



Norwegian Ministry
of Foreign Affairs



Evaluation Report

FINAL EVALUATION

Strengthening of Regional Cooperation on Gender Mainstreaming in Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans Phases I (2012-2016) and II (2018-2023)

Date submitted: 21st September 2023

Evaluation Expert: Joanna Brooks

PROJECT PROFILE – Phase II

Project Identification		
Project Title:	<i>Strengthening of Regional Cooperation on Gender Mainstreaming in Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans (Second Phase)</i>	
Project ID:	00113253 – Women in the Military 2	
Linkages to UNDP Regional Programme 2018 - 2021 and UNDP Strategic Plan 2018 - 2021		
Regional Programme	Regional Programme for Europe and the CIS (2018-2021): Outcome 3. Resilience Built to Respond to Systemic Uncertainty and Risk Output 3.3 Regional cooperation enables national systems to ensure the restoration of justice institutions, redress mechanisms and community security, including armed violence reduction and small arms and light weapons control.	
UNDP Strategic Plan	Output 2.2.3: Capacities, functions and financing of rule of law and national human rights institutions and systems strengthened to expand access to justice and combat discrimination, with a focus on women and other marginalized groups	
Project Information		
Project Duration:	Start Date: Phase I: 01/01/2012 Phase II: 22/11/2018	End Date: Phase I: 30/06/2016 Phase II: – 30/06/2023 (NCE - 31/12/2023)
Implementing Partner:	UNDP IRH, through UNDP SEESAC, with the Ministries of Defence and Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia, and the Republic of Serbia as responsible parties.	
Region	RBEC/ Western Balkans	
Countries	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia	
Project Budget		
Project budget	Phase I: Kingdom of Norway US\$ 2.25 million Swedish Armed Forces SEK 300,000 UNDP US\$165,000 Phase II: Kingdom of Norway US\$ 2.22 million Slovak Republic US\$ 0.38 million	
Project expenditure as at time of evaluation –	Phase I: US\$ 1,251,750.33 (expenditures recorded since 2015 when the project was transferred from the CO Serbia to the IRH implementation. Remaining overall project balance for the first phase in the amount of US\$ 31,862.67 reimbursed to the donor). Phase II: US\$ 2,152,304.55	
Current funding source(s)	Governments of Norway (funds allocated until the end of June 2023) and the Slovak Republic (funds allocated until the end of December 2024)	
Evaluation Details		
Evaluation Type	Final Evaluation	
Evaluation dates	01/01/2012 – 30/06/2016 and 22/11/2018 – 30/06/2023	

Acknowledgements

The evaluator would like to thank all those who have contributed to this evaluation including the project team for their assistance during the evaluation and in preparing this report. Particular thanks go to the Project Manager, Danijela Djurovic and the Programme Assistant, Jana Ilic for all their kind assistance with the organisation of the data collection and continuous support throughout the evaluation process. Also to Vesna Ciprus, Gender Advisor, for her support in revising and finalising the report.

In addition, the evaluator would like to thank all of the project partners who participated in the evaluation, including representatives from the Ministries of Defence and Armed Forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. Their openness and willingness to share information were critical in providing a comprehensive assessment of the project's impact and effectiveness.

Thanks is also extended to Kevin Schmidt and Rayza Oblitas from the UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub for managing the evaluation.

Table of Contents

ABBREVIATIONS.....5

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY6

1. INTRODUCTION 11

2. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND 12

 2.1 CONTEXT 12

 2.2 BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT 12

 2.3 EVALUATION PURPOSE, OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE 13

 2.4. THEORY OF CHANGE..... 14

3. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY..... 15

 3.1 EVALUABILITY ANALYSIS..... 15

 3.2 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES - GENDER EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH AND INTERSECTIONALITY 15

 3.3 EVALUATION CRITERIA AND ELABORATION OF KEY QUESTIONS 16

 3.4. EVALUATION DESIGN..... 16

 3.4.1. Overall Approach 16

 3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK..... 16

 3.6. ANALYTICAL METHODS 17

 3.7. SAMPLING METHODS FOR QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION..... 18

 3.8. CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS OF THE EVALUATION AND MITIGATION RESPONSES 18

 3.9. DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN, INFORMED CONSENT AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS..... 19

4. FINDINGS..... 19

5. CONCLUSIONS..... 39

6. RECOMMENDATIONS 40

7. LESSONS LEARNED 44

ANNEX I – KEY EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS AS PER THE TERMS OF REFERENCE 45

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX..... 48

ANNEX III - INFORMED CONSENT PROTOCOL AND DATA COLLECTION TOOLS AND INSTRUMENTS..... 65

 ANNEX 3.1. INFORMED CONSENT PROTOCOL 65

 ANNEX 3.2. DRAFT INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDES 66

ANNEX IV. LIST OF PARTNERS MET 71

ANNEX V BIBLIOGRAPHY 78

ANNEX VI TERMS OF REFERENCE 79

ABBREVIATIONS

AF	Armed Force
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BIH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DFAC	Geneva centre for Democratic Control of the Armed Forces
EMG	Evaluation Management Group
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GEM	Gender Equality Mechanism
GENAD	Gender Advisor
GESI	Gender Equality & Social Inclusion
HR	Human Resources
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
KII	Key Informant Interview
MA	Military Academy
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MHS	Military High School
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NAP	National Action Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCGM	Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
ProDoc	Project Document
RCC	Regional Cooperation Council
SALW	Small Arms Light Weapons
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEESAC	South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons
SSR	Security Sector Reform
ToC	Theory of Change
ToT	Training of Trainers
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP IRH	United Nations Development Programme/Istanbul Regional Hub
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WPON	Women Police Officers Network in South East Europe
WPS	Women, Peace & Security

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This evaluation is an external, independent final evaluation of the UNDP’s regional project, “Strengthening of Regional Cooperation on Gender Mainstreaming in Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans” Phase I (2012 – 2016) and Phase II (2018-2023) (hereinafter the project), implemented by UNDP’s South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) . The evaluation was commissioned by the project and covers the entire implementation period to 30th June 2023. The geographical scope of the evaluation covers all four project implementation countries – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

As per the Terms of Reference and the OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria,¹ the purpose of the evaluation is to provide an impartial review of the UNDP regional project in terms of its relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, with the additional criteria of communications and visibility. The evaluation is essential for accountability and transparency and strengthening the ability of partners and stakeholders to hold UNDP and SEESAC accountable for its development contributions. The key findings, lessons learnt and recommendations generated by this evaluation will be used by UNDP and SEESAC to assess the performance and value of the regional project and as guidance for the future course of action in the field.

The evaluation is based on data available at the time of the evaluation, including project documents and regular progress report and other relevant reports, as well as comprehensive in-person and online stakeholder consultations conducted during May, June and July 2023. The primary audience for the evaluation is the project itself and the UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub. The secondary audience includes the Ministries of Defence (MoD) and Armed Forces (AF) in the four implementation countries and the project’s donors – the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway and the Slovak Republic as well as other project partners and stakeholders.

The methodology used a mixed-methods approach but was essentially qualitative. It comprised an analysis of all relevant project documentation shared by the project – over 100 documents in total, and data collected both in-person and virtually through a total of 16 key informant interviews and 9 group discussions, covering all four project countries. A total of 46 partners and stakeholders were met (27 women and 19 men) including representatives from the Ministries of Defence and Armed Forces in the region; both of the project’s donors; external partners and UNDP project and programme representatives.

The project is without doubt achieving its objective of strengthening regional cooperation on gender mainstreaming in security sector reform in the Western Balkans. It is really a standout project in terms of its approaches and its impact, which is evidenced by its results as well as being articulated by all MoDs in the region. The project has achieved results beyond the realisation of its activities. It has created a strong evidence base for decision-making as well as created both momentum and knowledge on gender equality in the military. The best practice approach of building the capacities of the MoDs and AFs from within, has proven highly successful and contributes to the sustainability of the project’s interventions. The project has begun the process of mainstreaming gender into military education and training; it has created a network of regional gender trainers who are now recognised and used as global experts by other external organisations; it has shared knowledge beyond the implementing countries both regionally and globally; and it has contributed to the increased participation of women in the military.

The project combined a highly successful regional approach with a “no one-size fits all” approach to activities at the national level, which were very much tailored to the individual and specific needs at the country level. It adopted a low-cost: high impact approach, which used low-cost

¹ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

measures to achieve far-reaching results. The long-term approach adopted by the project, its partners and its donors also furthered the project's results. The level of commitment and dedication of the project's staff, combined with their high-level of expertise is highly regarded and valued amongst the project partners, and has again, contributed to the success of the project.

While there is no empirical evidence to measure the impact of the project, its impact goes beyond just the results of its activities, including contributing to regional reconciliation, peace and stability. Anecdotally, the project is contributing to a gradual change in mindsets and the gradual erosion of stereotypes within the MoDs and AFs. As the MoDs are one of the most trusted institutions in the region, this has a wider effect of changing mindsets and eroding stereotypes amongst society as a whole.

Sustainability prospects are high across many of the project results. However, further efforts are required to fully institutionalise gender equality into military education; to fully institutionalise the gender trainers network; to reinforce the international complaint mechanisms relating to GBV, sexual harassment and abuse; as well as to secure the committed support among key decision makers in the four MoDs to continue regional cooperation beyond the lifespan of the project.

This evaluation report provides a set of 14 findings, eight conclusions, six recommendations and four lessons learned as well as identifying four best practices. A summary of the key findings and recommendations are provided below. Chapter 1 provides the introduction and background to the project; chapters 2 and 3 the evaluation's objective, purpose and scope and the approach and methodology respectively. Chapter 4 contains the main analysis and findings of the evaluation. Chapter 5 provides the conclusions and assessment against the evaluation criteria; Chapter 6 recommendations and Chapter 7 the lessons learned. Best practices are interspersed throughout the report.

Findings

Relevance

Finding 1: The project is highly relevant to the national development priorities of the countries in the Western Balkans, including alignment with the National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325 as well as the SDGs, in particular SDGs 5 and 16. It is also aligned with UNDP's global and regional strategic priorities as well as the priorities of the UN/DP in the specific countries. Further it is aligned with the regional and country priorities of its donors, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Slovak Republic.

Finding 2: The project is highly relevant for its partners – i.e. the Ministries of Defence and Armed Forces in the region. The project design process for both Phase I and Phase II was inclusive and participatory allowing for the project to be tailored to the needs of its partners. In particular, the Gender Equality Mechanisms in the four countries, have inputted to and steered the project design and implementation during both phases of the project. Both Phases of the project were well-designed, however the corresponding results frameworks could have benefitted from more clearly defined and SMART² indicators and targets at impact, outcome and output level, which would better capture the results of the project.

Finding 3: The project has articulately captured risks and regularly monitored and updated its risk analysis. It has been able to swiftly adapt to changes in its operational context, including geopolitical changes as well as the COVID-19 global pandemic. And while these have necessitated no-cost extensions to the project activities in both phases, the project was able to adapt without compromising on the achievement of its results.

² Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.

Coherence

Finding 4: The project has managed to successfully build partnerships based on trust and confidence among the MoDs and Armed Forces in the four countries as well as with external organisations, which has enabled it to successfully ensure coherence and coordination. This has allowed for the identification of synergies and complementarities where appropriate as well as avoiding duplication of efforts. The positioning of the project with other on-going processes within the respective countries, such as the EU Accession process and NATO membership/Partnership for Peace has brought a positive influence and impetus for the countries and the project to advance. The project also gained political legitimacy through its partnership with the Regional Cooperation Council. Within the SEESAC portfolio, coherence has been ensured through cross-fertilisation of efforts with the Small Arms Light Weapons project.

Finding 5: Lessons learnt and results from Phase I helped shape both the design and implementation of Phase II in order to maximise the coherence of the project. This included the need to continue fostering regional cooperation to contribute towards mainstreaming gender into military training and education, developing gender responsive and evidence based HR policies, strengthening capacities of internal complaints mechanisms, improving the integration of women through gender responsive policies and practices and continuing to strengthen the capacities of the gender trainers.

Effectiveness

Finding 6: Phase I was focused on fostering regional cooperation on gender equality in the military. Through this the project was able to achieve key results in increasing the level of gender awareness among the staff in the MoDs and AFs in the region, strengthening gender equality mechanisms and contributing to the development of more gender responsive HR policies. It focused on the preliminary trust and confidence building, capacity development, increasing gender awareness and creating an evidence base for decision-making, thereby creating both momentum and knowledge.

Finding 7: The regional cooperation approach adopted by the project transcends gender equality with results and impact way beyond the project. Through bringing together the four countries the project contributes to regional reconciliation, peace and stability. The project has been able to use the issue of gender to strengthen cooperation among the countries and to deconflict other issues, such as security sector reform in general. The project's approaches, through information sharing, knowledge exchange, learning grounded in regional meetings, and support for the implementation of demand-driven small-scale projects with tailor-made solutions have proven to be highly effective and have delivered impressive results. However, the committed support among key decision makers in MoDs to continue regional cooperation after the project close is yet to be achieved.

Finding 8: The project has without doubt advanced gender awareness in the MoDs and the Armed Forces through the region. It increased gender awareness and contributed to a more gender-sensitive and inclusive organizational culture, while also improving the integration of women into the Armed Forces. Through establishing a Regional Network of gender military trainers and building the capacities from within the system the project has enhanced and spread knowledge and capacities throughout the system. The level of expertise gained by the gender military trainers is evidenced by the demand from external partners to use the trainers in their activities and projects at the national, regional and global level. However, the trainers are still volunteering their time and are not yet fully institutionalised.

