project \$1,951,242
Between 200,000 and 400,000	8	Includes support to 5 states, NIRD, LBSNAA and NIBR
Between 50,000 and 199,000	5	Includes ISS, IIMB, ICRW and NRMCM
Up to 49,000	10	Includes Royal University of Bhutan
	24	

¹⁴¹ Source: UN Women Governance Program M & E Report

The Program Unit (PU) in UN Women has responsibility for monitoring all agreements and reporting progress to the Embassy. There is universal application (regardless of size of contract/PCA) of fairly complex and transaction intensive UN Women rules and procedures for entering into agreements and for their subsequent management, monitoring and reporting.

There is a real challenge when it comes to monitoring and reporting progress against the logframe. Monitoring and reporting requirements are set out within the agreements and associated supporting documents. An analysis of the top ten financing agreements and the non-financing agreement with MoPR (Annex 8, appendix 6)) shows that only two of the agreements have deliverables that are aligned with the project logframe.

The workload of the PU in UN Women associated with monitoring is significant. All agreements require financial reporting in accordance with UN Women guidelines and reporting format. The majority of agreements require quarterly narrative and financial reporting. The PU at UN Women has to monitor: a) timely receipt of these reports and financial statements; review content, advise on future direction and quality assure deliverables; map contract deliverable to the logframe and prepare reports for the Embassy. Staff from the PU also monitor delivery by attending trainings and other events held under the agreements.

Some agreements are also monitored by MoPR. These concern agreements with State Governments and NIRD. There are sixteen agreements including the PCA with THP outside the scope of the MoU between MoPR and UN Women are reviewed during the annual consultations by the Embassy. Additionally, THP, the organisation with the largest financial agreement has been invited to report progress at the annual consultations between the Embassy and UN Women.

2.8 State Level Monitoring and Reporting Financial Flows

UN Women and the State Project Steering Committee (PSC) share primary accountability for the implementation of the project at the district and state levels. Implementation is guided by the objectives, strategies and the seven specific deliverables in the MOU with MPRI. The total contribution to the states is £1,602,619 of which 30% goes to five State Institutes of Rural Development (SIRDs) and 70% shared equally within the state allocation to the 16 participating districts. Funds for SIRD are transferred directly to the SIRDs and directly to a district bank account set up especially for the project for participating districts. On an average a participating district received \$72,250 and SIRDs receive \$96,750 each. The districts get 60 % upon signatures and remaining 40 % is transferred when utilization touches 70 % mark. The usage of funds is defined by the Annual Work Plan that is approved by the State Project Steering Committee (SPSC). The PU monitors the finances of 16 districts and 5 SIRDs in accordance Clause VIII of the PCAs.

The funds received by districts are used to hire and train motivators and conduct Special Gram Sabhas, Ward/Palli Sabhas and Mahila Sabhas. DPOs and Motivators have standard terms of reference in all states. DPOs are engaged by UN Women and Motivators by the Gram Panchayat. In exceptional circumstances they can be appointed by the DPO. Payments to motivators are based on a standard stipend for organising Gram Sabha meetings, facilitating the recording the minutes of the meeting and submission of a follow up report.

Although activity level costing is not possible due to lack of data, the fund utilisation by districts and volume of activity could be a useful baseline for estimating

requirements for scaling up activities. In addition to district level expenditure it would be necessary to add the cost of the DPO who is contracted by UN Women¹⁴².

Based on the outreach data provided by UN Women (Annex 8, appendix 7) for the period until November 2012 a total of 474 Special Gram Sabhas, 3,547 Ward/Palli Sabhas and 1,547 Mahila Sabhas were conducted in ten districts. For the same period the disbursement to the districts was \$740,000. This is based on the funds disbursed to the states estimated as \$1,059,400¹⁴³ and where 70% is transferred to the participating districts. However, more data is required before any costing can be done of the district based events.

Some other observations: Although the project is well into the end of the third year no meetings have been conducted in the state of Karnataka, two districts in Orissa and one district in MP. Furthermore in the participating districts only 131 out of the 225 blocks have been covered. There appear to be no plans for covering the remaining blocks.

The state funds are also used for training by SIRDs. As there are no consolidated returns on the training provided and the costs of the training, the MTR team was unable to assess the costs of the services provided by the SIRDs and to make any comparison service quality and cost effectiveness between SIRDs. The estimated funds transferred as at November 2012 was \$480,785.

2.9 State Monitoring and Reporting on Services

Work planning, monitoring and reporting and quality assurance mechanisms operate at district, state and national levels (table 7). Through the State PSC, the district administration is held accountable for implementation and for management of the program funds at district level with support from the UN Women District Project Officer (DPO). Recording and monitoring of financial expenditure and State and District government levels is undertaken in accordance with government rules of accounting.

Level of implementation	Work Planning	Monitoring and reporting	Quality assurance mechanism
National	UN Women and the Embassy submit work plans and progress reports to RNE for discussion, review and approval	Minutes of the Annual Consultation with UN Women and RNE prepared by UN Women	Minutes of the Annual Consultation reviewed and approved by RNE
State	State Institutions of Regional Development (SIRDs), District Project Officers (DPOs) and Ministry of Panchayati Raj – jointly do the state level work planning	Representative from UN Women Program Unit (PU) attend State PSC held twice yearly. The minutes of the PSC meetings submitted to national level.	Minutes of the State PSC are reviewed and finalized in consultation with UN Women. States present their reports at the National PSC meetings.
District	State PSC develops the	DPOs and CEO Zilla	UN Women PU

¹⁴² Estimated monthly pay including bonus is Rs 67,000.

¹⁴³ Source UN Women returns on list of government contracts/agreements

Level of implementation	Work Planning	Monitoring and reporting	Quality assurance mechanism
	work plan for the districts and DPOs. DPOs submit monthly progress reports to UN Women using a standardized format. Annex 8, appendix 9 contains a sample.	Parishad report to the State PSC at the bi-annual meetings	conducts monitoring visits.
Panchayat	UN Women PU representative conduct monitoring missions to Special Gram Sabhas and Mahila Sabhas conducted under the program. There is standard template for monitoring Gram Sabha meetings (Annex 8, appendix 10)	Findings reported using a standardised reporting format	UN Women PU are expected to analyse the reports and identify critical issues for the follow up activities that may be required.

State PSCs: The responsibilities of State PSCs and the frequency of their meetings are set out in the PCA between the State Government and UN Women. The State PSC is expected to meet at least once every three months. Most meetings started in the last quarter of 2011 (table 8) and no state has conducted meetings on a quarterly basis. Although the MTR team was advised that The Hunger Project State representative attended these meetings as an observer, a review of the minutes of the meetings indicates that THP were only present at the second MP State PSC. Secondly, although Karnataka was one of the first to have a PSC, and has conducted 3 State PSCs, it has not convened any Special Gram Sabhas and related events. A change in the chairmanship of the State PSC may have contributed to the slow start.

The rationale for not complying with the requirement for three monthly State PSC meetings set out in the PCA is unclear. Frequent and regular monitoring and review of district based activity is critical, particularly as the approach for empowering EWRs is untested with expectations of scaling up successful models. Nevertheless, with the seniority of the government officials in the State PSC and the relative financial contribution of the project (\$320,000) to the state it may be more appropriate to consider how this project could be part of a state-led umbrella program with similar objectives.

State	Date of meeting	THP as observer	Chairperson
MP	4 October 2011	No	Principal Secretary & Development Commissioner, Panchayati Raj (PR) and Rural Development (RD) Department
MP	6 September 2012	Yes	Principal Secretary & Development Commissioner, PR and RD Department
Karnataka	29 December 2011	No	Principal Secretary, PR and RD Department
Karnataka	22 June 2011	No	Principal Secretary, PR and RD Department
Karnataka	30 November 2012	No	Secretary -1, RD and PR Department
AP	6 February 2012	No	Principal Secretary, PR and RD Department
AP	16 October 2012	No	IAS Commissioner, PR and RD Department

Table 8: Schedule of State PSC meetings			
State	Date of meeting	THP as observer	Chairperson
Odisha	1 October 2011	No	IAS, Commissioner cum Secretary, PR Department
Odisha	11 October 2012	No	IAS, Commissioner cum Secretary, PR Department
Rajasthan	24 November 2011	No	Additional Chief Secretary, PR and RD Department GoR
Rajasthan	4 September 2012	No	Additional Chief Secretary, PR and RD Department GoR

Monitoring Missions by UN Women PU Staff: As the money directed to state programs is concerned with empowerment of EWR and the effectiveness of gram sabhas in addressing women related issues it is important to track the effectiveness of the intervention.

Based on an analysis of the purposes in the monitoring reports produced by PU staff, it appears that only one out of the 18 was concerned with monitoring a Special Gram Sabha. Although there is a template for recording the monitoring of Special Gram Sabhas, it wasn't used. There appears to be no schedule of monitoring missions for the PU. The MTR team were provided monitoring reports for 18 missions by PU staff. An analysis of the purpose of the missions is contained in Annex 8, appendix 8.

A closer examination of the missions show that many of the missions which lasted beyond 3 days were concerned with events that had a tangential association with the outputs and outcomes of the project. Prioritising scarce PU resources and directing them to monitoring project implementation activities at the local level does not appear to have been a priority for PU missions.

Although 474 Special Gram Sabhas were conducted, by having only a single mission report, an opportunity has been missed to acquire a body of knowledge on gram sabha effectiveness. Furthermore effective use of the monitoring template could have provided the quantitative and qualitative data.

Monitoring and Reporting by DPOs: The project has invested in 16 DPOs and the annual cost is estimated¹⁴⁴ as \$325,000¹⁴⁵. Although DPOs have a significant hands-on role in delivery guided by terms of reference which contain specific results, there is no reporting system for DPO performance.

DPOs produce several activity based reports using a template provided by the PU. Although there is some quantitative data, the narrative parts of the reporting are not in a form that could be used to assess the qualitative aspects of the activities by the PU. There is limited information on performance although their contracts are results based. For example, DPOs are expected to conduct 100 Special Gram Sabha meetings in a year of which 30-40% should be repeat meetings. They are also expected to follow up issues raised at the Special Gram Sabhas at block and district levels and produce weekly and monthly progress reports to a prescribed format. Their reporting requirements are significant and labour intensive and could be streamlined and results and performance oriented.

¹⁴⁴ According to written comment to this report UN Women states that the actual cost of the 16 DPOs for the year 2012 was USD 185, 255. The comments were not accompanied by financial corroborative information.

¹⁴⁵ Source: Estimates based on UN Women DPO Amendment to Service Contract 6 June 2012

2.10 Monitoring Capacity Building and Outreach

Four project outputs are concerned with capacity building and outreach and there are several organisations that have entered into agreements with UN Women to build capacity. The project document contains suggestions on how capacity building can be tracked for empowering women Sarpanches through the use of quantitative and qualitative indicators (Annex 8, appendix 9). However, there is no overarching framework for tracking progress in capacity building and the impact of the support provided. For example, there is no system for tracking the impact of the support provided by motivators and DPOs on the quality of women's engagement and discussion of womens issues at the normal Gram Sabhas.

UN Women tracks participation at the training, meetings, special events and outreach activities using the returns provided by DPOs, THP, NIRD, SIRDs, LBSNAA and IIM B. The analysis provides data on male and female participants at Gram Sabhas, Ward Level Meetings and Village Level Meetings.

Tables 9-12A provide a summary of the returns produced by UN Women and cover 2010 – 2012¹⁴⁶.