Efficiency

Finding 9: The efficiency approaches utilised by the project through identifying low cost measures combined with the long-term approach of both the project and its donors has proven to be highly successful. Financial delivery has always been high, illustrating a realistic budget based on a sound assessment of partners' needs. The project has been implemented in a lean and cost-efficient manner, offering good value for money for the results it has achieved as well as its anticipated future results. The expertise that the SEESAC project team is able to offer is highly regarded and well respected. The team managed to meet the needs of the partners through deploying in-house expertise and facilitating the exchange of knowledge through leveraging gender-related knowledge and expertise from the military across all four defence systems.

Impact

Finding 10: The project has undoubtedly had impact beyond just the results of its activities, which have been transformative for the MoDs and AFs in the region. While impact can be shown through the increase of participation of women in the Armed Forces in all four countries, the increase of knowledge and capacities, the continuous strengthening of the gender equality mechanisms, the expanded Network of Gender Military Trainers and the establishment of complaint mechanisms, it can perhaps best be illustrated by the numerous anecdotal examples of how mindsets and perceptions have begun to change and the gradual erosion of gender stereotypes in the MoDs and AFs. While there is currently no empirical evidence related to the change in mindsets and perceptions, all partners informed that this is the case. The impact of the project in terms of its contribution towards regional reconciliation, peace and stability can also not be underestimated.

Sustainability

Finding 11: The project was designed with sustainability in mind from the outset and the approaches it has adopted have contributed to the longer-term sustainability of the project's results. Ownership of both the project and its results is assessed as very high. There is a need to continue to reinforce the sustainability of the project's results and in particular to create a mechanism for the continuity of the regional cooperation beyond the lifespan of the project. While Phase II was focused on embedding a gender perspective in the military, particularly in military education and training, and ensuring the sustainability of results, there was no specific exit strategy developed during the project development process.

Visibility and Communications

Finding 12: Internal communication and external communication and visibility has been developed to a very high level. Throughout both phases of the project implementation, the project has maintained a high level of visibility and utilised different communication techniques to promote the project, its activities and its results. This has been extended by all four MoDs in the region, who all have dedicated space on their websites to promote the project. The branding for SEESAC and the project is well known throughout the region and the project has enabled a high degree of visibility for its donors. This high level of visibility has also had a knock-on effect of further raising awareness and knowledge about gender equality in the military beyond its partners including in the four implementing countries as well as in the region and globally.

Cross-Cutting Issues

Finding 13: The project was designed according to the Human Rights-Based Approach, working with both rights-holders and duty-bearers. Gender equality was the primary focus of the project and was well integrated both into the design of the project and its implementation. Social inclusion and intersectionality, while not a focus of the project, were addressed indirectly, however within the operational context within which the project was being implemented. There was some level of engagement with civil society organisations, including through training and capacity development.

Finding 14: In line with UNDP’s Digital Strategy 2018 – 2021, the project harnessed digitalisation and IT solutions to drive forward the project’s results. This included the development of the online knowledge sharing platform; the development of the online gender training course and the availability of all its knowledge products in electronic formats.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Develop a short and longer term exit strategy to cover the project extension phase and a potential Phase III of the project in order to fully embed and institutionalise all results achieved.

Recommendation 2: The project should support the co-creation of a viable solution for the continuation of the regional coordination and knowledge exchange on gender related topics once the project comes to an end.

Recommendation 3: Continuously upgrade capacity development approaches and transform the MoDs from being a recipient of learning to becoming teachers and deliverers of knowledge to other institutions and service providers. Consideration should also be given towards focusing on integrating gender equality into the disaster response function of the military.

Recommendation 4: Support the continuous sharing and exporting of knowledge beyond the region.

Recommendation 5: Consider supporting the MoDs to strengthen their cooperation with civil society actors, in particular with regards to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda and UNSCR 1325.

Recommendation 6: Develop a stronger Results Framework with SMART indicators for Phase III and conduct an impact assessment.

FINAL EVALUATION

Strengthening of Regional Cooperation on Gender Mainstreaming in Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans

1. Introduction

This Evaluation Report relates to a final evaluation of the regional project, “Strengthening of Regional Cooperation on Gender Mainstreaming in Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans” Phase I (2012 – 2016) and Phase II (2018-2023) (hereinafter the project). The project is implemented by UNDP’s South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC). The evaluation was commissioned by the project as the project was due to end on 30 June 2023 and covers the entire implementation period, bar the no cost extension period from 1 July 2023 – 31 December 2023.

The evaluation objective was to examine the overall performance of the regional project and its results and assess how the outputs delivered the added value for the participating defence systems and their implementation of gender equality policies and the Women Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda. Based on a substantive analysis of the effectiveness of the project approach through desk-top review and feedback from project partners Ministries of Defence (MoDs) and Armed Forces (AFs) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, the evaluation assesses cause and effect relations, identifying the extent to which the observed changes can be defined as transformational and can be attributed to the UNDP regional project.

The intended users of the evaluation include primary evaluation users, namely UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub (IRH) and SEESAC who will use the evaluation to further strategize for gender equality in security sector reform (SSR) in the Western Balkans. The secondary users, namely the MoDs and AFs in the region will use the information to learn about what works when advancing and enhancing gender equality in SSR. The Kingdom of Norway and the Slovak Republic may use the evaluation for accountability and as input for decision-making purposes. Overall, all users can use the evaluation for accountability and transparency purposes, to hold UNDP accountable for its development contributions. The evaluator sought to ensure the full and active participation of all users as relevant throughout the evaluation process.

The report is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 presents the context and background as well as the project itself. Chapter 3 provides the evaluations’ objective, scope and purpose as well as the evaluation approach, methods and data analysis approaches utilised as part of the evaluation process. Chapter 4 presents the findings, Chapter 5 the conclusions, Chapter 6 the recommendations and Chapter 7 the lessons learnt. Best practices are interspersed throughout Chapter 4.

There are a number of annexes to the Inception Report, including the key evaluation questions, evaluation matrix, informed consent protocol and data collection tools and instruments, the stakeholder list, bibliography and the ToR.

2. Context and Background

2.1 Context

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and corresponding Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015, affirms that sustainable development, peace, and security are inextricably linked. The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and related UN Security Council resolutions adopted between 2000 and 2020 emphasize the key role of women in forging and maintaining peace. To ensure continuous progress, preserve the gains and pave the way for long-term sustainability that includes harmonization with the relevant international standards, as well as the European Union (EU) legislative and regulatory framework, focused support was provided through the project to the systems of defence of four Western Balkans countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH), Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia and the Republic of Serbia.

The UNDP IRH and SEESAC is a joint initiative of UNDP and the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), with 20 years of experience in Southeast Europe in strengthening knowledge sharing, information exchange, standardization and cooperation on small arms and light weapons (SALW) control, as well as integrating a gender perspective into the security sector reform processes and SALW control. Within this broader framework, the regional project has a decade-long track record of supporting systems of defence in the Western Balkans in integrating gender in security sector reform.

All of the project partners are RCC participants. RCC provides a framework that facilitates the initiation and implementation of regional processes and activities while providing the flexibility to have various partners. Regional ownership is ensured through the RCC (politically) as well as the [Regional Security Sector Reform platform](#),³ including regular regional meetings (technically), which provide opportunities for the representatives of the four Ministries of Defence and Armed Forces to provide strategic guidance, exchange information and agree on initiatives and requests for UNDP SEESAC support.⁴

2.2 Background to the Project

Achieving gender equality in the military is critical to ensuring the safety and security of all citizens. Promoting gender equality and integrating a gender perspective in the military is not only the right thing but also the smart thing to do, keeping in mind the complex security challenges in today's world. UNDP SEESAC has facilitated regional cooperation on integrating a gender perspective in the security sector among the Ministries of Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia and the Republic of Serbia since 2012.⁵ The second phase (2018 – 2023) of the project dovetails Phase I implemented in the period 2012-2016.⁶

Notwithstanding advances achieved by the MoDs and the AFs in the Western Balkans during Phase I, women remained underrepresented and unequally treated in the military. Challenges include limited capacities for gender-sensitive analysis and evidence-based policymaking, the low

³ UNDP SEESAC established the Regional Security Sector Reform Platform (RSSRP) to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and expertise on niche security sector reform themes from SEE to the rest of Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (ECIS) region and further afield.

⁴ Taken from the Terms of Reference for the Project Evaluation Expert

⁵ UNDP SEESAC has extensive experience working in SEE. With a result-oriented mode of operation, SEESAC identifies relevant regional issues, collects baseline data, ensures political support from the national stakeholders, secures funding, and implements the envisaged activities ensuring strong national ownership. The implementation at the regional level brings added value through coordination, experience, and best practices sharing, as well as the regional and national level top-notch policy research.

⁶ The project's first phase was implemented with the financial support of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

capability of institutions to address gender-based discrimination timely and adequately, and a lack of shared understanding of how to integrate the gender perspective in military education. Based on the results and lessons learnt and continuing needs identified during Phase I, Phase II of the project continued fostering both regional and national level activities through support for (1) gender-responsive and evidence-based policy development and implementation; and (2) improved integration of women in the military through gender sensitization and integrating a gender perspective in military education and training.

The project was established to act as a regional cooperation facilitation mechanism for the integration of a gender perspective in the military. The project has two main outcomes:

Outcome 1: Strengthened capacities for gender-responsive and evidence-based policy development and implementation - aiming to further institutionalize gender equality mechanisms (GEMs), strengthen the capacities of the MoDs for gender-responsive policymaking and implementation and enhance their response to gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse. This outcome is being achieved through information sharing, knowledge exchange, learning grounded in regional meetings and support for the implementation of demand-driven small-scale projects.

Outcome 2: Improved integration of women into the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans through increasing gender awareness and revision of the military education curricula - aiming to advance gender awareness in the MoDs and AFs through the Regional Network of gender military trainers and to mainstream gender in military education and training.

The project supports the four Western Balkans countries to work towards fulfilling their global SDG commitments by directly contributing to SDG 16, dedicated to building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels, and SDG 5, on achieving gender equality as a "necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world." The project contributes to UNDP IRH's Regional Programme outcome No. 3 – "Building resilience to shocks and crises through enhanced prevention and risk-informed development," notably output 3.3. – "Regional cooperation enables national systems to ensure the restoration of justice institutions, redress mechanisms and community security, including armed violence reduction and small arms and light weapons (SALW) control."

The project has been financially supported by the Kingdom of Norway through NOK 13.5 million (US\$ 2.25 million) in Phase I, and NOK 19.5 million (US\$ 2.22 million) in Phase II, the latter contribution ending at the end of June 2023. The Swedish Armed Forces also supported Phase I with a contribution of SEK300,000, as well as UNDP with a contribution of US\$165,000. The Slovak Republic supported Phase II of the project with EUR 0.3 million (US\$ 0.38 million), whereby these funds remain available until the end of December 2024.⁷

2.3 Evaluation purpose, objective and scope

The ToR provided the overall framework for the evaluation, including the purpose, objective and scope of the evaluation, which the evaluator analysed to develop the specific methodology for conducting the evaluation.

As per the OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria,⁸ the purpose of the project evaluation is to provide an impartial review of the UNDP regional project in terms of its relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, with the additional criteria of communications and visibility.

⁷ The Slovak funding for this regional project comes from UNDP -Slovakia Partnership Effective Development Solutions for SDGs (00111827) which is ending on 31 December 2024.

⁸ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

The evaluation is essential for accountability and transparency and strengthening the ability of partners and stakeholders to hold UNDP accountable for its development contributions. The key findings, lessons learnt, and recommendations generated by the evaluation will be used by UNDP to assess the performance and value of the regional project, and as guidance for the future course of action in the field.

The evaluation objective is to examine the overall performance of the regional project and its results and assess how the outputs delivered the added value for the participating defence systems and their implementation of gender equality policies and the WPS Agenda. Based on a substantive analysis of the effectiveness of the project approach through desk-top review and feedback from project partners (MoDs and AFs), the evaluation assessed cause and effect relations, identifying the extent to which the observed changes can be defined as transformational and can be attributed to the UNDP regional project.

The evaluation scope covers the periods January 2012 - June 2016 (Phase I) and December 2018 – June 2023 (Phase II). The geographical scope of the evaluation covers all four project implementation countries – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

2.4. Theory of Change

The project forms part of the SEESAC regional project.⁹ The project strategy for Phase II is based on the theory of change that **if** MoDs' and AFs' capacities for gender sensitive data collection and analysis are created and procedures are institutionalized, and if outreach activities are strengthened, **then** there will be better insight into the remaining gaps and challenges, which will enable gender responsive and evidence based policymaking. The project strategy is also based on a theory of change that **if** gender awareness is increased among personnel and systematically integrated into military education, **then** this will lead to a change in the institutional culture and the creation of a non-discriminatory working environment for women and men that will result in better integration of women in the military. Furthermore, **if** gender responsive and evidence based policymaking is ensured and a non-discriminatory working environment for women and men is created, **then** this will advance gender equality and contribute to building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions in the Western Balkans. The project is also based on a theory of change that **if** regional cooperation is facilitated, then information sharing and knowledge exchange among institutions in the region is ensured, **leading** to development of local solutions, contributing to more sustainable defence reform and, at the same time, confidence building in the region. **If** existing capacities in the region are further strengthened and the sharing of this expertise with institutions outside of the Western Balkans is supported, **then** the project will help the Western Balkans to become an even stronger contributor to global security by enhancing South-South cooperation around key rule of law challenges.