Audience	THP		National & State Institutions ¹⁴⁷		Total
	M	F	M	F	
Training					
Elected Representatives	600	569	1,376	3,617	6162
Motivators/ Volunteers	0	0	107	890	997
District/ Block Officials	0	0	1,845	933	2,778
NGOs/CBOs /SHGs	0	0	213	1,866	2,079
Administrators	0	0	1,482	2,242	3,724
Leadership Training	0	2,750	32	368	3,150
Refresher Training	0	4,380	30	178	4588
Training of Trainers	62	345	313	547	1267
Potential Leadership Training	0	4,365	0	0	4,365
Outreach to raise awareness					
Outreach by THP	0	10,300	0	0	10,300
Interface with Parliamentarians	0	3,800	0	0	3800
Media Dialogue	310	477	32	18	837
Strengthening Standing Committees	152	5,750	18	6	5926
Panchayat Functionaries	250	195	539	418	1402

Event Type	THP		
	M	F	Total
Jagruk Manch		37,150	37150

¹⁴⁶ The data for 2012 does not include returns for July – December for LBSNAA, IIMB, NIRD, IIS and THP,

¹⁴⁷ They include: NIRD, SIRDs, LBSNAA, IIMB and IIS

Table 10: Participants at Special Events for empowering women			
Event Type	THP		
	M	F	Total
Simulation Camps	6,409	9,782	16,191
Street Play/ Puppet Shows	57,085	53,826	110,911

Table 11: Number of participants at meetings where the project facilitated discussions on women's issues					
Types of meetings	THP		16 Districts in 5 States through DPOs & motivators		Total
	M	F	M	F	
Meeting participation					
Special Gram Sabha			87,119	144,350	231,469
Ward/Palli/Mandal Sabha	0	0	47,749	86,114	133,863
Mahila Sabha	0	0	0	187,264	187,264
Ward-Level Meetings	14,700	32,070	45,482	83,559	175,811
Village Meetings	22,352	27,775	0	0	50,127

Table 12A : Number of Special Gram Sabhas, Mahila Sabhas & Ward Sabhas held			
	2010	2011	2012
Special Gram Sabhas	0	14	354
Mahila Sabhas	0	2	1301
Ward Sabhas	0	0	2,684
Other Meetings (THP)	297	2,569	1,665

The cost of capacity building: A significant component of the capacity development is directed at state level. An analysis of the resources from two primary sources i.e. the state PCAs and the Hunger Project allocations indicate that just over 35% of the project budget has been allocated for state based activities as shown in tables 9 – 12A with Rajasthan as the highest recipient.

Table 12 B: State wise budget for PCAs and The Hunger Project			
State	PCA Allocations	The Hunger Project Allocations	
Madhya Pradesh	324,167	242,840	567,007
Rajasthan	470,862	426,401	897,263
Andhra Pradesh	427,551	0	427,551
Orissa	298,429	403,997	702,426

Table 12 B: State wise budget for PCAs and The Hunger Project			
State	PCA Allocations	The Hunger Project Allocations	
Karnataka	294,593	433,395	727,988
Bihar	0	446,701	446,701
	1,815,602	1,953,334	3,768,936

Some observations on capacity building: Independent checks on the returns have yet to be operationalized. The analysis is raw data on participants at events. It does not cover effectiveness, efficiency or economy, or form part of a process for building capacity over time using a monitoring framework to track progress among EWRs, civil society, government officials and RCOE.

The analysis produced by UN Women groups all types of interventions under capacity building. It would be more helpful if raw data could be analysed by broad categories e.g. training of EWRs, outreach, special events. A follow up phase could consider a reporting framework that tracks capacity building among target EWR groups.

2.11 Performance Management Framework and Evaluation Framework

The requirement in the project document was for a performance management framework (PMF) and evaluation framework (EF) to be designed during the inception phase covering all countries under the project. However, UN Women only commissioned NRM¹⁴⁸ in October 2011 to undertake the design and development of the system for India. There is a time bound delivery schedule:

- Final Performance management framework (PMF) and key indicators for evaluation to be delivered by October 2011;
- Evaluation framework and methodology for conducting the evaluation to be developed based on the approved PMF;
- Baseline assessment including survey tools by August 2012;
- Midline assessment by August 2012; and
- End line assessment by December 2012

The PMF and the accompanying proposal for the Evaluation Framework have not been approved by the Embassy or UN Women Headquarters. A baseline assessment has also been completed.

Observations: Several fundamental concerns have been raised on methodology, content and process by the Embassy and UN Women staff at Headquarters. The MTR team share these concerns.

Other issues that are cause for concern include:

- There is no over-arching PMF and EF for the countries covered by the program or the regional component.
- The delay in commissioning the design (from what should have been completed during the inception phase) has meant that there was no M & E system in

¹⁴⁸ NRM Contract Value: \$193,760; Duration: October 11– December 2012; Disbursement to November 2012: \$89,015

operation during the period when 75% of the project funds were utilized¹⁴⁹.

Secondly, it is highly unlikely that a system will be in place before the full utilisation of the project funds.

- Although the contract with NRMC is for the M & E of the India program, the PMF and EF proposed appear to focus primarily on the MoPR MoU, and in particular on the support to the partner states with a budget allocation of \$1,602,619. The frameworks exclude contributions by The Hunger Project which has a larger contract value (\$1.9 million).
- The baseline assessment should not have been undertaken before approval of the PMF indicators. In the absence of an approved PMF and EF, it is difficult to assess the relevance and appropriateness of technical and institutional approach adopted for the baseline assessment. Both reports are awaiting approval.
- Although it was envisaged that the PMF and EF systems would be developed in partnership with stakeholders e.g. MPRI, state governments and NIRD and SIRDs, in reality it has been conducted as an internal process by UN Women and the Embassy.

2.12 Monitoring and Reporting 'The Hunger Project (THP)'

The overall goal of The Hunger Project within the context of the PCA is to strengthen the political leadership of women in Gram Panchayats so that they are empowered to address the issues of governance, social justice and women's rights in local institutions of governance. The project has been implemented in two phases: July 2010 – June 2011 and July 2011 – December 2012 supported by two financial and narrative proposals. The financial schedules in the proposals are input and activity based.

The THP component is \$1,953,335¹⁵⁰, i.e. 18.4% of the project budget and is the largest single financial agreement. Delivery is aligned to the detailed proposals submitted for each phase and reported quarterly. The program covers Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha and Karnataka. The detailed budget allocation and expenditure incurred by state and by strategy is in Annex 8, appendix 12.

The program activities are framed around four strategies and four main and several smaller programs (table 13). A summary of the programs is in Annex 8, appendix 13. The main strategies are

- Build leadership capacity of EWRs in Gram Panchayats so as to enhance their participation in political decision making processes
- Support the EWR to engage with women's coalitions, Gram Sabhas and other support structures for demanding implementation of commitments by the State
- Build an enabling environment by engaging with local administration and identifying & advocating for change in laws and policies which impede the full participation of women in governance
- Build an effective and impactful programme with local Partners on the ground towards political empowerment of EWRs. Planning/capacity building/review

¹⁴⁹ As at 10 November the UN statement on budget, results and expenditure submitted on 8 January 2013 shows \$6,483,905 as expenditure, \$256,965 as commitments and \$1,209,993 as advances (Total \$7,950,863)

¹⁵⁰ Exchange rate of Rs46.6:1US\$ has been used as all reports from THP were submitted in Indian Rupees

and monitoring of Partners to build an impactful and effective programme towards political empowerment of EWRs.

Strategy	Total Approved Budget \$	Total Expenditure \$	% utilisation
SWEEP	266,761	244,351	91
Jagruk Manch	733,139	660,500	90
Development Linkages with Parliamentarians	94,532	64,213	68
Advocacy	107,521	56,246	52
Other Programmes ¹⁵¹	361,240	208,477	58
Programme Management & Administration	390,140	284,368	73
TOTAL	1,953,335	1,518,157	78

The Hunger Project works through partner organisations in participating states. There were 44 partners in phase 1 and 38 partners in phase 2. Approximately 60% (\$916,667) of the THP budget was transferred to partner organisations for the delivery of the program.

In addition to the direct costs for program delivery, THP charges a program administration which is approximately 18% of the allocation (table 13). Program administration includes documentation and dissemination and attendance at the South Asia Regional meeting. It also includes the cost of M & E and capacity building of 20 partners in M & E.

The menu of interventions and level of support to the states is based on the election cycle and the project budget allocations for each state (table 14). At 78% utilisation there will approximately \$435,000 remaining by the scheduled PCA date of 31 December 2012.

State	Budget	Expenditure	% utilisation
Bihar	446,701	372,591	83
Karnataka	433,395	306,879	71
Rajasthan	426,401	327,458	77
Odisha	403,997	324,664	80
Madhya Pradesh	242,840	186,564	77
Total	1,953,335	1,518,157	78

The outreach programs for the two phases in five states covered 120 districts, 264 blocks and 4,773 Gram Panchayats. This was delivered through 44 partners in phase 1 and 38 partners in phase 2. Annex 8, appendix 14 provides the outreach data by state for each phase.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the delivery was expected to be undertaken by THP, whereas UN Women were expected to conduct an impact assessment. Both systems have not been operationalized.

¹⁵¹ Making Panchayat Effective; Capacity Building & Exposure; Planning Review & monitoring meeting; Documentation & Dissemination; South Asia Regional Meeting; Training of Trainers (NIRD); Capacity Building of partners; Capacity Building ; Engagement with THP Partners

Observations: The THP activities are widespread and cover multiple strategies. In the absence of any baselines and performance management framework for tracking progress it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of their contribution. Had THP and UN Women fulfilled their respective obligations under the terms of the PCA there would have been a systematic approach to program based financial and performance management.

Beyond presenting the allocations and utilisations for each type of event (table 13) the MTR was unable to assess whether the budgets were adequate or whether the resources utilised enabled the desired outputs to be delivered. In the absence of a planning system that goes beyond the project to address sustainability and expansion into the non-project districts and blocks in a state it is difficult to assess affordability and cost effectiveness.

Although THP quarterly reports provide information on their meetings with partners to address issues of quality, there is no information on how this is undertaken and secondly, as to whether there is a structured open and transparent performance monitoring framework for partners that is made available to UN Women and the Embassy.

UN Women has a dedicated officer looking after the THP PCA. However, there is no information on how this works and whether there are systems and processes in the PU at UN Women to provide oversight and quality assurance of THP inputs, activities and outputs.

2.13 Monitoring and Reporting the Regional Centre of Excellence (RCOE)

The regional centre of excellence was given a high priority during project design and 22% of the project funds (\$2.3 million) were allocated for establishing and operationalising the RCOE to achieve specific results (table 15). The RCOE budget allocation is in table 16.

RCOE Output	Indicators	Means of verification
Regional Institutional System (consisting of Regional Centre of Excellence and satellite institutions) for demand driven capacity development of EWRs in South Asia on gender responsive governance in place and strengthened by 2015	<p>Qualitative: RCOE set up and functioning with a budget to cover its costs for at least 10 years after 2015.</p> <p>Quantitative: No. of national and state institutions that have changed their curriculum to include content on gender responsive governance issues in their curriculum.</p> <p>Quantitative: No of ICT pilots promoted by the program that has been adopted by State Governments to scale up training in gender responsive governance</p>	Project annual reports; Published curricula of capacity development institutions; Govt. Records

Table 16: RCOE Budget and expenditure as presented by UN Women on 10 November 2012

Planned Activities	Revised Budget \$	Expenditure	Expenditure Classification
1. South Asia Regional Centre of Excellence set up & strengthened along with its satellite institutions	134,792	31,094 76,148	For building prototype For UN Women launch of RCOE in October 2011
2 National and State structures (e.g. NIRD, SIRD, etc.) and methods of capacity development for ERs (both men and women) mapped and assessed from gender lens.	1,335,907	723, 603	Pakistan
3 In collaboration with Civil Society institutions, support National and State structures (e.g. NIRD, SIRD, etc.) to develop demand-based gendered modules and tools (including self-learning tools) for CD of EWRs.	994,519	141,730 758,843	Rajasthan NIRD and the Hunger Project
4 Pilots for use of ICT for rapid scaling up of engendered CD methods identified & implemented.	40,000	0	
5 Facilitate South-South Exchange for enhancing capacities of EWRs on gender responsive governance for peer learning.	100,000	0	
Advocacy campaign for increased participation of women in politics	147,000	0	

A Position Paper¹⁵² on a Regional Centre of Excellence for 'Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia' was developed through a consultative process across the South Asian countries under the project. In the October 2012 progress report to the NSPC it was noted that based on the Position Paper appropriate strategies for establishing the RCOE would be initiated.

Observations: There has been a departure from the budget allocations in the project document. Activities 2, 5 and 6 in table 14 appear to be outside the scope envisaged in the original budget and there is no information on the activities conducted associated with the expenditure incurred by Pakistan, NIRD and THP. The MTR team was unable to find any record in the minutes of the Annual Consultations or NSPC meetings on the approval status of the revised budget allocations.

The launch by UN Women of the RCOE in October 2012 was undertaken before there was a discussion or approval by the stakeholders in the participating countries on the RCOE.

The Position Paper will require significant changes before it can be approved by the NSPC and by the Embassy. At the NSPC meeting in October 2012, a decision was taken that RCOE would be the focal point and for UN Women to coordinate with all SIRDs and NIRD to discuss structure, content, dissemination and sustainability of the RCOE. This would be presented in the next NSPC.

¹⁵² Zero Draft submitted to UN Women: 26.04.2012; Zero Draft (Revised) submitted to The Embassy: 1.05.2012

Submitted for Annual Consultation 14.05.2012; first Draft submitted 17. 08. 2012 to UN Women; second draft submitted 24. 08. 2012 to UN Women; third draft September 2012

The approach adopted in the Position Paper was a significant departure from what was envisaged by MoPR in the MoU and the approach suggested in the project document.