In addition to the elaborated ToC, which charts the causal pathway foreseen to achieving results, the project's results framework for Phase II contains two clearly defined impact statements, together with eleven corresponding indicators, targets and baselines, as well as two outcome statements. Under outcome 1, there are three outputs, the first with one activity result area and three indicators; the second with two activity result areas and eight indicators; and the third with one activity result area and four indicators. Outcome 2 has two outputs, both with one activity result area. Under the first there are six indicators and under the second there are eleven. Progress towards targets is included in Chapter 4, under the findings related to effectiveness.

⁹ The project falls under output 2 of the SEESAC Regional Project 2015 – 2019 – Regional cooperation, information sharing and networking capacities national authorities to implement gender equality within security sector policies and procedures.

3. Evaluation Approach and Methodology

The main reference for the evaluation methodology was the OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria,¹⁰ the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards,¹¹ the UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation,¹² and UNDP's updated Evaluation Guidelines (2021).¹³ As detailed in the Inception Report, the evaluation was designed to be gender-responsive, follow a human-rights based approach, and reflect utilisation-focused and feminist approaches. The evaluation is both summative in terms of analysing the achievement of results during the two phases of the project, as well as formative in terms of providing forward-looking and actionable recommendations.

3.1 Evaluability Analysis

The evaluator undertook a rapid evaluability assessment, looking at Phase II of the project's ToC together with its results and resources framework. The evaluator assessed that the ToC and Results Framework are generally clear, with appropriately worded impact, outcome and output statements, although there are gaps in the indicators, baselines and targets. These are discussed further under Finding 2. Document availability was assessed as very good. All relevant project documentation was shared with the evaluator covering both phases of the project implementation. Regular annual and quarterly progress reports are comprehensive and available for all years. Project board meeting minutes were shared as well as relevant regional meeting minutes and reports and minutes from donor meetings and consultations. The project team also shared the evaluation assessments from training participants from a series of gender equality trainings. In addition, the evaluator has been provided with the annual work plans and relevant financial information. Overall, this means that from documentary sources alone, triangulation is potentially available. For Phase I of the project, the evaluator relied on the comprehensive report of the project's results, the final project report summarising all project activities and reports, as well as qualitative data gained through key informant interviews and group interviews with MoD representatives, SEESAC project staff and other external partners who also participated in Phase I of the project. Despite some gaps in the indicators framework, the conclusion from the evaluability analysis was that the evaluability of the two phases of the project was very good.

3.2 Cross-cutting Issues - Gender Equality and Human Rights Based Approach and Intersectionality

Gender equality and social inclusion and the human rights based approach aspects were integrated into the evaluation methodology and incorporated into the evaluation matrix. In addition to being participatory and inclusive, the evaluator's approach was based on the principles of gender equality. All data gathered was disaggregated to the largest extent possible and efforts were made for positive sampling in terms of ensuring a minimum of 45% women representation during the key informant interviews and joint group discussions. This was over-exceeded. To the extent possible, the evaluator assessed gender equality and the human rights based approach using an

¹⁰ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development / Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC), Network on Development Evaluation, Better Criteria for Better Evaluation Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use, 2019, available at: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf>

¹¹ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/2787>

¹² <http://www.uneval.org/document/download/1294>

¹³ http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/PDF/UNDP_Evaluation_Guidelines.pdf

intersectionality lens, looking at gender, age, disability status, ethnicity and other intersectional elements that were deemed relevant.

3.3 Evaluation criteria and elaboration of key questions

As per the ToR, the evaluator was asked to consider a number of key questions shaped around the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria and the additional criteria of communications and visibility. The key evaluation questions and sub-questions (see Annex I) were synthesized into an evaluation matrix (see Annex II), which guided the evaluator and provided an analytical framework for conducting the evaluation. The evaluation matrix sets out the relevant evaluation criteria, key questions and sub-questions, data sources, data collection methods/tools, indicators/success standards and methods for data analysis. The evaluation matrix was divided into each of the six evaluation criteria – relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, with the additional criteria of communications and visibility. Within the effectiveness criteria, each of the project’s outputs were individually scrutinized. The evaluation matrix also contains questions relating to the two cross-cutting issues of gender equality and the HRBA, including intersectionality, which are mainstreamed throughout. The overarching question for the overall project action was: *Should the positive (or negative) changes be attributed to the project intervention, and which changes would not have happened without the project support in each of the four partner MoDs and the region of the Western Balkans?*

3.4. Evaluation Design

3.4.1. Overall Approach

The evaluation was multi-faceted and the methodological approach used mixed (qualitative and quantitative) methods, as the best vehicle for meeting the evaluation’s needs. The evaluator ensured that the evaluation was conducted through a participatory and consultative process, which included all relevant national and regional stakeholders and the project partners. The methodological approach promoted inclusion and participation by employing gender equality and human rights responsive approaches, as detailed above under section 3.2

The evaluation’s principal guide was the project document for Phase II, in particular the Results Framework containing its logframe and M&E framework, which provided an indication and outline as to the set of questions that the evaluator asked each stakeholder group. Informant Interview Guides are provided at Annex III and additional questions are provided in the Evaluation Matrix.

3.5 Data collection methods and instruments and analytical framework

A number of different data collection methods and instruments were utilised by the evaluator in order to collect as much primary and secondary, quantitative and qualitative data as possible to ensure the integrity of the evaluation. This allowed for the maximum reliability of data and validity of the evaluation findings, as well as generating feedback loops and insights to inform future planning. These methods are detailed in the Inception Report and included desk research and document review whereby over 100 documents were reviewed; key informant interviews/group discussions whereby 46 partners and stakeholders – 27 women, 19 men were consulted during 16 key informant interviews and nine group discussions; assessment of post-training evaluations whereby 72 participant responses were analysed; analysis of the communications and visibility of the project including the annual and quarterly communications and visibility reports as well as visiting of the project’s website and the websites of the MoDs in the region; as well as analysis of the project’s financial documents.

3.6. Analytical methods

In order to analyse the collected data, the following analytical methods were applied by the evaluator:

Contribution Analysis

In the complex development context in the Western Balkans and in the specific countries in which the project is being implemented, it is difficult for the final evaluation to attribute the observed results *solely* to the project. This is partly because of the number of partners and stakeholders involved, partly because of other exogenous factors and partly because of the complex nature of the project itself. For this reason, the evaluator adopted a contribution analysis approach, which did not firmly establish causality but rather sought to achieve a plausible association by analysing the project's ToC and results framework, documenting the project's successes and value added, applying the "before and after" criterion, i.e. what exists now that did not exist before and what has changed since the start of the project, and through considering the counterfactual – what would have happened without the project.

Political Economy Analysis

A political economy approach recognises the local and regional contexts and the incentives faced by the actors engaged in it, i.e. the internal and external factors that determine success. This helped the evaluator to understand who seeks to gain and lose from the project, as well as to identify who has vested interests and the social and cultural norms that need to be taken into account. Applying political economy analysis helped answer why things are the way they are and helped unpack the enabling environment by understanding the political economy drivers behind gender equality in security sector reform in the Western Balkans. A political economy approach also allowed the evaluator to consider the geo-political sensitivities at play in the region and how these might have affected (positively or negatively) the project. This included being cognisant of the political, social and economic changes that have taken place, in particular during Phase II of the project, as well as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of the project.

Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis

Most of the primary data collection methods (interviews and group discussions) collected qualitative data. These were analysed using a code structure, aligned to the key evaluation questions, sub-questions and indicators. The qualitative data from the primary data collection methods was cross-referenced with other sources such as documents. The quantitative data produced descriptive analysis (rather than more complex regressions).

Triangulation

Triangulation is the process of using multiple data sources, data collection methods, and/or theories to validate research findings. The evaluator used more than one approach (data collection method) to address the evaluation questions in order to reduce the risk of bias and increase the chances of detecting errors or anomalies. Wherever possible all data gathered, both qualitatively and quantitatively was triangulated, through cross verification from two or more sources. For interviews, this was done through posing a similar set of questions to multiple interviewees. For the document review it was accomplished through crosschecking data and information from multiple sources to increase the credibility and validity of the material. The evaluator applied three approaches to triangulation: methods triangulation (checking the consistency of findings generated by different data collection methods); interrogating data where diverging results arose; and analyst triangulation (discussion and validation of findings, allowing for a consistent approach to interpretive analysis).

Data Synthesis

Data synthesis is the process of bringing all the evidence together to synthesize the data and formulate findings and conclusions. Multiple lines of evidence fed into the contribution analysis. An evidence map was utilized to map information obtained from different sources on the same results area and evaluation questions, and information collected through interviews and case studies. The evaluator synthesised data in two ways. The first was the process of articulating the key findings and cross-checking the strength of the evidence for each. Based on this, the conclusions and recommendations were developed and cross-checked for their relevance to the findings.

Verification and Validation

The above steps incorporated verification and validation of evidence during the data collection and data analysis processes. In addition, the evaluator presented the preliminary findings and recommendations at an evaluation de-brief held with the EMG and UNDP SEESAC on 3rd July 2023 and the draft report was shared widely amongst the project team and other key partners and stakeholders, allowing for review and comments. These comments were addressed and the final evaluation report was produced. These processes provided an opportunity to share key findings, offer mutual challenges, and discuss the feasibility of and receptiveness to draft recommendations. It also provided an important opportunity to foster buy-in to the evaluation process particularly for the partners who will have responsibility for implementing recommendations.

3.7. Sampling Methods for Qualitative and Quantitative Data Collection

The geographical scope of the evaluation included the four project implementation countries – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. The evaluator ensured that partners from each country were included in the data gathering process, as well as regional and sub-regional stakeholders. In addition, the evaluation reviewed and analysed documents relating to each of the countries. The evaluator used a combination of both purposive and random sampling techniques. For example, purposive sampling techniques were used for the selection of subjects from each of the countries where the project activities have been undertaken, to ensure their inclusion and participation in the evaluation and data collection processes. Purposive sampling techniques were used to try to ensure as equal a gender representation as possible, with a minimum of 45% women interviewees, and for participation in the key informant interviews (KIIs) to ensure that the participants are able to actively engage and provide the needed information during the KIIs. Random sampling techniques were applied for assessment of the training activities.

3.8. Challenges and Limitations of the Evaluation and Mitigation Responses

Although a number of potential challenges and limitations and mitigation responses were detailed in the Inception Report, none of these were realised during the evaluation, with the possible exception of selection bias. Partners provided by the project and its partners could mean that the evaluator heard only from people who had positive experiences. However, the evaluator mitigated this potential bias through using multiple sources of data and questions eliciting specific examples to mitigate the risk of this bias. In addition, a wide variety of partners and stakeholders participated in the evaluation and a large number of documents were reviewed, which allowed for additional triangulation.

3.9. Data management plan, informed consent and ethical considerations

The evaluation adhered to international best practices and standards in evaluation, including the OECD DAC ethical considerations for development evaluations¹⁴ and [UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct](#).¹⁵ In addition, the evaluator signed the UNEG Pledge of Ethical Conduct at the start of the evaluation process. All stakeholder information has been handled with confidentiality and in accordance with UNDP's Rules on Personal Data Protection. All interview notes have been de-identified by the evaluator and all names were changed into a code. Proper storage of data was essential for ensuring confidentiality and the data protection procedures were adhered to during all stages of the evaluation.

The evaluation was conducted in an ethical and legal manner, taking into account the well-being of those involved in and affected by the evaluation. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with professional ethics and standards to minimize risks to evaluation participants, including the principle of 'do no harm', and a protocol was in place to ensure that the clearly defined informed consent of all evaluation participants was obtained prior to the start of the data collection meeting/interview – please see Annex IV for the informed consent protocol.

4. Findings

This chapter presents the analysis and findings of the final evaluation grouped around each of the evaluation criteria and cross-cutting issues and based on the analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data collected. Each of the key evaluation questions is answered within the narrative and the analysis and findings are also informed by the guiding questions provided in the ToR.

4.1 Relevance

Finding 1: The project is highly relevant to the national development priorities of the countries in the Western Balkans, including alignment with the National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325 as well as the SDGs, in particular SDGs 5 and 16. It is also aligned with UNDP's global and regional strategic priorities as well as the priorities of the UN/DP in the specific countries. Further it is aligned with the regional and country priorities of its donors, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Slovak Republic.

The evaluation finds that the project is highly relevant in the countries of implementation. The project was able to position itself with the national development priorities of the countries, including the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda and corresponding UNSCR 1325, for which all countries have developed National Action Plans (NAP). Through aligning itself with these national development priorities, the project ensured a high degree of stakeholder buy-in and ownership from the outset as well as the commitment of the partners and stakeholders to the goals of the project. In addition to the WPS Agenda, the project is also relevant to the commitment of the countries to the achievement of the Agenda 2030 and associated SDGs. In particular, the project contributes to SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions, as well as SDG 5 on gender equality.

The project also furthers the UN and UNDP's global and regional strategic priorities. Under the UNDP Strategic Plan 2018 – 2021, the project contributes towards output 2.2.3 "*Capacities, functions and financing of rule of law and national human rights institutions and systems strengthened to expand access to justice and combat discrimination, with a focus on women and*

¹⁴ <https://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/qualitystandards.pdf>

¹⁵ United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation- UNEG/CoC , 2008.

other marginalized groups.” The project is in line with UNDP’s Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2021, which sets entry points for mainstreaming gender equality into the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, more specifically its Outcome 2, including by ‘*Supporting national institutions and engaging community leaders to implement the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and gender-related obligations of other human rights treaties; support women’s access to justice through both formal and informal systems; and increase women’s leadership in the judicial, security and legal sectors.*’ It also contributes toward outcome 3 of UNDP’s Regional Programme for Europe and the CIS 2018 – 2021, “*resilience built to respond to systemic uncertainty and risk.*” The project also contributes to the current UNDP Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025, UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2022 – 2025 and the corresponding regional programme. The project also responds to the UN and UNDP’s priorities in each of the four project implementation countries.

Further, the project has been able to attract funding throughout both phases of implementation due to its relevance to other development partners and donors priorities in the region. The projects is well aligned and relevant to the priorities of its main donor, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whose priorities in the Western Balkans include security and stabilisation as well as Euro-Atlantic integration. This combined with a strong commitment towards gender equality and combatting discrimination ensured the relevance of the project to Norway’s development priorities. Similarly, Slovakia has held a long term commitment to security sector reform in the Western Balkans as part of its foreign policy priorities in the region and viewed the project as aligning closely with its priorities.

Finding 2: The project is highly relevant for its partners – i.e. the Ministries of Defence and Armed Forces in the region. The project design process for both Phase I and Phase II was inclusive and participatory allowing for the project to be tailored to the needs of its partners. In particular, the Gender Equality Mechanisms in the four countries have inputted to and steered the project design and implementation during both phases of the project. Both Phases of the project were well-designed, however the corresponding results frameworks could have benefitted from more clearly defined and SMART¹⁶ indicators and targets at impact, outcome and output level, which would better capture the results of the project.

The first phase of the project was developed at the request of the MoDs in the region, based on the success of a similar regional project focused on gender sensitive policing and strengthening gender equality in the police. Given the results of the SEESAC-supported project that facilitated the establishment of the Women Police Officers Network in South East Europe (WPON), the MoDs approached SEESAC requesting support. Very quickly a project document was developed, with inputs from the MoDs and AFs. The evaluator was informed by partners that the prodoc was based on their needs while also replicating some of the activities arising from the WPON project. Thus, there was a high level of buy-in and commitment to the project from the outset. The project subsequently attracted donor funding and was launched at the ministerial/deputy ministerial level. As one stakeholder informed the evaluator during the group discussions:

“We jointly identified needs with the project and jointly identified how we would address them. We chose our priorities.”

Phase I, which is discussed more fully under the effectiveness findings below, contributed significantly to gathering data and evidence on the level of gender equality in the armed forces in the region. This data was then used to provide an evidence base for the development of Phase II.

¹⁶ Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.

“The results from Phase I created the basis for the development of Phase II, together with the increased knowledge and data. It also created momentum and all four MoDs wanted to continue with the project, but needed support from SEESAC to do so.”

Again, the project design and development for Phase II was largely driven by the partners and in particular the Gender Equality Mechanisms. At a large concluding conference for Phase I a number of areas for further support were identified by the partners and topics and issues for inclusion in Phase II were agreed upon. The evaluator finds that the highly inclusive and participatory development of both phases of the project, combined with the strengthened evidence base for Phase II not only ensured a high degree of ownership and commitment to the project and its objectives, but also contributed to the excellent results of the project.

The results frameworks for the project, and in particular that from Phase II, could have benefitted from more clearly defined and SMART¹⁷ indicators and targets at impact, outcome and output level. For example, the project’s results framework for Phase II contains two impact statements, together with eleven corresponding indicators, targets and baselines, as well as two outcome statements. However, there are no indicators and targets at the outcome level, which would be able to chart the project’s progress towards the impact. The impact level indicators are generally defined as activity level indicators, and do not include any qualitative indicators, which would capture changes in mindsets and practices. Under outcome 1, there are three outputs, the first with one activity result area and three indicators; the second with two activity result areas and eight indicators; and the third with one activity result area and four indicators. Outcome 2 has two outputs, both with one activity result area. Under the first there are six indicators and under the second there are eleven. However, many of the existing indicators are not measurable or quantifiable or have clear baselines. While the RF does include indicators and targets at the activity level, these are unable to capture results of progress towards higher level outcomes. Overall, the indicators are assessed as weak. They do not have a singular focus, they have an unclear timeline, and impact indicators do not use change language. The indicators that are included are generally activity indicators so are only able to measure results at the activity level.

Finding 3: The project has articulately captured risks and regularly monitored and updated its risk analysis. It has been able to swiftly adapt to changes in its operational context, including geo-political changes as well as the COVID-19 global pandemic. And while these have necessitated no-cost extensions to the project activities in both phases, the project was able to adapt without compromising on the achievement of its results.

In the project documents for both phases of the project, risks have been well captured and subsequently monitored and updated throughout the implementation phases. Regular updates on the risks are provided in the project’s progress reports. Despite this, the project has been faced by unexpected challenges in its operational context, including geo-political challenges as well as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Phase II of the project started in 2018 and throughout its implementation it was faced with geo-political tensions resulting from the region’s past as well as the current, differing global aspirations of the countries. This culminated in 2020, with the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia to pull out from all international military cooperation, which resulted in the MoD of Serbia withdrawing from project activities as of September 2020. This impacted the dynamic of implementation of the activities that were planned for 2020. For example, the representatives of the MoD of Serbia did not take part in the 12th regional meeting of Gender Equality Mechanisms in MoDs and Armed Forces in September 2020 and the 5th regional meeting of Gender Military

¹⁷ Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.

Trainers in October 2020. It also impacted finalisation of the regional study on the Position of Women in the AFs in the Western Balkans, as well as delayed the approval of the content of the Regional Manual on Combating Gender-Based Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Abuse, both of which required approval from the MoD Serbia prior to publication. However, following successful discussions between the then newly appointed Serbian Minister of Defence in December 2020 with the Head of SEESAC and the UNDP Serbia Resident Representative, the MoD reversed its decision and agreed to continue its participation in the project. Through having locally recruited experts, the project was able to steer the project through the geo-political challenges. As one stakeholder commented:

“The project is locally grounded and has an adaptive approach, allowing it to react to the evolving context.”

The second phase of the project was implemented during the time of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout 2020 and 2021, and to some extent 2022, the project had to adapt to an ever-changing context. Very quickly, in response to the lockdowns throughout the region and the ban on in-person contact, the project assisted its partners to move to an online modality. This included provision of some technical equipment as well as support in organising online meetings and events. This was confirmed by partners participating in the evaluation, one of whom informed the evaluator that:

“The project has always been sensitive to our needs and the support has been tailored to those needs. The project is flexible and understands our needs, problems and challenges. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the project didn’t give up, but quickly helped us to move activities online and we were adapting all the time, all with the support of the project.”

However, for a project that was to a large extent based on regional cooperation and bringing people together in the same room to discuss and progress issues, the shift to an online modality did change the dynamic of the project. The project helped to overcome this to the largest extent possible. For example, as soon as social distancing was introduced, the project would support participants in each country to participate online but in the same room. These approaches were very much welcomed by the partners, who clearly value the in-person regional contact that the project is able to offer.

4.2 Coherence

Finding 4: The project has managed to successfully build partnerships based on trust and confidence among the MoDs and Armed Forces in the four countries as well as with external organisations, which has enabled it to successfully ensure coherence and coordination. This has allowed for the identification of synergies and complementarities where appropriate as well as avoiding duplication of efforts. The positioning of the project with other on-going processes within the respective countries, such as the EU Accession process and NATO membership/Partnership for Peace has brought a positive influence and impetus for the countries and the project to advance. The project also gained political legitimacy through its partnership with the Regional Cooperation Council. Within the SEESAC portfolio, coherence has been ensured through cross-fertilisation of efforts with the Small Arms Light Weapons project.

From the outset, the project was able to build partnerships based on trust and confidence that were then nurtured throughout both implementation phases. While this has resulted in numerous benefits, it has also contributed to the coherence of the project with the priorities of the respective countries. Approaches towards building strong partnerships have also been extended towards external partners, be it other development partners working in similar fields, such as UN Women,

USAID, OSCE, or with other organisations with whom the project cooperates, such as the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations (NCGM) and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF). Regular coordination meetings are held with external partners to ensure coherence and coordination and avoid potentials for overlap and duplication. The leading role of the project in these coordination efforts is summarised by one stakeholder below:

“SEESAC has become a synonym for gender equality. Even when we work with OSCE, USAID, UN Women, SEESAC is the foundation for all our gender equality efforts in the MoD.”

The project was also able to position itself as distinct from other efforts that were on-going in the region, for example those supported by the NCGM and DCAF. As one stakeholder commented:

“Although others had been working in the region on similar issues, for example, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the AFs, they did not have the capacity for support on the ground, which SEESAC was able to offer.”

All four countries participating in the project are at various stages of the EU accession process, with differing degrees of commitment and advancement. Two of the countries – Montenegro and North Macedonia – are full NATO members, while the remaining two – Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia – are both in NATO’s Partnership for Peace programme. In addition, Bosnia and Herzegovina is receiving considerable support for military and security sector reforms from the UK’s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The evaluator finds that the close alignment and coordination with these other on-going processes has not only contributed towards the coherence of the project but has also positively influenced the project and given an added impetus for the participating countries, and thus the project, to advance.

SEESAC is a joint initiative between UNDP and the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC). All of the project partners are RCC participants, while the RCC provides a framework that facilitates the initiation and implementation of regional processes and activities while providing the flexibility to have various partners. The [Regional Security Sector Reform platform](#)¹⁸ (RSSRP), includes regular regional meetings (technically), which provide opportunities for the representatives of the four Ministries of Defence and Armed Forces to provide strategic guidance, exchange information, and agree on initiatives and requests for UNDP SEESAC support. The evaluator finds that the partnership with the RCC has given the project political legitimacy while also ensuring regional ownership at the political level. This has been crucial, in particular during Phase I, to establish the regional cooperation and mechanisms within the project.

In addition, the project works closely with the SEESAC project on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), leading to cross-fertilisation of efforts and ideas.

Finding 5: Lessons learnt and results from Phase I helped shape both the design and implementation of Phase II in order to maximise the coherence of the project. This included the need to continue fostering regional cooperation to contribute towards mainstreaming gender into military training and education, developing gender responsive and evidence based HR policies, strengthening capacities of internal complaints mechanisms, improving the integration of women through gender responsive policies and practices and continuing to strengthen the capacities of the gender trainers.

As mentioned under Finding 2, lessons learnt and results from Phase I were used to inform the development and implementation of Phase II. This also strengthened the coherence of the project,

¹⁸ UNDP SEESAC established the Regional Security Sector Reform Platform (RSSRP) to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and expertise on niche security sector reform themes from SEE to the rest of Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (ECIS) region and further afield.

in particular by responding to the needs of the partners as well as ensuring a strong evidence base for design and implementation.

Areas identified by the partners for continued support during Phase II included the need to continue fostering regional cooperation to contribute towards mainstreaming gender into military training and education, developing gender responsive and evidence based HR policies, strengthening capacities of internal complaints mechanisms, improving the integration of women in the military through gender-responsive policies and practices and continuing to strengthen the capacities of the gender trainers.

4.3 Effectiveness

This section will analyse the effectiveness of the project. It has been broken down into the effectiveness of Phase I, and under Phase II, the analysis has been broken down further by outcome. However, it is important to point out that many of the results achieved during Phase II were as a result of achievements or groundwork laid in Phase I, so the findings cannot be looked at in total isolation. While this section does not analyse all of the project's activities conducted throughout both phases of the project, it uses certain activities to evidence the analysis conducted and identification of findings.

4.3.1 Phase I

Finding 6: Phase I was focused on fostering regional cooperation on gender equality in the military. Through this the project was able to achieve key results in increasing the level of gender awareness among the staff in the MoDs and AFs in the region, strengthening gender equality mechanisms and contributing to the development of more gender responsive HR policies. It focused on the preliminary trust and confidence building, capacity development, increasing gender awareness and creating an evidence base for decision-making, thereby creating both momentum and knowledge.

As mentioned above, the project came about in large part due to the success of the WPON project. Based on the results of that project in terms of addressing gender in the police forces in the Western Balkans, Ministries of Defence approached SEESAC requesting similar support for developing and implementing a similar project for the military and armed forces in the region. As one stakeholder informed:

“The MoDs saw an opening because of the police project (WPON), they had to engage with the topic because of UNSCR 1325 and it (gender equality in the military) was a fairly neutral topic, so there was good momentum and the opportunity was there.”

The project was developed by SEESAC in cooperation with the MoDs in the region and as mentioned, was tailored to their needs. It was launched at the level of Deputy Ministers, which was important given the hierarchical structure of the military, to ensure the political support at the ministerial level from the outset, in order to facilitate the smooth implementation of activities. It contained three outputs. The first focused on providing support to the gender focal points within the MoDs, through institutionalizing the positions and developing existing capacities. The second was designed to provide support for Human Resource policy reform in order to improve the recruitment and retention of women personnel and the third was focused on the implementation of a gender sensitization programme to increase gender awareness of military personnel in the four participating countries.