Although the RCOE was considered a priority in the project document, the first real discussion only took place at the end of the third year of implementation.

The rationale for launching the RCOE ahead of any approval of the position paper and incurring in excess of \$100,000 expenditure is unclear. The funds could have been utilised by NIRD and SIRDs for developing the prototype.

At the NSPC meeting in October 2012, a decision was taken that NIRD would be the focal point and for UN Women to coordinate with all SIRDs and NIRD to discuss structure, content, dissemination and sustainability of the RCOE. This would be presented in the next NSPC.

UN Women took the lead in implementing the RCOE with very little formal interaction with NIRD. The PCA and work plan and budget is silent on NIRD's role and contribution towards the establishment of the RCOE. Secondly, by only entering into an annual agreement with NIRD and several short extensions there was little opportunity for NIRD to enter into a longer term partnership.

Annex 9: List of Appendices referred to in Annex 7 and 8

- Appendix 1: Latest Logframe submitted by UN Women to MTR Team
- Appendix 2: Project Timeline; Schedule of Annual Consultations; & Schedule of National Steering Committee Meetings
- Appendix 3: Highlights of Annual Consultations on Annual Work Plans and Budgets (AWP&Bs) and Financial Reports
- Appendix 4: Deliverables listed in the MoU between MoPR and UN Women
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- Appendix 7: DPO/Motivator related outreach in States at at 23 November 2012
- Appendix 8: Summary analysis of purpose of UN Women monitoring missions
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- Appendix 10: UN WOMEN, South Asia Sub Regional Office Gram Sabha Monitoring Visit Report
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Annex 9: Appendix 1: Latest Logframe submitted by UN Women to MTR Team

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Progress towards Results	Risks	Mitigation
<p>Outcome 1: Laws and policies on decentralized governance and devolution of powers to local bodies strengthened in line with national commitments to gender equality in South Asia by 2015</p>	<p>Output 1.1: A body of knowledge on legal, budgetary, and policy frameworks, that promote and/or act as barriers to women's effective participation in institutions of local governance in South Asia.</p>	<p>Quantitative: Evidence that the knowledge products and tools on gender-sensitive governance that UN WOMEN has made accessible are useful and relevant.</p> <p>Qualitative: Level of satisfaction of users with knowledge services and products supported by the programme.</p>	<p>Programme Reports, Media reports etc.</p> <p>User satisfaction surveys</p>	<p>Knowledge products on gender responsive governance in India and South Asia developed in partnership with ICRW in India; Survey on Women's Political Participation in Bhutan developed and disseminated.</p> <p>Twelfth Plan Working Group report on Gender and Agency informed by UN Women knowledge products on gender responsive governance.</p> <p>North-South cooperation for joint research capacity building established between NIBR and RUB.</p> <p>Baseline evaluation conducted for the programme.</p>	<p>Risks: a) Knowledge generation and sharing in the programme is based on a multi-country, cross-cultural cooperation. This may not happen as smoothly as envisaged by programme.</p> <p>b) Since the issue of women in governance is in a nascent form, progress on development of theoretical and knowledge frameworks and operationalising the same may not happen in Programme period.</p> <p>c) Quality of research institutions and individuals is not adequate to develop methodologies that question current stereotypes and design new approaches</p> <p>d) High quality research institutions do not join the programme due to their own comfort zone</p> <p>e) Research strategy not designed comprehensively and strategically</p>	<p>Ensure a mapping of critical research and support agencies and close collaboration between them by supporting cross-country and cross-institutional research forums on the issue of women in governance</p> <p>Same as above. Also float global call for collaboration, ensure that the best institutions in the area are part of the programme</p> <p>Same as above</p> <p>Same as above</p>

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Progress towards Results	Risks	Mitigation
	Output 1.2: By 2011, consensus on legal and policy reforms necessary in the area of governance decentralization and devolution of financial powers to promote women's effective political participation in India identified	Quantitative: No. of selected issues taken up for policy advocacy for change in laws or policies in India or 6 (now 5) Indian states in favour of women.	Review of changed policies	<p>Consensus building achieved with national and state ownership of the programme in India.</p> <p>Andhra Pradesh: Branded as 'Samabhagam' (equal share); won the prestigious LAADLI award for best IEC material on gender equality</p> <p>Karnataka: branded as 'Sampoorna' (achieve 100 per cent gender equality and equal access for women in all areas)</p> <p>Rajasthan: Mahila Sabha prior to conduct of gram sabha meeting institutionalised by State government in programme districts</p> <p>Odisha: office order underway to formalise Mahila Sabhas</p>	<p>Assumptions: National and State governments demonstrate political commitment to providing full legislative and executive support to meet programme objectives.</p> <p>Risks: a) Policy environment in India and South Asia may change adversely affecting the programme</p> <p>b) Governments at national and state levels have adequate political commitment to provide full legislative and executive support to meet programme objectives</p>	<p>Map and ensure close collaboration and buy-in of critical policy-making institutions with the programme from the beginning. Formalise collaborations through series of MoUs and resource commitments from both sides.</p> <p>Ensure that major actors in research, government and civil society are in collaboration with programme from the beginning</p>

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Progress towards Results	Risks	Mitigation
				<p>Dialogue forums established between women PR leaders, women's activists, and women parliamentarians in 3 states.</p> <p>Advocacy initiatives on promoting women's political participation in local governance established.</p>		
	<p>Output 1.3: Coalitions of women in politics articulate a common agenda for gender responsive governance in India and South Asia by 2015</p>	<p>Quantitative: Percentage of issues on gender responsive governance raised by coalitions supported by the programme that have been discussed in National and State legislatures.</p>	<p>National and State Legislature records</p>	<p>Consensus for strengthening Women's Parliamentary Caucus mechanism at regional level achieved states.</p> <p>Consensus achieved among civil society groups on repeal of laws such as Section 40, Two-Child Norm that prevent women's political participation in different states.</p> <p>Advocacy for women's empowerment and political participation in politics undertaken.</p>	<p>Risks: Partners and stakeholders who are expected to participate in the programme not receptive to affirmative action for women.</p>	<p>Mitigation: Map and ensure close collaboration and buy-in of critical partners – ensure adequate time and resources for building common vision and commitments</p>

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Progress towards Results	Risks	Mitigation
				<p>EWRs share their experiences and learning from the field.</p> <p>Government of Bhutan on ownership of the programme, Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia achieved. Implementation under One UN Framework.</p> <p>Consensus building on Pakistan's ownership of the programme, Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia' provided.</p> <p>Support for developing Bangladesh's ownership of the programme, Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in</p>		

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Progress towards Results	Risks	Mitigation
				<p>India and South Asia provided.</p> <p>Support for developing Nepal's ownership of the programme, Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia provided.</p>		
<p>Outcome 2: Elected women representatives in local government have the knowledge and capacity to transform and implement policies, programmes, and resource allocation for gender sensitive governance in 6 states (now 5</p>	<p>Output 2.1: Competencies of women and men representatives in 6 states (now 5 states) in India enhanced on public speaking, understanding budgets, understanding how to link with the constituencies i.e. gram sabhas etc in gender responsive governance.</p>	<p>Quantitative: Percentage of trained elected women representatives who are able to correctly identify learning targets in the CD programme after 1 years of training.</p> <p>Qualitative: Evidence of change in competencies of EWRs.</p>	<p>Randomised capacity assessment surveys 1 year after CD is done</p>	<p>Capacities of 5 SIRDS and NIRD in designing and conducting trainings on gender and governance for EWRs established.</p> <p>Women's participation in panchayat elections as informed voters, polling agents, and proposers to promote women's political leadership achieved through civil society initiative.</p> <p>District administration strengthened to implement the programme at the</p>	<p>Risks: a) EWRs are not able to participate in CD programme due to systemic reasons.</p> <p>b) Retention of Capacity Development learnings among Elected representatives, key civil servants and officials at various levels is affected by frequent transfers/ turnover.</p>	<p>Build an enabling environment for EWRs by working with men and officials at various levels</p> <p>Ensure that capacity development programme have been designed rigorously, and are constantly updated through a sensitive feedback and quality enhancement programme. Out in refreshers</p>

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Progress towards Results	Risks	Mitigation
states) in India by 2015.				district, block, and village level. Advocacy on women's political leadership and governance in India undertaken.		
	Output 2.2: Capacities of civil society enhanced to engage with major political parties in India to ensure affirmative actions for party positions and election tickets for women by 2015.	Quantitative: Ratio of women to men candidates standing for political office on party tickets (segregated by National and State levels)	National and state election commissions	Strong focus on gender equality and decentralised governance included in the innovative course political skills development – engagement through a non – partisan approach	Risks: Political parties and their leaders do not cooperate in programme.	Design and support programme and collaborations with major political actors to ensure that buy-in of political parties is available. Develop close collaboration with forum of parliamentarians and legislators.
Outcome 3: Key capacity development and media institutions and structures in India and South Asia strengthened to mainstream gender	Output 3.1: Regional institutional system (consisting of Regional Centre of Excellence and satellite institutions) for demand-driven capacity development of EWRs in South	Qualitative: Regional Centre of Excellence set up and functioning with a budget to cover its costs for at least 10 years after 2015. Quantitative: No. of national and state institutions that have changed their curriculum to	Programme Annual Reports Published curricula of CD institutions	Regional Centre of Excellence (RCoE) on 'Promoting Women's Leadership and Governance in South Asia' launched by UN Under – Secretary General and UN Women Executive Director, Ms. Michelle Bachelet in October 2011. www.womenchangem	Assumption: National Governments (e.g. Gol) commit funds for sustainability of Centre of Excellence. Risks: a) Regional conflicts escalate and break down the institutional mechanism. b) UN and regional agencies do not provide	Develop partnership with SAARC and share learning through SAARC Gender Database. Develop Regional Parliamentary Caucus, so that cooperation for programme is maintained. Map and ensure close collaboration and buy-in of critical partners. Ensure that technically bets

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Progress towards Results	Risks	Mitigation
responsive governance into their policies and programme by 2015.	Asia on gender responsive governance in place and strengthened by 2015.	include content on gender responsive governance issues in their curriculum. Quantitative: No. of ICT pilots promoted by the programme that have been adopted by state governments to scale up training in GRG.	Govt. Records	akers.net Communication and media strategy underway Position paper on RCoE available.	support and cooperation as needed. c) ICT Innovations envisaged under the programme may not materialize within programme period due to technological or partnership reasons.	actors and involved in technology design and promotion. Learn from similar experiences (eg. e-Chaupal, etc.)
	Output 3.2: Capacities of government officials at state, districts, and block levels strengthened to monitor capacity development efforts aimed at women PR members.	Quantitative: a) No. of national and state institutions that have changed their curriculum to include content on gender responsive governance issues in their curriculum. b) % of trained government officials who are able to correctly identify learning targets in the CD	Published Curricula of National and State institutions Randomised Capacity assessment surveys	Decision makers sensitized to gender responsive governance issues at the PRI, administrative, and parliament levels in India. Capacity of the core staff of NIRD and 5 SIRDs enhanced on gender responsive governance. Message of women's empowerment conveyed to policy makers.	Risks: a) Retention of Capacity Development learnings among key civil servants and officials at various levels affected by frequent transfers. b) Regional Institutions, NIRD, SIRDs and other CD institutions are unwilling to change their curricula.	Ensure that capacity development programmes have been designed rigorously and are constantly updated through a sensitive feedback and quality enhancement programme. Ensure that programme is incorporated as part of a standard induction or training course for civil servants. Map and ensure close collaboration and buy-in of critical policy making institutions with the programme from the

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Progress towards Results	Risks	Mitigation
		programme after 1 year of training				beginning. Provide support for experimental pilots as modules are developed in various institutions.
	Output 3.3. Incentive mechanisms developed within national and state government systems to promote decision-making of women in local governance	Incentive mechanism to reward Govt. servants for promoting women's participation in local governance in place.	Gol		Govt. unwilling to institutionalise the award and other incentive mechanisms.	Map and ensure close collaboration and buy-in of critical partners.