One of the key successes of Phase I was the establishment of the Regional Network of Gender Trainers. In partnership with the NCGM, the project trained an initial 16 gender trainers, who undertook a 10-day, NATO certified Training of Trainers course. The Network was established in

March 2014 and subsequently expanded to 33 Trainers by 2015. By the end of the project in 2016, these trainers had delivered gender awareness briefings and seminars to more than 4,000 officers, non-commissioned officers, soldiers and civilians in the MoDs and AFs in the Western Balkans. The gender trainers in Serbia developed and launched a Gender Training Manual to support education and training on gender equality. The SEESAC project staff also participated in the initial training programme, thereby demonstrating their commitment to the project and increasing the level of trust with the project's partners

Best Practice: Raising credibility and confidence through joint participation in activities - By participating in the Gender Training themselves the SEESAC staff were able to not only raise their own knowledge but also their credibility and commitment to the project.

A key indicator of success of the gender training programme was the inclusion of the gender trainers in the Regional Security Sector Reform Platform roster of experts developed to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and expertise from South East Europe to the rest of Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States, as well as further afield. As such, they assisted the NCGM in planning and delivering the Gender Training of Trainers courses, for example in Georgia, the United Kingdom and Croatia. This provides clear evidence of the high regard with which the expertise, knowledge and the capacities of the gender trainers are held. It evidences their transition from being a recipient of support to a provider of gender training and entering into an equal partnership with the NCGM.

In order to facilitate experience exchange, Phase I organised a total of nine Regional Meetings of Gender Equality Mechanisms. This included the provision of technical advice as well as other forms of capacity building such as study visits and the implementation of small-scale projects, aimed at mainstreaming gender equality in defence policies and practices. These initiatives resulted in improved working conditions for women in the military in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro; supported the creation of the Regional Network of Gender Trainers; raised gender awareness among 263 Military Academy (MA) cadets and 123 Military High School (MHS) students and 59 members of the MA and MHS teaching staff in Serbia; increased knowledge about gender equality and anti-discrimination of the MoD of the Republic of Serbia public relations staff; piloting the Gender Coach Programme in Montenegro; better knowledge of the position of women in the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans through the development of a regional study (see below), and implementation of the study's recommendations.¹⁹ As one stakeholder commented:

“When I enrolled at the Military Academy it was inconceivable to have women. Now it has become normal.”

The project supported the MoDs to undertake a seminal study on The Position of Women in the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans, which was published in 2014. The methodology for the study was developed by the Working Group, who were also responsible for conducting the study. The identification of recommendations and their subsequent implementation were also the responsibility of the Working Group. This allowed for the strengthening of capacities from within, in particular on gender analysis, which led not only to the achievement of results and the building of capacities, but also contributes towards the sustainability of the project's interventions. The evaluator finds that this is a best practice.

¹⁹ Overview of Project Results, UNDP SEESAC, 2016

Best Practice: Building capacities from within - Appointing a Working Group to develop the methodology and undertake the study strengthened the MoDs and AFs capacities from within.

The evaluator was informed that the skills gained through this best practice approach have allowed the MoDs to subsequently conduct their own studies, independently of the project. The recommendations, which were subsequently implemented with support of the project included further capacity development for gender responsive human resource policies in North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia; improvement of working conditions for women in the military in BiH, Montenegro and Serbia; professional development courses for 22 women officers from the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans, thus strengthening their career development prospects; as well as the piloting of the Gender Coach Programme in Montenegro. This was initially organised for one high-ranking officer of the Montenegrin Armed Forces in charge of Human Resource management, but has subsequently been expanded for top-level leaders in all four of the project's implementation countries during Phase II and to date, seven high-level military officers and decision-makers have completed the course to increase gender-responsive military leadership. The Gender Coach Programme is a replica of a programme developed in Sweden with the aim of strengthening the capacities of leaders within security and humanitarian agencies to integrate a gender perspective in the work of their organizations, both at the national and international level. It is highly regarded by the participants, one of whom commented:

“The training lasted over six months. It was one of the best trainings I have ever had, because although the topic was familiar the focus was on specific elements that were based on our experience.”

Another commented on the high level of expertise of the trainers for the Gender Coach Programme, who was the first Commissioner for the Protection of Equality in Serbia and a highly experienced gender equality lawyer. This level of expertise that the project was able to attract was highly valued by the participants. The evaluator was informed that the programme was tailored both to the individual needs of the leaders as well as to the organisational needs. To have senior military leaders involved marked a huge cultural shift and to secure their buy-in and interest was crucial for the success of the project.

Together, the study on The Position of Women in the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans and the Action Plan to implement the recommendations formed the evidence-base for the development of Phase II of the project.

4.3.2 Phase II - Outcome 1: Strengthened capacities for gender-responsive and evidence-based policy development and implementation

Finding 7: The regional coordination approach adopted by the project transcends gender equality with results and impact way beyond the project. Through bringing together the four countries the project contributes to regional reconciliation, peace and stability. The project has been able to use the issue of gender to strengthen cooperation among the countries and to deconflict other issues, such as security sector reform in general. The project's approaches, through information sharing, knowledge exchange, learning grounded in regional meetings, and support for the implementation of demand-driven small-scale projects with tailor-made solutions have proven to be highly effective and have delivered impressive results. However, the committed support among key decision makers in MoDs to continue regional cooperation after the project close is yet to be achieved.

Outcome 1 builds upon the successful facilitation of the networking at the regional level between the MoDs and AFs in the Western Balkans undertaken during Phase I. The regional coordination,

which was established during Phase I enables information sharing and knowledge exchange as a result of increased regional cooperation, strengthening capacities of the MoDs and AFs for gender mainstreaming, and practical solutions for gender mainstreaming in the military. There are three main areas of focus under outcome 1 - i) institutionalisation of gender equality through continued support to the GEMs in the MoDs; ii) increased gender-responsive policymaking and implementation capacities of Human Resources (HR) Departments in the MoDs; and iii) enhanced response to gender-based discrimination by strengthening the internal complaints mechanisms. This is done through information sharing, knowledge exchange and learning grounded on regional meetings, and support for the implementation of small-scale projects.

The evaluator finds that the regional approach adopted by the project transcends gender equality with results and impact way beyond the project. Through bringing together the four countries the project contributes to regional reconciliation, peace and stability. The project has been able to use the issue of gender to unify the countries and to deconflict other issues, such as security sector reform in general. This also set the project apart from other projects and the value added of the regional aspect encouraged MoDs to participate in the project. It provided a new dimension and additional quality. As one stakeholder commented:

“The regional character of the project had a great impact on the regional MoDs and armed forces especially in the light of regional cooperation, which represents one of the key foreign policy goals for my country as well as for the other Western Balkan countries. Not to mention the importance of connecting the countries and building the bridges of mutual trust and collaboration in the light of the terrible events/conflicts that occurred in the region in the past.”

The key results of the regional cooperation throughout both phases of the project implementation include the joint development of three seminal studies and the development of the online gender course by the gender trainers. However, just bringing the partners and participants together has had immeasurable benefits. This was confirmed by all partners, one of whom commented:

“We have a diversity of best practices that can be exchanged, which exceeds the value of individual examples. It also helps to escape the duplication of efforts. We always hear something new and get more ideas from our regional colleagues.”

The regional meetings of Gender Equality Mechanisms represent a key capacity-building mechanism for the MoDs and AFs and, as such, are regarded as the backbone of the regional cooperation. Partners and stakeholders repeatedly informed the evaluator of the value that the regional cooperation through the project brings. The regional meetings allow for exchange of information and experiences on practical as well as policy aspects of mainstreaming gender equality in the military. They are used to identify topics for the development of knowledge products as well as planning activities. During Phase I, nine regional meetings were held. As of the end of quarter 2, 2023, seven regional meetings have been organised during Phase II, bringing the total to 16. In 2020 and 2021 only one regional meeting was held per year due to the restrictions in place as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the regional meetings, technical support from the project is available to the GEMs in the MoDs and AFs on-demand at any time, offering expertise, training, and assistance with small-scale project implementation.

Best practice: Regional model – the unique regional model has driven the project allowing opportunities for learning and exchange, while also providing an element of friendly competition to drive the project results further.

The project has provided considerable support to increase gender-responsive policymaking and the implementation capacities of Human Resources (HR) Departments in the MoDs. This has included a number of seminal studies aimed at providing an evidence base for decision making, including the second study on The Position of Women in the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans

and the Regional Online Youth Perception Survey on Values and Attitudes.²⁰ The Position of Women in the AFs builds on the original study conducted in 2012 at the very start of Phase I, looking at improvements registered and remaining gaps related to the position of women in the AFs. The Youth Perception Survey has gathered regionally comparable and gender disaggregated data on how attitudes and values, socio-economic context, and previous education influence the career choices of young women and men. The survey reached 2,538 young men and women aged between 14-21 years old. It was conducted online using a mixed methodology, including a survey questionnaire, interviews with key informants and focus group discussions in all four countries.

Another key success under outcome 1 has been the increase in requests from the MoDs for support for the small-scale projects. During Phase I there were less than 10 requests for support, whereas to date, during Phase II, there have been over 40. The ministries approach the project with an idea and then jointly a solution is found on how to best address it. Examples of small-scale projects that have been supported include increasing capacities of women officers in the MoD and AFs to promote inclusion of a gender perspective in their day-to-day work as well as networking among women officers as a means for empowerment and sharing experiences; strengthening capacities of mediators and persons of trust from MoD and AFs to address gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, and abuse and strengthening capacities of the internal complaints mechanisms to respond to gender-related complaints; and increasing capacities for implementing gender-responsive human resources policies through conducting gender-sensitive selection processes, collecting and analysing gender-sensitive data. The high number of demands from the partners for support through the small-scale projects evidences the project's ability to deliver tailor-made capacity development support based on the very individualised and specific needs of each Ministry.

Finally under outcome 1, the project has been addressing the issue of gender based discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse and enhancing responses through strengthening internal complaint mechanisms. This has included the development of a seminal Handbook on Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Abuse, which is designed to help identify and respond to gender-based discrimination by providing information, practical advice, and case studies from the four systems of defence that should contribute to addressing gender-based discrimination and promoting zero tolerance towards discrimination, sexual harassment, and abuse. Continuing the best practice established during Phase I, the project built the capacities of the MoDs from within through establishing a working group among the four MoDs to develop the methodology, undertake the data collection and conduct the analysis to jointly identify recommendations and chart the way forward. The project provided technical support and facilitated the process. The joint recommendations arising from the study have yet to be fully implemented.

With regards to progress towards indicators under outcome 1, all 11 indicators under the three output areas have been fully met or exceeded.

4.3.3 Phase II - Outcome 2: Improved integration of women into the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans through increasing gender awareness and revision of the military education curricula

Finding 8: The project has without doubt advanced gender awareness in the MoDs and the Armed Forces through the region. It increased gender awareness and contributed to a more gender-sensitive and inclusive organizational culture, while also improving the integration

²⁰ Regional Online Youth Perception Research - Values and Attitudes while considering future profession with specific emphasis on gender related aspects focusing on the career in the military

of women into the AFs. Through establishing a Regional Network of gender military trainers and building the capacities from within the system the project has enhanced and spread knowledge and capacities throughout the system. The level of expertise gained by the gender military trainers is evidenced by the demand from external partners to use the trainers in their activities and projects at the national, regional and global level. However, the trainers are still volunteering their time and are not yet fully institutionalised.

Outcome 2 builds upon the results achieved in raising gender awareness within the military and AFs in the region during Phase I. Diverse activities are undertaken to contribute to a more gender-sensitive organizational culture, free from obstacles to meaningful integration of women in the defence system. The project supports and further strengthens the Regional Network of Gender Military Trainers established in Phase I, through regular regional meetings and access to relevant knowledge tools. To facilitate the integration of the gender perspective into military training and education, and thus ensure a systematic approach to gender sensitization in the military, technical support is provided to raise gender awareness of curriculum developers and the teaching staff of the military, both through training and education institutional tools.

“Through the project we have integrated gender equality into the whole education system at all levels, from soldiers through to commanding officers. Also, equal rights have been entrenched throughout from entrance into the military to all stages of promotion.”

The knowledge products and handbooks developed through the project have been crucial with regards to expanding training and the evaluator was informed that they are used throughout all levels of the training system as well as beyond the project.

“The knowledge products are used in other projects and other work as well. We can easily find the legislative framework, statistical data and other information all in one place. We have used this data in other strategic and planning documents.”

One of the key results under outcome 2 has been the development of the Regional Baseline Study on Integrating a Gender Perspective in Military Education and Training, which was jointly developed by the four MoDs in the region, with the support of the SEESAC team project, as per the best practice of building capacities from within. The Regional Baseline Study resulted in a set of recommendations related to the integration of a gender perspective in military education at all levels. While each MoD will implement recommendations at their own pace, the potential for regional cooperation was specifically recognised related to the development of an online gender training course. All four MoDs decided to embark on joint development of the online gender course and it is envisaged that the course will become a mandatory part of education and training across all levels of the military. Outcome 2 has also introduced or continued additional capacity development activities such as the highly regarded Gender Coach Programme, as well as the Commanding Officers Seminars.

The study was conducted in parallel to the implementation of some small scale projects. This allowed the MoDs to start with innovative practices while at the same time gathering information for the Regional Baseline Study to generate recommendations for the next steps. These included:

- (a) Seminar for decision-making personnel on education plans and programmes in AFs of Montenegro;
- (b) Workshop for the Teaching Staff of the Military Academy in the Republic of North Macedonia;
- (c) Gender Training Handbook development in MoDs and AFs of BiH, Montenegro, and update of the Manual in MoD Serbia;
- (d) Gender Coaching Programme for teaching staff in Military Academy, MoD Serbia.

The fact that the project was able to enter into military education was crucial, because it is of paramount importance for creating a gender inclusive culture in the military. Integrating a gender perspective in military education and training was something that seemed inconceivable during Phase I, but based on the results of the project and the high level of trust and confidence created, the project was able to enter this vital area. As one stakeholder commented:

“Mainstreaming gender into military education could not have been imagined during Phase I. We now have a regional (baseline) study and joint recommendations, we set up a working group, did the research and the report. This has hugely built the capacities of the MoDs.”

Perhaps the key result under outcome 2 has been the establishment of the Regional Network of Gender Military Trainers and their subsequent strengthening. To date, throughout both phases of the project, seven regional meetings of gender trainers have been held. The activities and results relating to the Network during Phase I have been detailed under Finding 6. In Phase II, the project has continued to strengthen the MoDs capacities to deliver gender training, by further expanding the network with 17 new certified gender trainers and by strengthening the regional platform of gender trainers, to facilitate information sharing and knowledge exchange. The total number of gender instructors who have finished the Gender Training of Trainers according to the NCGM methodology and are certified to deliver gender training in the military now stands at 77.²¹ The Regional Network has been instrumental in raising gender awareness in the MoDs and AFs, with more than 4,000 military and civilian personnel being informed/educated on gender. However, to date, the gender trainers contribute their time on an entirely voluntary basis and receive no compensation or incentive for it. The evaluator was informed about this from partners from all four of the implementing countries, one of whom summarised the situation as follows:

“We all have other duties and responsibilities but the project can push us to organise and to sit together and speak. And this is invaluable and more efficient. This was the best support of the project. However, it is difficult to balance working on the project with our other roles and obligations and we do not receive extra benefits for participating in the project but it is an additional responsibility. We need to attract people through motivation and incentives.”

As mentioned above, the gender trainers are engaged through the Regional Network as well as by the NCGM and the RCC, all of whom utilize their knowledge and expertise in their own work. This is testament to the ~~huge~~ robust capacities that they have gained with support of the project.

In respect of strengthening internal complaint mechanisms related to gender based discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse, in addition to the Regional Handbook on Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Abuse,²² the project has also strengthened capacities and internal complaint mechanisms through tailor-made support based on the needs of the MoDs. For example, this has included considerable support to the MoD in Serbia, who in 2010 had established a network of persons of trust. Persons of trust represent a network of MoD employees who have been selected by their colleagues to act as the internal complaint mechanism and the project supported their capacity building. Evaluations of these trainings show an increased ability to recognise and address gender-based discrimination in the workplace. Within the MoD in Serbia, there are now 86 persons of trust. As one stakeholder informed:

“We now have persons of trust who are available 24/7. Everyone knows who they are and how to approach them and it creates a culture of zero tolerance towards gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace.”

²¹ It is important to note that not all the trainers finished GTOT as part of this particular project, but they all participate in the Regional network of gender trainers.

²² The Handbook was drafted by the regional working group comprised of members nominated by the MoDs and with the SEESAC expert support

Other MoDs have mediators or appointed persons who fulfil this role. The support that the project has been able to provide in terms of strengthening the capacities of the internal complaints mechanisms has included interactive seminars, knowledge sharing on international standards and best practices, and skills improvement. This support led the MoD in Montenegro to develop tailor-made knowledge products to increase awareness and knowledge of reporting procedures. This included a Guide on Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Abuse. The Guide is aimed to support the internal complaints mechanisms to efficiently combat discrimination. It provides support to all employees in the AF and MoD to familiarise them with the reporting procedures. The project has also provided support to the MoD in North Macedonia to strengthen the capacities of their mediators and to the MoD of Bosnia and Herzegovina on professional development and career advancement, focusing on the position of the Gender Advisor and the Chief of the Joint Staff of the AFs of BiH (GENAD).

With regards to progress towards indicators under outcome 2, the three indicators under output 2.1 have been fully met or exceeded. Under output 2.2, there are 3 indicators. The first output foresaw the organisation of a seminar for Commanding Officers on Gender Sensitive Training, the second the development of a Handbook for Commanding Officers on Gender Sensitive Training and the third, three Commanding Officers Seminars. These indicators have been partially met. One seminar has been held so far and it is envisaged that an additional two will be completed by the end of 2024. With regards to the envisaged Handbook for Commanding Officers, a decision was made that it was a more effective approach to translate the DCAF Handbook and complement it with a Concept Paper on integrating a gender perspective in military education curricula, which will include comments for the gender military trainers. It was also agreed to focus more on the number of high level leaders who participate in the Gender Coach Programme. This change reflects the flexibility of the project and its ability to adapt to the changing needs. Instead of focusing on commanding officers only, the project focused on the entire system through production of the online gender course, plus the Handbook on gender-based discrimination, plus Handbooks for gender trainers so that they can deliver standardised gender training to all military staff, including commanding officers.

4.4 Efficiency

Finding 9: The efficiency approaches utilised by the project through identifying low cost measures combined with the long-term approach of both the project and its donors has proven to be highly successful. Financial delivery has always been high, illustrating a realistic budget based on a sound assessment of partners' needs. The project has been implemented in a lean and cost-efficient manner, offering good value for money for the results it has achieved as well as its anticipated future results. The expertise that the SEESAC project team is able to offer is highly regarded and well respected. The team managed to meet the needs of the partners through deploying in-house expertise and facilitating the exchange of knowledge through leveraging gender-related knowledge and expertise from the military across all four defence systems.

The project adopted a number of approaches to enhance efficiency during both phases of project implementation. This included the guiding approach of identifying low cost measures combined with the long-term approach of both the project and its donors. This has proven to be highly effective and is evidenced by both the high level of results achieved as well as the accumulation of results. Many results gained in Phase II were as a result of initial results achieved during Phase I and/or the laying of groundwork in Phase I to enable the achievement of results in Phase II. The project has achieved a good value for money co-efficient throughout its implementation. Project donors informed the evaluator that they were satisfied with the value for money given the results achieved by the project. One commented:

“I can see the project is bringing good value for money and even extra results.”

The project has consistently had a high level of delivery. During Phase I, there were no deviations from the project’s budget and during Phase II, any deviations have been as a result of fluctuations in the currency exchange. As of the end of 2022, overall delivery stood at 81%, which is a solid figure given the remaining implementation period and in particular considering the impact that COVID-19 had on the implementation of the project in terms of delays. The delivery rate for 2022 stood at 95%, which is highly impressive. The project has received a no cost extension until 31st December 2023, due to delays caused in implementation as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The high delivery rate is illustrative of the project developing a realistic budget that is based on the needs of its partners.

With regards to the efficiency of the staffing structure, the project has been implemented with a very lean organisational structure.. All team members have extensive gender equality expertise, which is highly regarded and valued by the project partners as well as by external partners. Without fail, the evaluator was informed by all partners and stakeholders of the extremely high level of dedication and commitment of the team; the excellent partnerships and relationships that have been developed by the team; the high level of expertise that the team is able to offer; and the genuine willingness of the team to provide assistance to the partners, not only to further the results of the project, but also simply to help. The team are highly valued as being experts in their field and not simply as project managers or implementers. It should also be noted that the “no one size fits all” approach adopted by the project, by working at the national level and tailoring support to specific and individualised needs required different skills from the team, which they were always able to adapt to and provide.

The project has been efficiently managed throughout both phases and Project Board meetings are held on an annual basis, providing an opportunity to steer the project and undertake any necessary course corrections. Members of the project board informed the evaluator of the utility of the meetings. They also informed that they regularly receive information relating to the meetings in advance and receive minutes and other relevant follow-up after each meeting. In addition, the project has organised annual donor coordination meetings, which provide an opportunity to update the donors or the projects achievements, any challenges and to discuss planned activities in the coming period. This is a good approach and is valued by the donors in addition to the Project Board meetings.

The project is currently under a six-month no cost extension, which has extended the project until 31st December 2023. During this phase, the project will wrap-up the remaining activities, with a focus on ensuring the sustainability of the results gained so far. The project’s main donor, Norway, has already indicated it will not be able to fund a third phase of the project, while the funds received from the Slovak Republic will continue until end of 2024. There is currently no resource mobilisation strategy in place for a potential third phase of the project although the Concept Note for Phase III has been developed and shared with potential donors.²³

4.5 Impact

Finding 10: The project has undoubtedly had impact beyond just the results of its activities, which have been transformative for the MoDs and AFs in the region. While impact can be shown through the increase of participation of women in the Armed Forces in all four countries, the increase of knowledge and capacities, the continuous strengthening of the

²³ The evaluator was informed that the SEESAC team are currently (September 2023) in communication with the UN Mission of Lichtenstein, which approached SEESAC with an offer to support the continuation of the project.

gender quality mechanisms, the Network of Gender Military Trainers and establishment of complaint mechanisms, it can perhaps best be illustrated by the numerous anecdotal examples of how mindsets and perceptions have begun to change and the gradual erosion of gender stereotypes in the MoDs and AFs. While there is currently no empirical evidence related to the changes in mindsets and perceptions all partners informed that this is the case. The impact of the project in terms of its contribution towards regional reconciliation, peace and stability can also not be underestimated.

The project has had impact beyond the results of its activities, which have been transformative for the MoDs and AFs in the region. For example, there has been an increase in the numbers of women in the military in all four countries since 2012, which the project has certainly contributed to. As of 2019, in Bosnia and Herzegovina the number of women has increased from 6.2% to 6.5%; in Montenegro from 3.3% to 6.2%; in North Macedonia from 5.7% to 9.5%; and in Serbia from 4.9% to 8.7%. While this is the latest official data, the evaluator was informed by partners that the numbers now, four years on, are even higher. The numbers of women in command positions still remains low, however it needs to be kept in mind that change takes time and it takes time for women to progress through the organisational structures to command positions. That said, there have been some significant results during the project implementation period in this regard. As one stakeholder informed the evaluator:

“In 2012 Montenegro MoD had only one coordinator for gender equality in the MoD and her role was perceived as an additional job and then if we compare it with what we have in the system today, when AF Montenegro among everything else holds the position of gender advisor to the SACEUR (Supreme Allied Commander Europe) at SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe/NATO (the highest position in the command structure that Montenegro has in NATO currently) and we have the Gender Advisor to the Montenegro Chief of Defence, then the conclusion is for sure that the impact of the project was huge.”

Another example is the MoD in Bosnia and Herzegovina who informed the evaluator that they now have two women Brigadiers (the final rank before General), as well as women in the tank corps and the helicopter crew. Since 2020, they have had a gender advisor in the organisational structure of the MoD. They have a women in a peace-building mission in Latvia; a woman in a UN Mission in Western Sahara and from September the first woman in UN Mission in Kosovo.²⁴ A similar situation exists with the MoDs in North Macedonia and Serbia and these are all clear indications of the impact as well as the sustainability of the project’s interventions.

The evaluator was informed that the organisational culture within the MoDs and AFs has changed as a result of the project. While this goes beyond the increasing of numbers of women, the numbers are indicative of things starting to change. As one stakeholder commented:

“When we increased the number of women in the military this was a clear sign that both the military and society were beginning to change and from this point, we started to feel and see the change.”

The impact that the project has had in terms of the increase of knowledge and capacities of the MoDs, strengthening the Gender Equality Mechanisms, establishing the Network of Gender Military Trainers, contributing towards legislative and policy change regarding more gender responsive human resource policies; the establishment and strengthening of complaint mechanisms relating to gender discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse have been detailed under other findings but all add evidence as to the impact of the project. As one stakeholder commented:

²⁴ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

“The integration of a gender perspective in our everyday work allowed us to strengthen the legislative framework and created cohesion in the MoD and Armed Forces.”

The impact of the increase in knowledge of gender equality in the military within all four systems of defence cannot be underestimated. As detailed in other findings, the knowledge products created by the project are being used beyond just the scope of the project, but within all four systems of defence generally. They are also being used to inform strategic and policy decision-making more generally. One example of this is the new Gender Equality Strategy in Montenegro, where a participant in the Gender Coach Programme was able to integrate their new learning directly into the Strategy. This indicates the impact of the project way beyond the simple achievement of the project’s results.

However, perhaps the best way to illustrate the impact of the project is through the considerable anecdotal evidence shared with the evaluator of how mindsets and perceptions are starting to change as well as a gradual erosion of gender stereotypes within the MoDs and AFs. Given that the MoDs and AFs are one of the most trusted institutions throughout the region, this is also having a knock-on effect on perceptions among society as a whole. It is really a standout project in terms of its approaches and its impact, which is articulated by all MoDs in the region.

“Through the project, someone turned on the light and accelerated the importance of gender mainstreaming. They proved that an increased number of women in command structures can be an added advantage. The project carved a niche for policy formulation and soft laws.²⁵ They built a capable team of trainers who are now extending their expertise to other countries.”