Annex 9, Appendix 2: Project Timeline; Schedule of Annual Consultations; & Schedule of National Steering Committee Meetings

Table A2.1 Project Timeline: Key Events		
Date	Event	Notes
October – December 2009	Consultations by UN Women with national and state governments and NIRD and SIRD on project design	Minutes of meetings arising from consultation in annex 4 of project document (PD)
		Gol is not a signatory to the PD. UNIFEM as a regional office did not have a country program action plan
4 November 2009	Third Party CSA between the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women	UNIFEM as Executing Entity or under harmonised operational modalities an Implementing Partner for the Implementation of the Project. Agreement also has a framework agreement Refers to the programme document- but date is blank Refers to the Gol as having been duly informed of the contribution of MFA Annex 1 has agreed programme summary with logframe and budget
22 December 2009	Memorandum of Understanding between UN Women and The Hunger Project (THP)	MoU effective from date of signing for 3 years extendable to 5 years. MoU sets out scope of partnership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase women's influence in local governance; • Support formation and linkages with women's collectives and coalitions to hold politicians and political parties to account • Build a constituency of women to support elected women's representatives to put pressure on different political actors for stronger incorporation of women's needs in policies and plans.
23 December 2009	Memorandum of Understanding between UN Women and National Institute for Rural Development (NIRD)	MoU effective from date of signing for 3 years extendable to 5 years. MoU sets out scope of partnership:
31 December 2009	Expenditure statement for 2009 against project that had not as yet been approved	\$103,568 booked in 2009 towards program support costs i.e. before project approval
14 January 2010	PAC Meeting	UNIFEM internal project appraisal mtg. Minutes to come
1 February 2010	Letter from UNIFEM (UNWomen) HQ to UNIFEM Executive Director	Inception phase started in Feb 2010.
2 February 2010	UNIFEM Project Document (PD) and cover page submitted by Asia Pacific and Arab States Section to UNIFEM's Executive Director for signature	Project document budget and logframe supersede the cost-sharing agreement signed in November 2009. Although the project document refers to a three phase implementation over 5 years, the budget and agreement with UNWomen is for three

Table A2.1 Project Timeline: Key Events		
Date	Event	Notes
		years and covers phases 1 and 2. .
March 2010	Project Inception Phase starts	Expected duration 6 months – estimated completion date end August 2011
18 March 2011	MoU between The Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Gol and UNWomen	Non-financial MOU – Gol did not want direct financial assistance. Program described as 3 strategies with 7 specific deliverables. UNWomen and MoPR roles loosely defined. Roles of National and State Steering Committees included; silent on membership; no mention of budgets and allocations. No reference to the project document or budget. Project and financial management processes not in alignment with those laid down in the PD
15 April 2010	UNIFEM internal letters to: Ms Odegard, Sr. Advisor Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development; UNIFEM; Mr Vestrheim, Senior Adviser, Ministry of Local Government & Regional Development; and to Mr Aslak Brun, Minister Counsellor, RNE from Regional Programme Director, Anne Stenhammer inviting them to attend first steering committee meeting.	1 st Steering Committee Mtg scheduled for 26-28 April. Letter also mentions Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Ministry of Women and Child Development.
24-26 April 2010	First Annual Steering Meeting at Jaipur	Minutes of mtg – board constituted before Gol MOU signed Because of the delay in mobilising partners UNIFEM was agreed that UNIFEM could request 6 mth a no-cost extension.
April 2010	Contract with ISS	There are three contracts with ISS
July 2010	Contract with THP	However, THP only started in October 2010
November 2010	MOU with NIRD	Came to an end September 2012
December 2010	Agreement with ICRW	Ended in June 2012
22 June 2011	Rajasthan PCA	Although a template has been used, there are minor variations in the accountability arrangements across the five PCAs
15 July 2011	Orissa PCA	
9 August 2011	Madhya Pradesh PCA	
9 August 2011	Andhra Pradesh PCA	
14 September 2011	Karnataka PCA	
September 2011	Inception phase extended to February 2012	Due to delays in securing PCAs with states.
March 2011	Phase 2 Implementation begins	Scheduled completion Dec 2012. In principle no-cost extension given by Norwegian Embassy at Annual Consultation in May 2012 and subject to the fulfilment of a few conditions including completion of a financial audit and submission of the audit report to the Embassy - need to see the minutes

Table A2.2: Schedule of Annual Consultations between the Embassy and UN Women	
Date	Event
26- 28 April 2010	Annual Consultation, Jaipur
30 March 2011	Annual Consultation, UN Women, Delhi
13 October 2011	Extraordinary Annual Consultation, Sanchi Madhya Pradesh
13 February 2011	Supplementary Extraordinary Annual Consultation, Delhi
14 May 2012	Annual Consultation, Delhi
27 June 2012	Extraordinary Annual Consultation
3 August 2012	Special Meeting with Donor

Table A 2.3: Tracking NPSCs and ACs	
National Steering Project Committee Meetings (NPSCs)	Annual Consultations (ACs)
26 April 2010 (before MoU signed)	26 -28 April 2010 (Annual Consultation)
14 December 2010 (before MoU signed)	
18 March 2011 (MOU Signed)	30 March 2011 (Annual Consultation)
16 August 2011	
04 October 2011	13 October 2011 (Extraordinary mtg.)
23 March 2012	13 February 2012 (supplementary mtg.)
	14 May 2012 (Annual Consultation)
	27 June 2012
	3 August 2012
08 November 2012	

Annex 9, Appendix 3: Highlights of AC meetings on AWP&Bs and Financial Reports		
Date	Decision	Comments and supporting notes
26-28 April 2010	No discussion on AWP&Bs	
30 March 2011	Progress and Expenditure 2010 approved	Embassy noted that signed project document dated 2 February to be final reference document for program
	AWP&B for 2011 submitted and approved	Embassy wished to relook at budget estimates in August 2011 and to approve budget for 1 st quarter 2012
30 October 2011	AWP&B to March 2012 approved	
	Narrative part of progress report approved. Table in progress report not approved Proposed increase in 2011 budget approved	Narrative only approved; Embassy required the table of indicators to comply with those in project document of February 2010
13 February 2012	2011 Narrative/table progress report not approved. Last quarter 2011 expenditure report approved	Embassy requested a report based on results and for resubmission and approval in April annual consultation Clarification sought on underutilisation of funds; non-alignment with program document of some activities and support costs charges
14 May 2012	All action taken reports were approved (four since first AC) 2011 Expenditure statement not approved. AWP&B for 2012 not approved	Underspend a serious concern Future reports should show comprehensive risk analysis based on project document Narrative report to be results oriented and not activity oriented
27 June 2012	Financial Statement for 2011 not approved AWP&B for 2013 not approved	Low delivery; significant change to reporting; major deviation between budget lines; proportion of resources on non-program activities of concern Changes in UN Women financial system delayed rollout of funds to State governments Proposal for funds for second half 2012 would be approved after approval of 2011 accounts
28 June 2012	Financial report approved on 28 June contingent on final approval of the same by the audit report	
3 August 2012	No discussion on AWP&Bs or financial statements	

Annex 9, Appendix 4: Deliverables listed in the MoU between MoPR and UN Women

1. Involvement of EWRs and women in the Gram Sabha, Ward Sabha and Gram Panchayat meetings will increase
2. Issues that concern women most like livelihood, education, gender, health, drinking water and sanitation, planning and budget will be taken up in Gram Sabha, ward Sabha and Gram Panchayat
3. At least 100 Gram Sabha/Ward Sabha meetings will be attended by motivators each yaer in each project implementing district to achieve the objectives
4. Discussion will be encouraged on problems like trafficking of women and children, violence against women, special problems of women in disturbed areas in Gram Sabha/Ward Sabha meetings and the collective bargaining position will be used for amelioration of the problem.
5. There will be increase in actual participation of EWRs in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and reduction in proxy role of male relations of EWRs in PRIs
6. The Program will move on from pilot stage to universal stage by generating replicable models which will be done in close collaboration with implementing States and district administration
7. A baseline survey for the project will be carried out by the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW). Later this report will be used for the concurrent monitoring and evaluation of the program

Annex 9, Appendix 5: List of Contracts and PCAs (Revised list received 9/1/2012)

Name of Suppliers		Contract start date	Contract end date	Amount of contract		Amount disburse till 10 Nov 2012		Amount disburse after 10 Nov 2012		Amount to be disbursed		Contract Status
				INR	USD	INR	USD	INR	USD	INR	USD	
Institute of Social Sciences	Contract: Women's Empowerment day celebrations	Apr-10	May-10	914,850	20,129	914,850	20,129	-	-	-	-	Closed
Institute of Social Sciences	Contract	Apr-11	Jun-11	1,300,000	29,076	1,262,621	28,240	-	-	37,379	836	Closed
Institute of Social Sciences	Contract	Apr-12	Jul-12	3,000,280	59,177	2,400,224	47,342	-	-	600,056	11,835	Open
Ideosync	Contract: program communications strategy	Jul-12	Jun-13	7,319,500	131,693	1,463,900	26,339	5,855,600	106,815	-	1,461	Open
Institute of Social Studies Trust	Contract: Conference	Feb-12	May-12	269,500	5,433	215,600	4,347	-	-	53,900	1,087	Closed
The Hunger Project	MOU Training	Dec-09	Dec-12	91,025,443	1,951,242	67,936,212	1,456,296	10,617,126	197,712	12,472,105	297,234	Open
Anhad		Jul-10	Sep-10	1,300,000	28,090	1,300,000	28,090	-	-	-	-	Closed
Via Interactive Technologies Pvt Ltd		Nov-10	Nov-10	278,000	6,240	263,250	5,909	-	-	14,750	331	Closed
Sambodhi Research Management Institute		May-12	May-12	204,000	3,891	204,000	3,891	-	-	-	-	Closed
NIBR	Research Contract	Dec-11	Dec-12	-	350,000	-	-	-	175,000	-	175,000	Open
LBSNAA	PCA Training	Apr-11	Dec-12	15,534,000	347,439	12,912,600	288,808	2,621,400	47,818	-	10,813	Open

Annex 9, Appendix 5: List of Contracts and PCAs (Revised list received 9/1/2012)

Name of Suppliers		Contract start date	Contract end date	Amount of contract		Amount disburse till 10 Nov 2012		Amount disburse after 10 Nov 2012		Amount to be disbursed		Contract Status
NIRD	PCA Training	Nov-10	4 No cost ext. 16/11/11 to • 31/3/12, • 30/6/12 • 31/08/12 • 31/10/12	15,223,375	333,115	12,178,700	266,492	-	-	3,044,675	66,623	Open
IIM Bangalore	PCA Training	Jul-12	Oct-12	5,319,965	93,661	4,255,972	74,929	-	-	1,063,993	18,732	Open
ICRW	Research Contract	Dec-10	Jun-12	7,829,964	171,334	5,992,640	131,130	1,836,317	33,497	1,007	6,707	Closed
Royal University of Bhutan		Aug-12	Jun-13	1,643,100	29,563	358,000	6,441	-	-	1,285,100	23,122	Open
Alliance Web Solution	Contract RCOE	Sep-12	Dec-12	800,000	14,381	640,000	11,505	-	-	160,000	2,876	Open
One World Foundation	Contract RCOE	Sep-12	Dec-12	690,000	12,403	138,000	2,481	414,000	7,552	138,000	2,371	Open
Mobile Harvest	Contract RCOE	Sep-12	Jun-13	1,260,000	22,650	1,008,000	18,120	-	-	252,000	4,530	Open
Indira Gandhi Panchyati Raj & Gramin Vikas Sansthan		Sep-12	Dec-12	2,750,000	49,434	550,000	9,887	-	-	2,200,000	39,547	Open
NRMC	Contract M & E	Oct-11	Dec-12	9,552,381	193,760	4,560,452	92,504	-	-	4,991,929	101,256	Open
Lochan & Co	Contract Audit	May-12	Aug-12	413,502	7,543	-	-	413,502	7,543	-	-	Closed
Govt of Madhya Pradesh	PCA	Aug-11	Dec-12	14,393,000	289,016	8,635,800	173,410	-	-	5,757,200	115,606	Open
Govt of Rajasthan	PCA	May-11	Dec-12	20,929,800	402,884	12,557,880	241,730	-	-	8,371,920	161,153	Open
Govt of Andhra Pradesh	PCA	Aug-11	Dec-12	18,983,250	381,190	11,389,950	228,714	-	-	7,593,300	152,476	Open

Annex 9, Appendix 5: List of Contracts and PCAs (Revised list received 9/1/2012)