Another informed the evaluator about the impact that the project has had:

“The army and the MoD are now seen as institutions who attach great importance to gender equality and every decision and activity has this perspective.”

4.6 Sustainability

Finding 11: The project was designed with sustainability in mind from the outset and the approaches it has adopted have contributed to the longer-term sustainability of the project’s results. Ownership of both the project and its results is assessed as very high. There is a need to continue to reinforce the sustainability of the project’s results and it particular to create a mechanism for the continuity of the regional cooperation beyond the lifespan of the project. While Phase II was focused on embedding a gender perspective in the military, particularly in military education and training, and ensuring the sustainability of results, there was no specific exit strategy developed during the project development process.

The project was designed with sustainability in mind from the outset and the approaches it has adopted have contributed to the longer-term sustainability of the project’s results. This includes building the capacities of the MoDs from within, building on what already existed rather than creating new structures or processes and following a needs-based approach. Particular attention was paid to the institutionalisation of GEMs and the specific roles of gender advisors in the military to deal with gender related concerns; increasing the number of gender trainers and their empowerment through networking; increasing the availability of knowledge products (handbooks, online gender course) which can be used in the future and updated as required; and starting the process of integrating gender into military education and training through the joint production of the regional baseline study. As such, when sustainability is looked at through the lens of ownership, ownership of both the project and its results is assessed as very high, with both phases of the project

²⁵ Secondary legislation such as regulations and by-laws.

having been developed at the request, and based on the needs, of the MoDs. However, as yet, there is no specific exit strategy developed for the project although the evaluator was informed that an exit strategy will be developed during the no-cost extension phase. This will be based on sustainability orientated efforts, which were solidified during Phase II.

There is much evidence that many of the results of the project will continue. The project has been a huge enabler of gender in the militaries in the region. All the knowledge products developed by the project are being actively used – not just by the immediate project partners, but also more widely within the MoDs and AFs in the region. For example, this includes the translation of the Handbook on gender-based discrimination to Ukrainian and sharing knowledge products and experience with the MoD of Georgia. The knowledge products will continue to provide an evidence base for decision-making relating to strengthening gender equality in the military beyond the lifespan of the project. The Gender Equality Mechanisms in all four MoDs have been considerably strengthened and institutionalised to varying degrees; knowledge and awareness of gender has been raised from the high command structures to the newly enrolled military and civilian personnel, although to date, less focus has been placed on the middle strata of personnel.²⁶ Gender training courses have been integrated into the annual training plans of the MoDs and the courses are regularly conducted. The full institutionalisation of gender equality into military education and training is on-going, through the development of the online gender course, although this has yet to be rolled-out. Human Resource policies have been strengthened and gender equality has been systematised into HR policies throughout the region. The increasing demand from MoDs for capacity building through seminars and training implemented through the small-scale project scheme (a total of 42 proposed small-scale projects since the beginning of Phase II, with an increasing trend year on year) demonstrates the commitment of all Project counterparts to ensure long-lasting impact and sustainability of Project results. As one stakeholder from one of the participating MoDs informed:

“We have now integrated gender equality into four subjects in military training and this is accredited. We have plans and procedures in place now and it is part of our regular work, e.g., training and ToT (training of trainers). This has been integrated into our AWP (annual work plans) so will continue.”

One area where sustainability is less ensured is with regards to the regional knowledge exchange on gender equality. While all partners hugely value the regional knowledge exchange and sharing of experiences, it is not guaranteed that this would continue beyond the continuation of the project. Other areas include the full integration and institutionalisation of gender throughout military education and the institutionalisation of the gender trainers and of complaint mechanisms relating to gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse. These would be strengthened by the full implementation of all recommendations arising from the studies, which is currently on-going.

With regards to the financial sustainability, there are different levels of sustainability within the MoDs and AFs. Some Ministries now have allocated funds from the state budget for gender activities, however not all activities are fully funded – for example the committed support among key decision makers in the four MoDs to continue regional cooperation after the project closed is yet to be achieved, and not all structures are fully funded, for example the network of gender trainers.

²⁶ The middle strata military staff were targeted by gender training and the online gender training is envisaged to address this gap. There was a conscious decision by the project to sensitise decision makers first and also support those who can galvanise the change in the system.

4.7 Visibility and Communications

Finding 12: Internal communication and external communication and visibility has been developed at a very high level. Throughout both phases of the project implementation, the project has maintained a high level of visibility and utilised different communication techniques to promote the project, its activities and its results. This has been extended by all four MoDs in the region, who all have dedicated space on their websites to promote the project. The branding for SEESAC and the project is well known throughout the region and the project has enabled a high degree of visibility for its donors. This high level of visibility has also had a knock-on effect of further raising awareness and knowledge about gender equality in the military beyond its partners including in the countries, the region and globally.

The evaluator finds that both internal communication and external communication and visibility have been consistently developed to a very high level, guided by a Visibility and Communication Plan. The objectives of the Visibility and Communication Plan are to raise awareness among key partners and the general public about the donors' support allocated through the Project and to inform key partners and the general public about the progress and milestones and the donors' contribution to these achievements. Throughout both phases of the project implementation, the project team has ensured a high level of visibility for the promotion of the project and its activities and results, through utilising a number of different communication methods. This has included branding of the project on all project related materials including promotional materials, knowledge products, website and social media news feeds. The project's website is regularly kept up to date with news and activities related to the project, all knowledge products are publicly available and results of the project can easily be accessed. In particular, the project took all the appropriate measures to publicise the fact that the action has been funded by the governments of Norway and the Slovak Republic. The project consistently ensured the visibility of the donors' contribution with appropriate branding and publicity and implemented the UNDP branding guidelines throughout.

Internally, the project has created excellent communication structures within the project team as well as with the partners of the project. All partners informed the evaluator about the high degree of communication between the project and the MoDs and AFs, which has also contributed to strengthening trust and confidence. The project has also put considerable efforts into strengthening the communication mechanisms among the MoDs and AFs in the region, including the development of a knowledge sharing platform. This is well used and highly valued among the partners. As one commented:

“We can find all information relating to the project and also communicate through the platform. It is actively used.”

The project regularly updates the online knowledge exchange platform with news items following project events, milestones and success stories. Relevant project information and news updates are also shared. All materials highlight the donors' financial support for the action. The platform dedicated to Gender Equality in the Military was developed to ensure proper outreach and visibility.

The high level of visibility of the project can be evidenced by its annual visibility highlights. For example, in 2022, the project had 38,163 impressions on social media; it organised 47 events – 6 of which were regional and 41 of which were at the national level; the events included 333 participants in total – 186 women and 147 men; the project tweeted 62 times (more than once per week) and it issued 30 news items – 2.5 times per month. This high level of publicity ensured that the project and its activities and results were constantly in the public's view.

In addition, all MoDs participating in the project actively promote the project through their websites. Each MoD website has information on the project, news and events and the project's results. This shows a high level of commitment to the project and its' objectives. As one stakeholder commented:

“Not only are the knowledge products used within the system, but it is also important to use them to promote our results both for management and for soldiers. This also helps to change mindsets, stereotypes and beliefs.”

The evaluator was also informed by external partners that many of the knowledge products and publications, as well as promotional materials developed by the project have been used by external partners. For example, the NCGM informed the evaluation that they use some of the video clips produced by the project in their training for other militaries and armed forces throughout the world. This also considerably raises the profile and visibility of the project.

Finally, the project team has further communicated about the project and raised its profile through participation in national, regional and international events. Through such events, the project team are able to share good practices arising from the Western Balkans on gender mainstreaming in security sector reform, showcase the results of the project, as well as raise further the visibility of its donors, the governments of Norway and the Slovak Republic.

4.8 Cross-Cutting Issues

Finding 13: The project was designed according to the Human Rights-Based Approach, working with both rights-holders and duty-bearers. Gender equality was the primary focus of the project and was well integrated both into the design of the project and its implementation. Social inclusion and intersectionality, while not a focus of the project, were addressed indirectly, however within the operational context within which the project was being implemented. There was some level of engagement with civil society organisations, including through training and capacity development.

The evaluator finds that the project was designed in accordance with the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA). The HRBA approach to programming is a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. It seeks to analyse inequalities, which lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress. Crucially, it works with both service providers in terms of strengthening their capacities to deliver transparent, accountable, equitable and quality services, and with rights-holders to raise awareness of their rights and develop their capacities to demand their rights. The project was both designed and implemented in accordance with the HRBA, by working top-down with duty bearers, i.e. the management structures of the MoDs and AFs in the region, as well as bottom-up and working with rights-holders – i.e. women in the military and AFs in the region.

Gender equality was the primary focus of the project and mainstreaming gender throughout the MoDs and AFs in the region. While social inclusion and intersectionality were not a direct focus of the project, it is important to be cognisant of the operational context within which the project is operating as well as the partners with whom the project is being implemented with. Traditionally, the MoDs and AFs are among the most conservative and masculine institutions, not just in the region, but also globally. The project would not have secured the level of buy-in that it did, nor gained the trust and confidence of its partners, nor gained the results that it did if it has focused directly on intersectionality. The issue of gender had a very strong cohesive element that cannot be politicised. It is universal and overarching and goes beyond the geo-politics and sensitivities in

the region. All the MoDs and AFs in the region could easily identify with the issue of gender, which transcended their divisions and were able to see the untapped potential of women in the armed forces. By focusing on gender equality, which is perceived as a more neutral issue, the project was able to incorporate social inclusion and intersectionality issues through for example, ensuring the principle of non-discrimination throughout the human resources policies within the MoDs. The evaluator finds that the approach of the project to address these issues indirectly, through the direct addressing of gender equality was the most appropriate and enabled the highest level of results.

The project has had some level of engagement with civil society organisations (CSOs), principally through using civil society experts for training and capacity development. There does not seem to have been engagement with CSO in terms of their oversight and accountability role, vis-à-vis the government's obligations in particular with regards to UNSCR 1325 and the associated NAPs and/or the Agenda 2030 and SGDs or with regards to GBV and associated issues. The evaluator was informed that this was a conscious decision on behalf of the project, who instead wanted to prioritise strengthening the MoDs.

Finding 14: In line with UNDP's Digital Strategy 2018 – 2021, the project harnessed digitalisation and IT solutions to drive forward the project's results. This included the development of the online knowledge sharing platform; the development of the online gender training course and the availability of all its knowledge products in electronic formats.

The evaluator finds that the project has harnessed modern technologies in an appropriate way, given the context in which it is operating, in order to facilitate and drive results. This has included the development of IT solutions to further strengthen communication mechanisms, the development of the online knowledge sharing platform as well as the development of the online gender training course. While not yet fully rolled out, the gender training course has the potential to be transformative in terms of further strengthening gender equality through the institutionalisation of gender in military education in the region. Further, it has the potential to be adapted for other sectors, such as police and fire services etc. In addition, the project has ensured that all of its knowledge products are available to all in digital format, which increases their accessibility and reach.

5. Conclusions

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Conclusion
Conclusion 1: Relevance	The project is very relevant to the national development priorities of the four countries in the region, with which it is closely aligned. This includes the WPS Agenda and UNSCR 1325 as well as the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, in particular SDGs 16 and 5. It contributes to the UN/DP priorities in the four countries in the region including the UNDP Strategic Plan , UNDP Gender Equality Strategy and UNDP Regional Programme for ECIS. It is aligned with the priorities of its donors, Norway and the Slovak Republic. Crucially the project is also relevant in relation to the needs and priorities of its target partners – i.e. the MoDs and AFs in the region.
Conclusion 2: Coherence	The project has created strong relationships with its partners ensuring the coherence of the project. This has extended to external partners, which ensures there is no overlap and duplication and that potential synergies are identified and maximised. Positioning the project with other on-going processes, such as the EU Accession process and membership in NATO and Partnership for Peace has brought further coherence as well as advancing momentum for the project and its objectives.
Conclusion 3: Effectiveness	The project has achieved results beyond the realisation of its activities. It has created a strong evidence base for decision-making as well as creating both momentum and knowledge. It has built capacities from within, which lends to the sustainability of the project’s results (see below). It has mainstreamed gender into military education and training; created a network of regional gender trainers who are now recognised and used as global experts; it has shared knowledge beyond the implementing countries both regionally and globally; and it has contributed to increasing the participation of women in the military.
Conclusion 4: Efficiency	The project has consistently delivered at a high level despite the operational challenges, proving that it had a realistic budget based on the needs of the partners. The project’s organisational structure is very lean providing good value for money. The expertise provided through the project, both internal and external, is highly regarded by project partners. The strategies and approaches adopted by the project have proven to be efficient, in particular the combination of low-cost measures with a long-term approach.
Conclusion 5: Impact	The impact of the project goes beyond the results of its activities, including contributing to regional reconciliation, peace and stability. While there is no empirical evidence to measure the impact of the project, anecdotally it is contributing to a gradual change in mindsets and the gradual erosion of gender stereotypes within the MoDs and AFs, which also extends beyond the scope of the project.
Conclusion 6: Sustainability	Sustainability prospects are high across many of the project results. Further efforts are required to fully institutionalise gender equality into military education, to fully institutionalise the gender trainers network, to reinforce the internal complaint mechanisms relating to GBV, sexual harassment and abuse, as well as to develop longstanding regional cooperation that will continue beyond the lifespan of the project.