Name of Suppliers		Contract start date	Contract end date	Amount of contract		Amount disburse till 10 Nov 2012		Amount disburse after 10 Nov 2012		Amount to be disbursed		Contract Status
Govt of Orrissa	PCA	Jul-11	Dec-12	13,408,400	269,245	8,045,040	161,547	5,363,360	97,836	-	9,862	Open
Government of Karnataka	PCA	Sep-11	Dec-11	13,521,800	260,285	8,113,080	156,171	-	-	5,408,720	104,114	Open
Sub total for states							1,602,619					
Suryansh Hotel		Jun-12	Jun-12	95,562	1,720	-	-			95,562	1,720	
Trident Hotel		Jun-12	Jun-12	283,153	5,343	283,153	5,343			-	-	Closed
Shangri-La New Delhi		May-12	May-12	556,114	9,791	556,114	9,791	-	-	1	0	Closed
Hotel Queen Road		Nov-10	Nov-10	569,350	12,780	569,350	12,628			-	152	Closed
Four points, Vizag		Sep-11	Oct-11	978,665	19,506	978,665	19,506			-	-	Closed
The Park Hotel		Jul-12	Jul-12	358,591	6,332	358,591	6,332			-	-	Closed
Red Fox Hotel		Sep-12	Oct-12	827,165	15,089	-	-	827,165	15,089	-	-	Closed
Marriott Hotel, Jaipur		Sep-12	Oct-12	1,639,835	30,537	-	-	1,639,835	30,537	-	-	Closed
Taj Group of Hotels		Oct-12	Oct-12	593,360	11,050	-	-	593,360	11,050	-	-	Closed
Total				253,765,905	5,575,021	70,042,643	3,538,049	30,181,665	730,448	53,541,597	1,306,524	
Other small agreements					385,224							

Annex 9, Appendix 6: India - Top Ten Financing Agreements & MoPR non-financing agreement links with project logframe				
Component	Type of Agreement; Duration and Dates	Agreement Value \$	Financial and Progress Reporting and Monitoring Requirements	Objectives/expected results stated in agreement
MoPR	Duration: open ended (3 months' notice by either party); start date March 2011	No value	Non-financing MoU; Joint co-chair with Nn Women; National Project Steering Committee (NPSC) meeting at least every 4 months Quarterly review of the implementation of the project in the states Review and confirm budget and annual work plans from districts/states Quarterly review of implementation status of the program in the districts; Review grant utilisation and consolidated audit reports prepared by the Program Unit in UN Women	Not linked to project logframe. MoU sets out objectives, program strategies and specific deliverables - not aligned to program logframe Requirements for a ICRW baseline survey to concurrently monitor and evaluate the program Requirement for NIRD as core agency for research and training in cooperation with resource institutions at Regional and State level. Requirements to move from pilot stage to universal stage by generating replicable models done in collaboration with States and Districts
The Hunger Project (THP)	MoU and PCA: 30 months – July 2010 – December 2012	1,951,242	Financing and reporting plan in 8 instalments Work Plan and Budgets for two Phases; Quarterly Reports and accompanying Financial Statements. Monitoring to be undertaken by THP. Impact assessment to be conducted by UN Women	Not linked to project logframe. T.oR provides scope of work. Agreement does not refer to ToR and superseded by project proposal, THP logframe and budgets for phases 1 and 2. THP reports against own logframe
5 State Governments	PCAs within overarching framework MoU with MoPR. Duration;20-23months PCA signed: Rajasthan: May 2011; Karnataka, MP and Orissa: July 2011; AP:	1,602,619 AP: 381,190 Karnataka: 260,285 MP: 289,016 Orissa; 269,245 Rajasthan 402,884	State Project Steering Committee (SPSC) review of implementation status in the districts at least quarterly based on Annual Work Plan and MOU with MoPR Review grant utilised and consolidated audit reports from district	Not linked to logframe. There are no results/outputs in PCAs; However reference in PCAs to MoU with MPRI which has the objective, strategy and results expected

Annex 9, Appendix 6: India - Top Ten Financing Agreements & MoPR non-financing agreement links with project logframe				
Component	Type of Agreement; Duration and Dates	Agreement Value \$	Financial and Progress Reporting and Monitoring Requirements	Objectives/expected results stated in agreement
	August 2011 PCA Termination: March 2013		implementation Unit DPU submits quarterly financial statements in UN format and submit to UN Women and State Government Final financial statement and narrative report within two months of project closure Certified annual financial statement submitted by State government to UN Women Subject to audit at least once under established UN Women audit requirements and by UN Women appointed auditors	
NIBR	Contract: Duration 13 months December 2011 – December 2012	350,000	Six monthly narrative and financial reports Quarterly work plans and budgets Audited financial statement for the expenditure	TOR makes reference to the project logframe Letter of 12 December 2011, TORs and proposal form part of contract Letter contains number of days by named expert . Sets out timeline 22 activities over four quarters Four deliverables defined in letter
LBSNAA	PCA: 21 months (15 April 2011 – 31 December 2012)	347,439	A five stage financial and narrative reporting system linked to release of funds based on budgets submissions for year one and year two.	Reference is made to objectives in program document. No specific objectives or results defined
NIRD	Duration:12 months extended to 22 months; five contract extensions November 2010 – October 2012 MoU and PCA	326,332	To stage payment and quarterly financial and narrative reporting. Payment 80% on signing of agreement and balance 0n 70% expenditure and satisfactory physical and financial	Linked to Project Logframe Deliverables set out in PCA attachment under 'Description of Services': two results areas and two outputs.

Annex 9, Appendix 6: India - Top Ten Financing Agreements & MoPR non-financing agreement links with project logframe				
Component	Type of Agreement; Duration and Dates	Agreement Value \$	Financial and Progress Reporting and Monitoring Requirements	Objectives/expected results stated in agreement
	supported by Description of Services, 9 page procedures for payment request,;		progress	In addition, 12 services identified. However, most not covered by results and outputs or the budget
NRMC	Contract:	193,760	4 Stage payment linked to specific milestones; signed contract; evaluation indicators and final questionnaire; final baseline report; final physical and financial reports	ToRs set out deliverables in line with project document; although ToRs cover region, implementation is only for India.
ICRW	Contract: 19 months, December 2010 – June 2012	171,334	3 Stage payment: on signing of contract; on receipt of financial and narrative report June 2010; and final audited financial and narrative report	Not linked to project logframe. Seven sets of deliverables with dates set out in the contract. ToR and ICRW proposal form part of contract
Ideosync	Contract: 12 months; July 2012 – June 2013	128,264	3 stage payment: signing of contract; inception report and financial statement; final physical and financial statement	Five time bound deliverables in contract. ToR, technical proposal form part of contract
ISS	Contract, ToRs, Proposal	108,382	3 Stage payment: signing of agreement ;list of participants; and receipt of final audited financial and narrative reports	Clear date-wise list of deliverables.
IIM Bangalore	PCA: 4 months (12 July 2012 – 31 October 2012)	93,661	An initial work plan and interim narrative report. Quarterly financial reporting using UN Women format. Two-stage release of funds based on financial and narrative reports.	Not linked to project logframe. Only reference to objectives in program document; there are no specific objectives, or results defined in the PCA

Annex 9, Appendix 7: DPO/Motivator related outreach in States at at 23 November 2012

State	Districts	No. of Blocks/ Mandals	Blocks/ Mandals Covered	Blocks/ Mandal Not Covered	Spl. Gram Sabhas Held	Ward/ Palli Sabhas Held	Mahila Sabhas Held
Andhra Pradesh	Mahabubnagar	64	13	51	35	740	140
	Srikakulam	38	38	0	27	414	54
	Vizianagaram	34	12	22	37	376	36
Karnataka	Dharwad	5	5	0	0	0	0
	Mysore	7	7	0	0	0	0
	Uttar Kannad						
Madhya Pradesh	Jhabua	6	6	0	60	270	210
	Sagar	11	3	8	0	0	0
	Sehore	5	5	0	82	306	212
Odisha	Bhadrak	7	7	0	0	0	0
	Dhenkanal	8	8	0	50	263	803
	Gajapati	7	7	0	50	495	50
	Sambalpur	9	9	0	0	0	0
Rajasthan	Alwar	14	5	9	27	0	0
	Dungarpur	5	4	1	83	683	42
	Tonk	5	2	3	23	0	0
TOTAL		225	131	94	474	3547	1547

Note: Roll out of the programme in Uttar Kannad is yet to start, as the DPO recruited did not join. The process of recruiting a new DPO has been initiated

Annex 9, Appendix 8: Summary analysis of purpose of UN Women monitoring missions					
Name	Project sites	Other sites	Dates	Days	Purpose
D Dutta	Paro & Thimphu		27 Feb. - 6 March 2012	2	Regional Consultation on GRGI and Regional Centre of Excellence: Planning meeting between UN Women, UN System in Bhutan, RUB, NCWC, NIBR regarding second phase of research in Bhutan on women's political leadership and governance (04-06 March 2012)
D Dutta		Bangalore	18 - 23 July 2012	6	To attend the District Programme Officers Review under the Programme 'Promoting Women's Political Leadership - 18-20 July 2012
D Dutta	Paro		15 - 19 Sept 2012	5	Monitoring of data collection for RUB-NIBR research capacity building assignment
D Dutta		Jaipur	1 - 6 Oct 2012	6	Preparation for and hosting of Leadership Summit, Dialogue for Change: Women Transform Politics, Policy and Livelihoods in light of UN Women Executive Director, Ms Michelle Bachelet's visit to India
D Dutta	Visakhapatnam		18 - 19 Oct 2012	2	To witness Gram Sabha meeting
D Dutta		Visakhapatnam	28 Sep. to 1 Oct. 2012	4	To attend the Stakeholder Consultative Workshop of the GOI-UN Women programme, 'Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia' in Visakhapatnam.
D Dutta	Dungarpur		19- 20 Dec 2012	2	To monitor Satellite Communication training for Motivators under GOI-UN Women programme, 'Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia'.
Rachna Gahilote Bisht	Bodh Gaya		4 - 6 January 2011	3	The objective of the mission was to attend the SWEEP Campaign workshop organized by our partner agency The Hunger Project in Bihar. The key issues taken up at the workshop were as follows:
D Dutta		Colombo	19 - 24 Feb 2011	6	Participation in UNESCO Forum of Ministers in Charge of Social Development from South Asia, Third Ministerial Meeting and Workshop on Social Protection Policies in South Asia
J Borgoyary	Hyderabad		24 - 26 February	3	Preparation of Annual Work Plan and Log frame for NIRD.

			2011		
D Dutta	Paro & Thimphu		28 Feb - 3 March 2011	4	Discussion and meetings with UNDP Bhutan, UN RC, and possible partners for rolling out the Research component of the Gender Responsive Governance programme in Bhutan from April 2011
D Dutta	Tonk and Alwar		8-9 March 2011		To coordinate the photo essay documentation initiative for the UN Women donor outreach publication to cover the gender Responsive Governance Programme.
D Dutta	Jaipur		30-May-11	1	To facilitate as well as oversee ICRW's preparation for in-depth field study on barriers or enablers to women's participation in local politics in Alwar district in Rajasthan for the Governance programme.
D Dutta		Mussorie	13- 15 June 2011	3	To observe UN Women sponsored Workshop on developing Gender Based Violence Training Manual by the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA)
D Dutta	Bhubaneswar		14-16 July 2011	3	To attend training of District Project Officers for the GRG programme in SIRD, Bhubaneswar
Suraj Kumar	Bhubaneswar		15 - 16 July 2011	2	Meetings with Govt. Of Odisha and training workshop for District Project Officers
Suraj Kumar	Jaipur		18 - 19 July 2011	2	Meetings with Govt. of Rajasthan re roll-out of Governance Programme and UN agencies working on decentralisation and governance in Rajasthan under the UN Agencies' MOU.
D Dutta	Mysore		21-25 September 2011	5	To monitor ICRW's training of surveyors and researchers for quantitative and qualitative in-depth study in Mysore district

Annex 9, Appendix 9: Example of a monthly progress report from a District Project Officer

**Monthly Progress Report
Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance
MoPR, GoI – UN Women**

Name of the District Project Officer: Anshul Saxena

Name of the State : Madhya Pradesh

Name of the District : Jhabua

Period Coverer: November, 2011.

Total No. of Villages covered: 08

Block : Jhabua

Number of Meetings Conducted =08

**Activities and Participation
Jhabua Block**

Gram Panchayat	Names of Villages in the respective Panchayat	Total Population	Total Participants		Profile of Participants		
			Female	Male	ST	OBC	Gen
Village Panchayat Dungralalu	Village Panchayat Dungralalu	1837	20	20	38	1	1
Village Panchayat Masuriya	Village Panchayat Masuriya	2135	19	22	40	1	
Village Panchayat Hadmatiya	Village Panchayat Hadmatiya	1033	15	18	32	1	
Village Panchayat Kushalpura	Village Panchayat Kushalpura	1228	19	21	37	2	1
Village Panchayat Amlifaliya	Village Panchayat Amlifaliya	2099	20	23	40	2	1
Village Panchayat Mandlibadi	Village Panchayat Mandlibadi	1580	17	22	38		1
Village Panchayat Antervelia	Village Panchayat Antervelia	2659	20	24	42	2	

Village Panchayat Devjhiri	Village Panchayat Devjhiri	1686	18	21	36	2	1

1. Meeting/*Gram Sabhas* Agenda

Special meeting : Dungralalu

Date: 8th November, 01.00 p.m.

Introduction: The meeting was attended by Sarpanch Mrs. Karma Misru , Secretary Mr. Ragu Amliyar, Panchs and the Villagers. The meeting was convened by the Sarpanch after that the Secretary explained about the Project and about the importance of Gram Sabhas.

Discussions

- The Importance of Gram Sabha were explained to the participants.
- The Provisions of MNREGA were discussed and it was mentioned that the Job cards are made free of cost under the MNREGA and the Act provides provision of 100 days employment. In case if the Govt fails to provide employment with in the prescribed period, then the person is entitled to get compensation .
- The concept of “Bride price” is very common in Jhabua. It was mentioned that such practices are not fruitful for the society and should be abolished.
- Jhabua being the highly Tribal populated district, the level of literacy is very low in the district. So, the people are very unaware about the various Govt Schemes and therefore they hardly get benefitted by the Govt. Schemes.
- It was said that free meal is provided to the children under the mid day meal scheme and a roster of mothers is maintained in every aaganwadi centre and the other(whose name is listed in the roster for that day), is entitled to get free food for the day , so as to monitor the quality of the food.
- The other Schemes of the Govt. like Ladli Laxmi Yojna , Janani Suraksha Yojana etc. were discussed.

Special meeting: Masuriya.

Date: 9th November, 01.00 p.m.

Introduction: The meeting was attended by the Sarpanch Mrs. Mana Dhuma, Secretary Narvar Bhabhor and the villagers. The meeting was convened by the Secretary. DPO- UN Women explained about the UN Women’s Project and its importance. The Panchayat Secretary said that condition of women in the district is really very pathetic and efforts needs to be done in this area.

Discussion

- It was mentioned that the literacy rate of the village is very low. People hardly show interest in educating their children. It was advised to the villagers to send the children to schools. It was also suggested that parents should show enthusiasm in sending the girls for education. It was further mentioned that Govt provides Scholarships to the students of SC and ST category. In addition, Govt. provides free books and stationary to the students of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes for higher education.

- The Secretary explained people about the SJSY Scheme and said that Govt provides loan under the Scheme to the SHG members. He advised female participants to form SHG and to get benefitted by the Scheme.
- The Issue of Toilets was discussed in the Meeting. It was suggested to the people to use the toilets instead of going outside. It gives feeling of embarrassment to the women while going outside. The Procedure of applying for Toilets under the Total Sanitation Campaign was discussed.
- The other Schemes of the Govt. like Ladli Laxmi Yojna , Janani Suraksha Yojana etc. were discussed.

Special meeting : Village:- Hadmatiya

Date: 11th November, 01.00 p.m.

The meeting was attended by the Sarpanch Mrs. Naku Samra, Secretary Mr. Rajesh Chawda and the Villagers.

Discussion

- It was mentioned that the Govt provides funds for building houses on the joint name of husband and wife, under the Indira Awas Yojana.
- The Secretary also explained about the MNREGA and about the procedure of getting the Job Card and employment under the Act.
- The Schemes of Women and Child Development including Ladli Laxmi Yojana, Janani Suraksha Yojana were discussed. It was said that The Govt provides fixed amount of money under the Ladli Lakshmi Yojna. This Scheme is available for the girls taking birth after 01/01/2006. When girl enters in class sixth, an amount of 2000 is provided to the girl, after which amount of rupees 4000 and 7500 are provided while the girl take admission in the ninth and eleventh standard of school. After which an amount of rupees 200 per month is provided to the girl while studying in eleventh and twelfths standard. Finally after passing 12 standard of school a lumpsum amount is transferred to the girl . The overall amount is more than one lac rupees.
- It was further mentioned that Govt. provides an amount of 1400 rupees for delivery in govt or authorised hospitals, in the Janani Suraksha Yojana.
- Violence against women is an offence. It was also mentioned that the project Officer of the Women and Child Development department, is designated as the Protection Officer for Domestic Violence Cell. Any women who suffers from Domestic Violence may lodge a complaint to the Protection Officer.

Special meeting : Kushalpura

Date: 15th November, 01.00 p.m.

Introduction: The meeting was attended by Sarpanch Mrs. Rajli bai Damor, Secretary Mr. Kailash Bhuria Panchs and the villagers. The meeting was convened by the Secretary Mr. Kailash Bhuria. DPO- Un women explained about the project

Discussion

- The Secretary explained about the Govt Schemes including Total Sanitation Campaign, MNREGA, SJSY etc. He advised people to consult him for getting benefit under any of the Govt. Schemes of Panchayat department.
- They were advised to take optimum benefit of the Govt. Schemes.

- It was further mentioned that the literacy rate of village is very low. People hardly shows interest in sending their children to schools for getting education. It was advised in the meeting to send the Children specially girls to the schools for getting education.

Special meeting :Amlifaliya

Date: 18th October, 01.00 p.m.

Introduction: The meeting was attended by Sarpanch Mrs. Jhumli Wakhla, Secretary Mr. Chatar singh Parmar Sarpanch and the villagers. The meeting was convened by Sarpanch after that the Secretary explained the participants about the Project and about the importance of Gram Sabha.

Discussion

- The Secretary explained people about the concept and role of SHGs and mentioned that Govt provides loans to the SHG members for starting Income Generation activity. He explained about the SJSY scheme of Govt.
- The Secretary further explained about the MNREGA and asked people to get the job cards to claim for employment under the Scheme. He also explained about the Procedure for doing this.
- The various schemes of the Women and Children Development department , including the ladli lakshmi Yojana, Janani Suraksha Yojana etc were discussed.
- The Secretary explained about the Indira Awas Yojna and said that Govt provides funds for building houses under the scheme.

Special meeting : Mandlibadi

Date: 26th November, 01.00 p.m.

Introduction: The meeting was attended by Sarpanch Mrs Shatura singh, Panchs and the villagers.

The meeting was convened by Sarpanch Mrs. Shatura singh, DPO UN Women explained about the Project and about the importance of Gram Sabhas.

Discussion

- Govt. Schemes related to women, including ladli laxmi Yojana, janani Suraskha Yojna ect were discussed.
- The provisions of Indira Awas Yojana were discussed and it was said that this scheme gives ownership to women.
- The Process of enrolment under the MNREGA, was discussed.
- Many of the People don't have the BPL card, despite of the fact that they are the most poor people of the village and are hardly able to attain two meals a day for the family members. The procedure of getting BPL cards were explained to them.
- The Schemes of the Women and Child Development department were discussed in the meeting.

Special meeting : Antervelia

Date: 28th November, 01.00 p.m.

Introduction: The meeting was attended by Sarpanch Mrs Ditli Bhuria, Secretary Narvar Bhuria, Panchs and the Villagers. The meeting was convened by the Secretary, he further explained about the Project and about the importance of Gram Sabhas.

Discussion

- The Schemes of the Panchayat Department including MNREGA, SJSY, MPRLP were discussed in the meeting.
- Along with, the Schemes of the Women and Child Development including the Janani Suraksha Yojana, Ladli Laxmi Yojana, Beti Bachao Abhiyaan were discussed in the meeting.
- The participants were adviced to send girls in School for getting education.

Special meeting : Devjhiri

Introduction: The meeting was attended by the Sarpanch Mrs Shanti Manna Damor , Secretary Mr. Ramesh mahodiya and the villagers.The meeting was convened by the Sarpanch after that the Secretary explained about the Project and the various Schemes of Govt.

Discussions

- The Issue of lack of education among girls was discussed and the participants were encouraged to send their girl child for getting education.
- The Schemes of the Women and Child Department including the Janani Suraksha Yojana, ladli Laxmi Yojana, Beti bachao Abhiyan etc were discussed .
- The Secretary explained about the Indira awas Yojana and said that it is a very good scheme which provides ownership to the women.
- The Secretary explained about the other Schemes of the Panchayat Department and about the Procedure of getting benefitted under the Schemes.
- Further the SJSY scheme was discussed and it was said that Govt provides loans to the women under the SGSY scheme for starting some Income generation activity.
- The importance of Toilets were discussed and the participants were requested to use the Toilets instead of going outside.
- The Issue of MNREGA was also discussed and the Secretary explained the procedure of getting the Job Card .

2. Follow-up actions

Since the meetings were conducted with an objective to aware the people about the Project , the Schemes of Govt and about the roles and responsibilities of EWR. Discussions on various issues were done in these meetings.

So no issue remained left for follow up.

3. Facilitators and Barriers

Please list environmental factors that act as facilitators in the programme implementation. Examples of facilitators includes: high education levels among the participants, availability of training materials in local language and so on.

A. Facilitators (List top facilitators for your work. Of the villages that you have visited in the past month, please check the ones where the facilitator is applicable.)

Facilitator	
1	Government Officials:
2	Panchayat Secretary

B. Obstacles/Challenges (List top three obstacles to your work. Of the villages that you have visited in the past month, please check the ones where the obstacle is applicable.)

Facilitator	
1	Due to high rate of Migration, most of the working males are migrated in the near by States, due to which the percentage of participation is quite less.
2	Women are hardly permitted to participate in any Public meeting or any other Public function. They are not even allowed to talk to any Govt officials . This is the only reason for less participation of women in the meetings.
3	People are very less aware about the schemes of Govt.

C. Steps taken to overcome challenges

Village 1:
Informed the villagers about the various Schemes of Govt and about the appropriate procedure of getting benefitted by the Schemes.

4. Progress on Focus Areas

A.	No of elected female representatives (Sarpanch) (8 Panchayat)	8
B.	No. of elected female representatives who report that they understand their roles and responsibilities	25 %
C.	To the best of your knowledge and understand, if the female elected representative performing her role or is her role being performed by a male relative?	In almost every case the role is performed by the husbands only.

5. Financial Progress (not planned in October 2011)

	Activity	Planned expenditure	Reported expenditure	Difference between planned and reported expenditure	Reason for difference between planned and reported expenditure
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

6. Any other remarks pertaining to the following:

A. Interaction with government officials

Interacted with the Officials of the Panchayat at District, Block and Village level.

B. Working in the villages

Since Jhabua district is highly tribal populated district. The major problems are low literacy, Poverty and Migration. But above it, the major challenge is to encourage women to participate in the public meetings, because women here are hardly permitted to participate in any public meetings etc.

C. Suggestions for UN Women

Poverty is a major Problem in Jhabua , which in turn results in high rate of Migration. If some kind of activity for Income Generation is initiated for the people. That would help the people in getting some income for sustaining their family and will also help them in fulfilling basic needs and thereby improving their living standards of their family.



Annex 9, Appendix 10: UN WOMEN, South Asia Sub Regional Office
Monitoring Visit Report Format

1. Name : Diya Dutta	2. Title : Research Analyst
3. Itinerary : 18 October 2012: Delhi-Visakhapatnam 19 October 2012: Visakhapatnam-Rankini Gram Panchayat, Srikakulam District-Visakhapatnam airport-Delhi	4. Project / Programme No.: 00072984
5. Name of the Project / Programme: 'Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia'	
6. Implementing partner of the Project / Programme (if any): State Government of Andhra Pradesh and the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India	
7. Places visited : Visakhapatnam, Srikakulam district town and Rankini Gram Panchayat	
8. Purpose of visit: To witness Gram Sabha meeting	
9. Persons/Agency met : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Saurabh Gaur, District Collector, Srikakulam District • Mr. Sunil Rajkumar, Project Officer, ITDA • Mr. T. Kailash Gireswar, CEO-ZPP, Srikakulam District • Mr. Rajini Kanth, Project Director, DRDA • Mr. Kalyan Chakravarthy, Project Director, DWMA/NREGS • Mr. Swaminathan, Special Officer, Pathatpatnam mandal • Mr. Lova Raju, Mandal Parishad Development Officer • Mr. Chiranjeevulu, Extension Officer, PR&RD • Mr. K. Trinadha Rao, Special Officer, Rankini GP • Mr. T. Dilleshwara Rao, Panchayat Secretary, Rankini GP • S. Sudhasagar, Tahasildar, Pathapatnam Mandal • Mrs. Manorama, Project Officer, ICDS 	
10. Actual Observations and Results <p>A special gram sabha was organized in the Rankini Gram Panchayat in Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh under the GOI-UN Women programme, 'Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia'. The previous Gram Sabha for this Gram Panchayat was held on 16 April 2012. A notice to the villagers, intimating about the upcoming Gram Sabha was made 7 days prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The agenda for the 19 October 2012 Gram Sabha was finalized based on issues raised at the ward and mahila sabhas. Women and the Panchayat Secretary took an active role in finalizing the gram sabha agenda. First ward and mahila sabhas were conducted and the issues raised in those sabhas were documented. Information about the issues (Agenda) documented were given to the government functionaries of various departments present in the mandal. Gram Sabha was held with an advance notice of at least 7 days to the villagers. Issues were discussed point by point and authorities gave clarification for each topic/issue raised in the Gram Sabha. Minutes of the meeting was written which will be read out in future ward and mahila sabhas as follow up to the issues raised. However the minutes were not put up in the GP notice Board.</p> <p>Issues raised at 19 October 2012 Gram Sabha included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of Library facilities-- supplying newspapers, books, journals for the youth and college students present in the GP 	

- Provision of Health Sub-Centre in the GP.
- Requirement of ISLs
- Abolition of Liquor sale in the GP.
- Construction of a Community Hall to hold public meetings such as Gram Sabha.

I was also informed that under the GOI-UN Women programme, many steps were taken by women through the motivation of the Motivator in ward and mahila sabhas. These initiatives include:

- In this GP, selling of liquor was banned.
- The GP has adopted a social norm of not washing clothes near to an open well.
- All pregnant women shall be taken to hospital for safe delivery.

11. Challenges

Some challenges were observed with regard to effective participation of women in Gram Sabha meetings:

- Earlier information was not passed to women regarding Gram Sabha. But in the GOI-UN Women special Gram sabhas, it is ensured that 7 days advance notice is given, information is passed through tom-tom, SHGs, NREGS field assistant, etc.
- Earlier women's participation was less in the Gram sabhas. But now with the help and presence of motivator in the Gram Panchayat, women have been motivated to come forward and participate in the Sabhas held as there is some sort of assurance that issues told by women in ward and mahila sabhas will be discussed in the Gram Sabha.

12. Follow up of the visit

S N	Follow up Actions to be taken	Responsible person	Time frame
1)	Villagers demanded a library for better information dissemination	District Administration – The District Collector by seeing the awareness of the women present in the Gram Sabha- sanctioned a library and made this village as model village for construction of ISLs.	Already done
2)	Villagers demanded the construction of a Community Hall to hold public meetings such as Gram Sabhas	District Administration	To be followed up by DPO, UN Women

13. Summary

As the first instance, it was interesting to witness a Gram Sabha. There were more than 200 women present at the meeting, all seated at the head of the meeting ground, while the men sat at the back. The women were articulate about their needs, what has changed and what they want for better improvement to their village. For future consideration a few observations:

1. Each Girl Child (Adolescents) present in the Project Gram Panchayat should be trained on the issues like Child Rights, Child marriages, Personal hygiene, Domestic Violence, Female Foeticide, etc. For this Schools should be identified and separate sessions should be organised as part of the program.
2. If it is done a comparative study can be undertaken regarding the reduction of the child marriages, female foeticide, etc.
3. The district officials mentioned that there is a sizeable number of unemployed youth (50%) in the Gram

Panchayat. Under the project in the second phase, initiatives should be undertaken to train them in process documentation, minutisation of public meetings and good record keeping. There is growing realisation among villagers of the value of education for better opportunities. Hence it would be an opportune moment to capture this growing desire education and literacy.

4. This village which is a tribal village is going to be a model village. So the motivator should be continued for another 12 months, i.e. from January to December 2013, as there are many activities to be taken up.
5. Process of funding the Gram/ Mahila and Ward Sabhas must be continued for best results.

14. Other relevant observation (Case Studies, photographs Quotes):

For photograph and press coverage see below.

As a GOI-UN Women sponsored special Gram Sabha meeting, the focus was too much on outside participants – UN Women visitors rather than on the normal conduct of a gram sabha meeting. This defeats the purpose of monitoring a Gram Sabha meeting or attending as silent observers to a Gram Sabha proceeding. DPOs should be alerted so that in future, the conduct of a gram sabha. Mahila/ward sabha is not distracted by the presence of outsiders.

Signature of the Traveler & Date:

Comments and Signature of the Supervisor:

Annex 9, Appendix 11: Capacity building intervention indicators proposed in Annex 3 of project document

Details	Quantitative	Qualitative
Perspective Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Functional awareness ➤ Deeper Understanding ➤ Empowerment 	Percentage of women sarpanches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attending Gram Sabhas • possessing the ability to articulate the dalit women local agenda • taking a stand on dalit women and local issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding developed in their roles as agents of development • Recognition of positive discriminatory steps towards the disadvantaged • Ability to engender acceptance of women leadership functions
Knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Functional awareness ➤ Deeper Understanding ➤ Empowerment 	Percentage of Women Sarpanches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having technical knowledge of the various Acts and the functions of the Gram Sabha and the committees under Gram Swaraj • Able to analyse conflicts in the internal and external environment • Successfully handling various cases under different Acts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of participation of the women Sarpanches in the proceedings of the Gram Sabhas • Level of confidence in dealing with different situations of the internal and external environment • Nature of contribution of the women Sarpanches while handling cases under different Acts
Skill <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Functional awareness ➤ Deeper Understanding ➤ Empowerment 	Percentage of Women Sarpanches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presiding Gram Sabhas independently • Mobilising the priority community during planning Percentage of funds raised from local resources and other external institutions for implementation plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability and level of confidence of the women Sarpanches to preside over Gram Sabhas • Nature of participation of the Gram Sabha members, especially of women and weaker sections in village action planning • Ability to visualise the utilisation of internal and external resources available for the village development

Annex 9, Appendix 12: The Hunger Project Budget and Expenditure Analysis for the period 1.08.2010 to 30.09.2012													
S. No	Strategy	Bihar		Madhya Pradesh		Karnataka		Rajasthan		Odisha		Total Approved Budget	Total Expenditure
		Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure		
1	SWEEP	121,888	124,203	-	-	-	-	-	-	144,873	120,147	266,761	244,351
2	Jagruk Manch	114,939	104,539	108,122	102,769	254,141	211,073	145,515	134,210	110,420	107,934	733,139	660,500
3	Development Linkages with Parliamentarians	10,944	9,008	20,600	13,747	14,403	6,258	23,261	18,770	25,321	16,428	94,532	64,213
4	Advocacy	15,561	11,376	22,156	12,055	23,079	644	41,001	28,457	5,722	3,711	107,521	56,246
5	Programme Management & Administration	105,505	81,850	28,129	18,079	65,066	44,058	107,131	77,915	84,306	62,464	390,140	284,368
6	Other Programmes 153	77,861	41,649	63,830	39,991	76,704	44,845	109,491	68,103	33,351	13,976	361,240	208,477
	TOTAL	446,701	372,591	242,840	186,564	433,395	306,879	426,401	327,458	403,997	324,664	1,953,335	1,518,157

¹⁵³ Making Panchayat Effective; Capacity Building & Exposure; Planning Review & monitoring meeting; Documentation & Dissemination; South Asia Regional Meeting; Training of Trainers (NIRD); Capacity Building of partners; Capacity Building ; Engagement with THP Partners

Annex 9, Appendix 13: The Hunger Project: Objectives of the four main programs

1 Program 1: OBJECTIVES OF JAGRUK MANCH

- Build a support structure for EWR so that they can exercise their leadership effectively
- Facilitate constituency building for elected women so that they are able to establish themselves as credible informed leaders with a clear focus on vision and priorities
- Engage women citizens in Gram Panchayats with issues of governance and build their political understanding of rights, roles, responsibilities and duties of citizens, elected representatives, local bureaucracy and the State
- Provide a common platform for elected women and women citizens in Gram Panchayats to advocate for good governance and accountability in their Panchayats; and ensure that their Panchayats are sensitive to issues of social justice and gender justice

2 Program 2: OBJECTIVES OF SWEEP

- Advocate for fair, gender sensitive and violence free elections in Panchayats
- Ensure/increase participation of women in the electoral process (voters, candidates, agents) focusing on dalits, tribals and minorities
- Encourage women to contest from reserved and un-reserved seats and claim their political space and right
- Redefine the concept of leadership; leading to the identification of a 'good' leader (for both voters and candidates)
- Promotion of an enabling environment which encourages women's participation internally (within the family) as well as externally (community, village, Panchayat, civil society, State-level); conduct an 'election watch' to track incidents of violence, corruption and exploitation
- Increase in THP's own understanding of women's political participation in the context of caste/power relations/party politics, as a learning which can be used as a base for designing future program strategies and engaging with multiple stakeholders, especially the State Election Commission.

3 Program 3: OBJECTIVE: DEVELOPING LINKAGES WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS & LEGISLATORS

- Develop linkage between the smallest unit of governance i.e. Gram Panchayats to the higher tiers of governance
- Help EWRs build their political acumen and leadership through regular interaction with experienced Legislators
- Sensitize Legislators about the demands of Gram Panchayat citizens and challenges faced by EWRs
- Raise different local and policy level advocacy issues directly with their MLA
- Provide a platform for EWRs to demand accountability from their legislators
- Facilitate local democracy that is effective, people oriented and based on mutual respect for each other's political agency

4 Program 4: ADVOCACY OBJECTIVES

- Identification and selection of state specific policy is demand driven
- Engage with multiple stakeholders representing different perspectives for generating awareness and building a consensus on the necessary reform
- Continuously engage with the state government till the necessary reform has been made

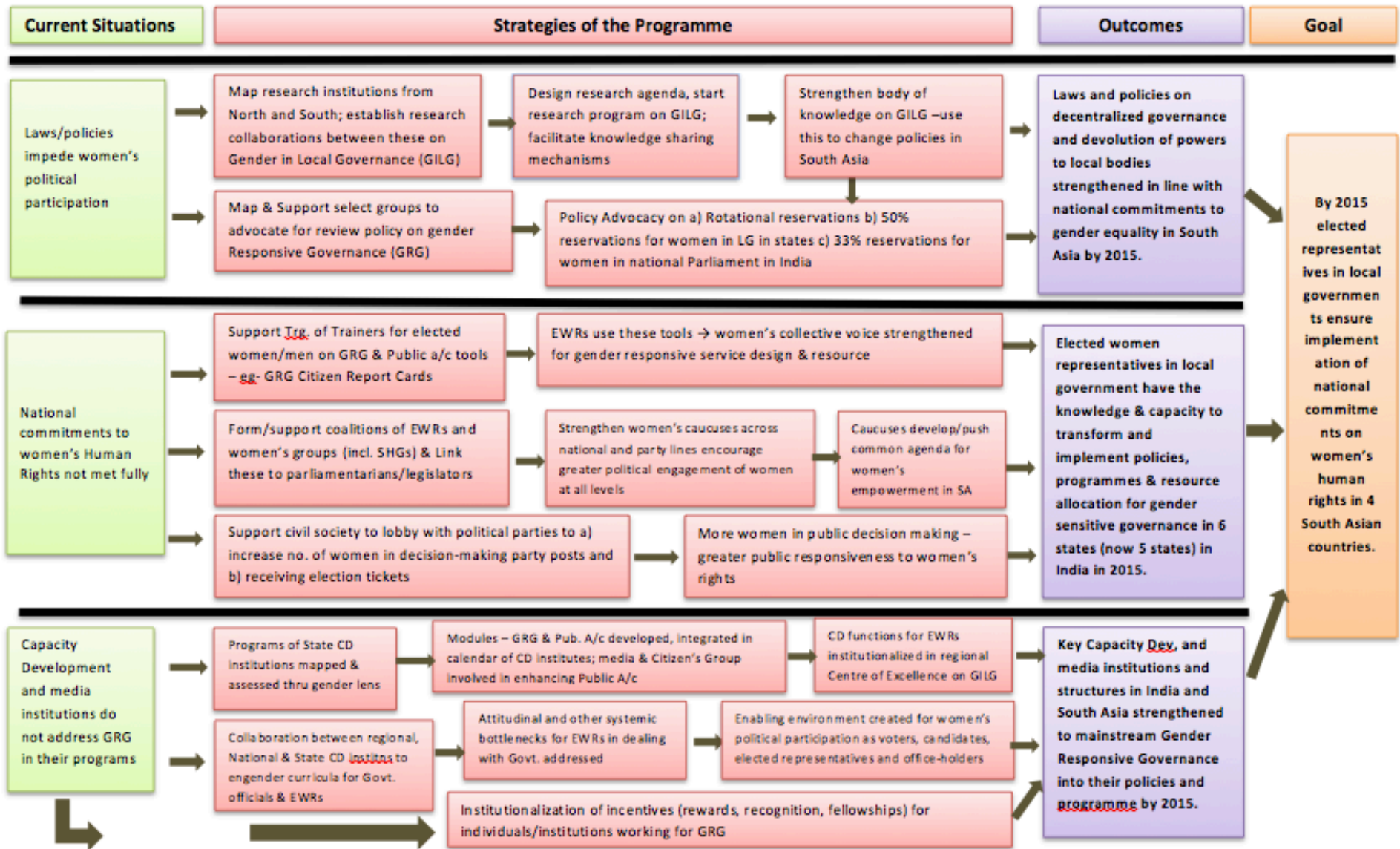
Annex 9, Appendix 14: THP Outreach and implementing partners

Outreach Phase 1: August 2010 - June 2011 and Phase 2: July 2011 - Dec 2012 (On-going)

State	No. of Districts	Blocks	GPs	No of Implementing Partners
Bihar	27	71	1065	11
Odisha	6	20	400	6
Rajasthan	10	13	478	11
MP	10	10	142	9
Karnataka	16	48	693	7
Total Phase One	69	162	2,778	44
Bihar	8	21	392	8
Odisha	8	17	342	6
Rajasthan	10	12	442	10
MP	10	10	110	8
Karnataka	15	42	709	6
Total Phase 2	51	102	1,995	38
Total Phases 1 & 2	120	264	4,773	82

Annex 10: Theory of Change for the Programme

The diagram overleaf presents the detailed ToC that was conceived as a basis for this programme.



Annex 11: The Panchayati Raj System

The basic institutional features of the Panchayati Raj system are detailed here. The State of Rajasthan is used as an illustrative example to explain how the system works in reality.¹⁵⁴

Level From Lowest to Highest	Local Names of Local Body	Composition of Local Body	Reservations for Women, Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes
Ward	Ward Sabha	Not all states have legally constituted Ward Sabhas. However, in states that do, all persons above 18 years of age residing in a Panchayat ward may be part of a Ward Sabha. The Ward Sabha may be presided over by members of the Panchayat elected by the ward. The state government may direct other officials and office bearers to be present at Ward Sabhas.	Panchayat laws may specify quorum for a Ward Sabha meeting. In Rajasthan the minimum quorum is one-tenth of the total number of Ward Sabha members, of which the presence of Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribe and women voters should be proportional to their respective population numbers in the village Panchayat area.
Village Assembly	Gram Sabha	All persons above 18 years of age residing in the Panchayat area (i.e., entitled to vote in the Panchayat election) are members of a Gram Sabha, the meetings are presided over by the village Panchayat president or deputy president. The state government may direct other officials and office bearers to be present at Gram Sabhas.	Panchayat law specifies the minimum quorum for a Gram Sabha meeting. In Rajasthan the minimum quorum is one-tenth of the total number of members. Furthermore, in order to comply with quorum, the presence of Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribe and women voters is to be proportional to their respective population numbers in the village Panchayat area.
		Gram Panchayat are directly elected from the electorate of the wards. Each ward has one seat.	Reservation seats for Schedule Castes and Tribes are pro-rata to their

¹⁵⁴ Some of these features differ from state to state. In this table the example of Rajasthan is referred to.

<p>Village Level</p>	<p>Gram Panchayat</p>	<p>In Rajasthan all the voters in the Panchayat area directly elect the president and deputy president of the Gram Panchayat.</p>	<p>proportion in the total population of the Panchayat area. The Constitution establishes that a minimum of 1/3rd of the seats should be reserved for women candidates. One-third of the total number of seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Tribes also to be reserved for women of these communities, so that the total reservation of seats for women does not exceed 1/3rd of the total number of seats. In addition to this, some states may provide for additional reservations of seats for women or other backward classes. Rajasthan is one of a few states that now reserves one-half of the total number of Panchayat seats for women. The position of the Panchayat President and Vice President is also subject to reservation guidelines, maintaining 1/3rd (or one-half as the case may be) reservation for women across the state, and for Schedule Castes and Tribes in proportion to their share in the population.</p>
<p>Intermediate Level</p>	<p>Block Panchayat, Panchayat</p>	<p>These are composed of a mix of direct and ex-officio members. In Rajasthan the law provides for: (i) Directly elected members (from larger constituencies</p>	<p>Reservation seats for Schedule Castes and Tribes are pro-rata to their proportion in the total population of the Panchayat</p>

	Samiti, Mandal Praja Parishad, Janpad Panchayat, Taluka Panchayat (for administrative convenience referred to generally as the “ Block Panchayat ”)	<p>which need not correspond to ward constituencies).</p> <p>(ii) Village Panchayat presidents.</p> <p>(iii) Member of state legislative assembly whose constituency falls in intermediate Panchayat area.</p> <p>The president and deputy president are elected by the constituency indirectly.</p>	<p>area. The Constitution establishes that a minimum of 1/3rd of the seats should be reserved for women candidates. One-third of the total number of seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Tribes also to be reserved for women of these communities. The total reservation of seats for women should not exceed 1/3rd of the total number of seats. In addition to this, some states such as Rajasthan may provide for additional reservations of up to one-half of seats for women or other backward classes. The position of the intermediate Panchayat President and Vice President is also reserved on the same principle, maintaining 1/3rd reservation (or one-half) for women across the state; and for Schedule Castes and Tribes in proportion to their representation in the population.</p>
District Level	Zila Parishad, Zila Praja Parishad	<p>Mix of direct and ex-officio members. In Rajasthan the law provides for:</p> <p>(iv) Directly elected members (from larger constituencies which need not correspond to ward or intermediate panchayat constituencies)</p> <p>(v) Intermediate Panchayat presidents</p> <p>(vi) Member of Parliament whose constituency falls in</p>	<p>Reservation seats for Schedule Castes and Tribes pro-rata to their proportion in the total population of the Panchayat area. The Constitution establishes that a minimum of 1/3rd of the seats should be reserved for female candidates. One-third of the total number of seats reserved for</p>

		<p>district Panchayat area.</p> <p>The president and deputy president are indirectly elected.</p>	<p>Scheduled Castes and Tribes. Of the latter group 1/3 should be filled by women, however the total number of women should not exceed the total number of representative of the. In addition to this, some states like Rajasthan may provide for additional reservations of seats of up to one-half of the total number of seats for women or other backward classes. The position of the district Panchayat President and Vice President is also reserved on the same principle, maintaining 1/3rd (or one-half) reservation for women across the state and for Schedule Castes and Tribes in proportion to their share in the population.</p>
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Annex 12: Un Women's Observations on the Mid-Term Review Report¹⁵⁵

We thank Norad for coordinating an important MTR for the Programme on “Promoting Women’s Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia” - one of the largest programmes of UN Women. The MTR report recognizes the importance of focusing on women’s political leadership and reiterates the relevance of the UN Women programme. Given that this is one of the largest programmes with partners ranging from National and State Training institutions, CSOs and district and State governments, understandably complexities and intricacies of the programme have not been delved into due to the short time frame for the MTR team.

The report correctly acknowledges the imminent relevance of the programme for the region as well as UN Women’s efforts in ensuring efficient implementation despite challenges pertaining to programme design and corporate procedures. Within a short period, the programme has carved a niche for UN Women in the area of women’s political leadership within India as well as in Bhutan. It has demonstrated the value addition of women’s participation in local governance via the mechanism of Mahila Sabhas. It has produced a body of knowledge on gender responsive governance, and informed national - level initiatives for strengthening local governance such as the Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan (RGPSA). As the Report is now final, UN Women’s response would be read along with the Report as there is no further iteration. We would like to point out that the reader of the report should keep in mind the following limitations of the MTR report:

Deeper analysis and practical recommendations are required

The recommendation that the programme should move away from a regional approach to a national programme approach could also be viewed from the perspective that there is a clear value addition of a regional programme – especially in countries where political will is weak and the local environment is not conducive. A regional programme¹⁵⁶ helps raise critical issues and mindful of national government sensitivities. The report also acknowledges on Page 33 that regionality is yet to materialize.

The observation that LBSNAA “don’t appear to fall within a clear structure enabling long-term sustainability” and the observation that people trained at LBSNAA will not necessarily end up in programme districts needs to be understood in view of the fact that all officials who become district collectors are trained by LBSNAA and its related training institutions. The LBSNAA strategy is for national level results of addressing gender concerns and integrating them into Indian administrative services curriculum for all training programmes of all government officials. Therefore to critique national level results by focusing on select districts only is a case of misappropriation of results. The critique of LBSNAA strategy should have focused on their effectiveness to achieve national level result of integrating gender responsive governance into apex capacity development strategies.

With regard to the research – “how research efforts will be actively used to nurture the programme activities is also unclear.” The research strategy approved by RNE clearly delineates the role of research in programming. The fact that research is a slow moving exercise and it is premature to assess its impact on the programme needs to be reflected. The programme did not have the opportunity to first initiate research and then begin capacity building efforts based on research findings. Government of India has stressed the need for action research which will support programme efforts. In order to develop such targeted studies, the programme needed to give time for the initiatives to operationalize. In other countries such

¹⁵⁵ Factual errors highlighted here by UN Women were corrected by the consultants prior to printing.

¹⁵⁶ For instance, UN system started work on HIV/AIDS under the ambit of a regional programme that helped in the creating a non – threatening platform to discuss sensitive issues that followed strong national programming with Government of India.

as Bhutan, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh, a practice of undertaking a mapping study has been followed before drafting the comprehensive action plan for the country. The first step towards the same is the organization of the proposed South Asia Research Conference on Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in collaboration with NIRD and the establishment of the South Asia Research Network on Women in Politics. The MTR report has questioned the sustainability of Mahila Sabhas (Women's Councils) and use of motivators. Mahila Sabhas have now been made mandatory in Rajasthan and Odisha. These would be replicated across the country, under the Twelfth Five Year Plan. The Government has made this an important platform to address the falling child sex ratio. This is a direct policy impact of the programme. Further, the role of motivators also finds a place in the new scheme of RGPSA – again indicating the policy impact of the programme.

The recommendation that “the programme should continue to focus primarily on efforts that are firmly embedded in the existing government or NGO activities to ensure that they are coherent with the environment and effective (*tried and tested*)” (*emphasis added*). This recommendation limits the space to be innovative, support new prototypes and consequently curtails the possibility of finding new solutions.

Factual errors and inconsistencies

On Page 39, the report states that the project has invested in 16 DPOs and the annual cost is estimated as USD 32500051. The cost of 16 DPOs in 2012 was USD 185,255

On Page 184 – Regional Centre of Excellence (RCoE) was launched in October 2012 (not October 2011 as indicated in the report). In addition, the MTR team concludes that “the rationale for launching the RCoE ahead of any approval and incurring in excess of \$100,000 expenditure is unclear.” The launch of the RCoE during the visit of the Executive Director to India was discussed at the Annual consultation between UN Women and the Royal Norwegian Embassy held on 14 May 2012 and subsequently at the Extraordinary Annual Consultation held on 27 June 2012 and discussion has been noted in the minutes as well.

The observation that “THP despite the MOPR's objection has been funded through the UN Women programme from the start” needs to also be substantiated by the fact that this was the requirement of RNE at the onset of the Programme. The present formulation presents a misplaced impression about UN Women taking *suo moto* action of including THP.

The following assertion is confusing: “...due to the fact that the programme document was developed based on a consultative process *prior* rather than *during* the drafting of the document has led to conflicting priorities among the stakeholders”. We would like to clarify for the reader that the draft of the document was prepared by a group comprising representatives from UN Women, NIRD, THP and Norad and reviewed by the Government of India who subsequently nominated a senior official as the nodal officer. If the consultative process had not been there then the Government would not have designated a senior officer or have participated at the highest level in the Programme Launch 19 November 2011.

Page 31 “The field visits showed that District Collectors appeared to have few ties to the programme and limited commitment to the programme's goals, strategies or activities.” There is a contradiction here with the observation on Page 129 “Collectors however played a significant support role by guiding the selection of GPs and Motivators, issuing notices and circulars urging women to attend special meetings organised under the programme, ensuring that line departments officials take action on petitions/complaints received etc. On page 131 it is stated, “In Dhenkanal, the Collector and ZP CEO calls (sic) for regular briefings while in Gajapati, we were informed that a “District Coordination Committee” chaired by the Collector reviews the implementation of the project along with other projects and activities in the district.” Page 145 states “In absence of motivators hired by the programme, ICDS workers had been deployed to mobilise women for Mahila Sabha meetings and to organise their participation. This put an additional burden on ICDS workers but helped ensure participation of women in Mahila

Sabhas.” We think this is evidence of strong commitment and ownership of the district administration and contradicts the conclusion that “district collectors appear to have few ties as stated by the MTR report. “

To conclude, the MTR Report affirms the fundamental soundness of our enterprise to promote women’s political leadership. UN Women values the observations and recommendations which can be taken forward by the programme to benefit the women of India and South Asia.

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