Conclusion 7: GESI/HRBA	Gender equality is the primary focus of the project and while social inclusion and intersectionalities have been less of a focus, implicitly they have been addressed through tackling discrimination as a whole in the MoDs and AFs. The project was designed in accordance with the HRBA, engaging with both duty bearers and rights holders.
Conclusion 8: Digitalisation	The project harnessed digitalisation and IT solutions to drive forward the project's results. This included the development of the online knowledge sharing platform; the development of the online gender training course and the availability of all its knowledge products in electronic formats.
Overall	The project is without doubt contributing to its objective of integrating a gender perspective into the security sector reform processes. During the two phases of project implementation, the Western Balkans has become an exporter of security in Europe and a unique source of expertise on achieving gender equality in the military worldwide. The project is assisting the four countries to fulfil their international obligations in particular with regards to UNSCR 1325 and the associated NAPs as well as the SDGs, especially SDGs 5 and 16. The project has made significant progress towards its results, having far reaching impact with good sustainability prospects. Some elements, as detailed under Finding 11, need to be further embedded in order to ensure their longevity beyond the lifespan of the project.

6. Recommendations

The following section provides a set of forward-looking recommendations for the project, which are practical and actionable. Each recommendation is linked to the relevant finding upon which it is based and provides an indication as to the timescale to address the recommendation. The recommendations are provided in the same order as the evaluation criteria and questions, and as per the order of the findings, rather than in order of priority.

Each recommendation also indicates whether this is a short-term priority, mid-term priority or both and contains some recommended next steps on how they should be actioned. It is envisaged that short-term priorities would be completed within the remaining implementation period of Phase II whereas long-term priorities would be addressed in a potential Phase III.

Recommendation 1: Develop a short and longer term exit strategy to cover the project extension phase and a potential Phase III of the project in order to fully embed and institutionalise all results achieved.

Recommendation targeted at the project (in coordination with the four MoDs), short - mid-term priority, based on findings 7, 8, 9 and 11 and conclusions 3, 4 and 6

During the remaining project implementation period until 31st December 2023, the project should develop a short-term exit strategy together with a longer term exit strategy that would be the focus of a potential Phase III of the project. The exit strategy/ies should detail the steps that need to be taken in order to fully embed and institutionalise the results achieved. This should be focused on the implementation of the recommendations from the studies undertaken in Phase II and in particular those relating to mainstreaming gender in education and training in the MoDs and AFs, and reinforcement of complaint mechanisms on gender based discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse. The exit strategy should address the full institutionalisation of gender trainers and roll-out of the online gender training course and ensuring it becomes a mandatory training course for all military and civilian personnel, including mid-level personnel who to date have not been the focus of the project, but who will become the future leaders. It is important to try and increase

interaction and engagement with the mid-level personnel through education and training and nurturing these emerging and future generation of leaders. In addition, the project should address the issue of incentivisation for the partner participants in the project and try to ensure that their duties and responsibilities become included as part of their regular terms of reference and that they are compensated accordingly. Gender trainers – at least some of them – should become integrated into the organisational structure of the MoDs. The exit strategy should also address the financial sustainability of the project and the project should lobby and advocate for appropriate levels in terms of the allocation of state budget. This overlaps to some extent with Recommendation 2. In addition, the project should develop a resource mobilisation strategy to attract support for a potential Phase III and target donors accordingly, presenting them with the Concept Note that has already been developed.

Next Steps:

- Develop a short-term exit strategy to cover the remaining project implementation period to 31/12/2023 – *short-term*
- Develop a mid-longer term exit strategy to cover a potential Phase III of the project – *short/mid-term*
- Develop a Resource Mobilisation Strategy to attract funds for a potential Phase III – *short-term*

Recommendation 2: The project should support the co-creation of a viable solution for the continuation of the regional knowledge exchange on gender related topics once the project comes to an end.

Recommendation targeted at the four MoDs and the project, short - mid-term priority, based on findings 7 and 11 and conclusions 3 and 6

The project should use both the exit phase as well as any future phase of the project to advocate for the continuation of the regional knowledge exchange on gender related topics, once the project comes to an end. This should include ensuring the commitment of the four MoDs in the region, setting out the functioning of the regional knowledge exchange, as well as advocating for a commitment for funding to facilitate the continuation. The evaluator proposes that the commitment seeks to set out the number of meetings that will be held per year (either 2 or 4); where the meetings will be held (this should be done per country on a repetitive basis, in alphabetical order); who will be responsible for preparation of the meetings, organisation of the meetings, follow-up of the meetings etc. (in accordance with which country is hosting) and all other relevant information. A small allocation of funds to cover the costs of the continuation of the regional knowledge exchange should also be detailed and the project should lobby and advocate for this with the respective MoDs as well as the Ministries of Finance in each of the implementing countries.

Next Steps:

- Ensure the commitment of the four MoDs to continue with the regional knowledge exchange beyond the lifespan of the project – *short/mid-term*
- Advocate for the allocation of funding to support the regional knowledge exchange beyond the lifespan of the project – *short/mid-term*

Recommendation 3: Continuously upgrade capacity development approaches and transform the MoDs from being a recipient of learning to becoming teachers and deliverers of knowledge to other institutions and service providers. Consideration should also be given towards focusing on integrating gender equality into the disaster response function of the military.

Recommendation targeted at the project in coordination with the four MoDs, short – mid/long-term priority, based on findings 7, 8, 9 and 11 and conclusions 3, 4 and 6

There is a growing body of knowledge in the MoDs that not only needs to be supported, implemented and sustained, but that should also be shared with others. The MoDs now have significant knowledge and experience in integrating gender equality into their processes that could be shared more widely. This could include other line Ministries and agencies, for example, the Ministry of Interior and National Security Agencies, Parliamentary Committees, as well as other service providers such as the police, ambulance and fire services. They would be able to learn from the best practices and experiences of the MoDs, which would accelerate the integration of gender equality into those Ministries and services.

In addition, the project should consider supporting the MoDs from moving from an internal perspective towards a more external perspective by further integrating gender equality into the disaster response function of the military. Although disaster response is not a primary function of the military, with the increase in natural disasters around the world, including in the Western Balkans (such as the COVID-19 pandemic, floods, wildfires etc.) the military is being increasingly used as a first responder to disasters. As such, it needs to know how to respond to women and girls who are often disproportionately affected by such disasters. While this has not been a focus of the project to date, consideration should be given to include this in any potential third phase of the project implementation.

Next Steps:

- Consider how to share knowledge from the MoDs to other line Ministries and service providers – *mid/long term*
- Consider how to integrate gender equality into the military's disaster response function – *long-term*
- Learning from and tapping into existing UNDP projects in the Western Balkans and overall ECA region, focusing on gender responsive disaster response/integrating a gender lens into disaster response to feed into Phase III project design and implementation – *short/mid-term*

Recommendation 4: Support the continuous sharing and exporting of knowledge beyond the region.

Recommendation targeted at the project, short-term priority, based on findings 7, 8 and 15 and conclusions 3, 4 and 6

One of the many value added aspects of the project has been its sharing of knowledge to countries beyond the Western Balkans, including those in the wider region, for example, Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova, as well as globally, such as in Latin America. Given the huge amount of knowledge and expertise that has been gained during both phases of project implementation, it is important that the project continue to export this knowledge to other countries with a similar context, as well as to other countries in general. As global conflicts continue to increase the lessons learned from the Western Balkans can be invaluable for those in a conflict or post-conflict setting, as well as for those engaged in supporting conflict affected countries. Beyond that, the project, as proven, is also able to assist other countries, for example, NATO countries in integrating gender into the military. This should be capitalised on to the extent possible.

Next Steps:

- Integrate exporting of knowledge into the exit phase and potential Phase III of the project – *short/mid-term*

Recommendation 5: Consider supporting MoDs to strengthen their cooperation with civil society actors, in particular with regards to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda and UNSCR 1325.

Recommendation targeted at the project in coordination with the four MoDs, mid/longer-term priority, based on findings 8, 11 and 13 and conclusions 3, 6 and 7

The project has engaged with civil society in the context of the provision of some trainings. Consideration could be given towards supporting the MoDs to strengthen their cooperation with civil society actors, in particular with regards to their oversight and monitoring role vis-à-vis the National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325. This could include establishing regular communication and coordination between civil society and the MoDs and AFs. CSOs can offer direct input on topics related to the security needs and concerns of the community and the existing status of and challenges related to gender equality. This would contribute towards the participation of citizens and CSOs in security policy and CSO participation in UNSCR 1325 implementation. The project should be cognisant of what others, including UN Women and OSCE are doing in this field.

Next Steps:

- Consider supporting the MoDs to engage further with Civil Society Organisations – *mid/long term*
- Ensure no overlap or duplication with other organisations working in the same field – *mid-term*

Recommendation 6: Develop a stronger Results Framework with SMART indicators for Phase III and conduct an impact assessment.

Recommendation targeted at the project in coordination with the four MoDs, short/mid-term priority, based on findings 2, 10 and 11 and conclusions 1, 5 and 6

The project has achieved huge results, that are not always fully captured in its results framework due to most of the indicators being developed at the activity level. In the development of Phase III, attention should be paid to identifying appropriate indicators at the impact and outcome level, as well as output indicators. Outcome level indicators would chart the progress of the project towards the impact, while impact level indicators would measure the wider impact of the project beyond the achievement of its results. Outcome and impact level indicators should include a combination of both quantitative and qualitative indicators that would capture behavioural and attitudinal change. Indicators should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timebound)– and pitched at the correct level – i.e. impact, outcome or output.

As part of this, the project should consider conducting a full impact assessment, which would measure the true contribution of the project to UNSCR 1325, SDGs 5 and 16 as well as other national development priorities of the countries and the priorities of UN/DP at the regional and national level. This should include the gathering of quantitative data but have a focus on gathering qualitative data, which would capture the effects of the project on people as well as any contribution the project has made towards changing perceptions and the erosion of gender stereotypes. This would not only help to feed into any future iterations of the project, but would also showcase the project's results and achievements and could be used by others in designing similar interventions.

Next Steps:

- Develop a carefully considered results framework for Phase III with SMART indicators at output, outcome and impact level to fully capture the projects results – *short-term*
- Consider undertaking an impact assessment towards the end of Phase III if implemented – *long-term*

7. Lessons Learned

Lesson Learned 1: Closely aligning the project with national and regional development priorities and global obligations of the countries secures a high level of buy-in and commitment from the outset, which allows for the ownership of the project by the partners

As demonstrated by the project, one of the keys to securing the high level of buy-in and commitment among the partners was to closely align the project and its objectives with the stakeholder's national and regional priorities and global obligations. This raised the level of ownership of the project and its results.

Lesson Learned 2: It takes time and commitment to build partnerships based on trust and confidence. Joint participation in training can contribute to this as well as being responsive to the partners' needs.

The project has achieved significant results in part due to the high level of trust and confidence between the project team and the project partners. However, this took time and commitment to build. One of the key ways the project was able to build trust and confidence was through the joint participation in training activities, which evened the playing field and put the team and the partners in the same position. The in-house gender expertise of the SEESAC team enabled responding to the needs of the MoDs and increased the trust of partners, which was further increased by truly collaborative processes of conducting research and delivering gender training, including the Gender Training of Trainers.

Lesson Learned 3: There is great value in bringing people together to discuss issues in person and find common solutions in a collaborative manner.

As detailed above, one of the key value added elements of the project was its facilitation of and ability to bring together partners from the different countries in person to discuss issues and find common solutions. The value of this became even more apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic when events had to be moved on-line. The benefits and value of bringing people together in-person cannot be underestimated.

Lesson Learned 4: The long-term commitment and continuity of the project and its donors has been key for ensuring the success of the project and its results.

The project has been implemented over a period of a decade and the long-term approach and commitment of both the project and its donors, as well as the project's partners has undoubtedly contributed towards and enabled its results and successes. As mentioned, it takes time to build trust and confidence as well as knowledge and networks and the results of these efforts can be seen even more in Phase II once the foundations had been put in place. The long-term approach also enabled the retaining of institutional knowledge and memory, which is key to longer-term success.

Lesson Learned 5: Responding to risks can create opportunities

The project provided IT equipment and used the challenges posed by COVID-19 as an opportunity to increase online cooperation and knowledge sharing - thus turning one of the major and unanticipated risks to the project into an opportunity.

ANNEX I – Key Evaluation Criteria and Questions as per the Terms of Reference

a. Relevance

- To what extent the project efforts towards meeting the gender equality goals have been relevant to the specific needs/priorities of the partner MoDs?
- Have the GEMs in each MoD in four jurisdictions steered the project design and implementation? If yes, how? If no, why not?

- Have all relevant risks been considered when designing the project, and have the risks been regularly monitored and updated to respond to any changes in the environment in which both phases of the regional project have been implemented?

b. Coherence

- To what extent has the project been successful in ensuring complementarity, harmonization, and coordination with other relevant interventions of the MoDs and AFs in four jurisdictions in the Western Balkans, as well as interventions supported by other donors, avoiding duplication of efforts and adding value?
- Have the lessons learnt in Phase I been successfully implemented in Phase II of the project to maximize the coherence of action?

c. Effectiveness

- Has the project results framework been well-defined and effective to measure the achievement of the project objectives and results?
- To what extent have the project activities been implemented, and have the intended objectives and results been achieved? What are the main accomplishments of each project phase?
- To what extent were the regional project design and management arrangements effective and appropriate for meeting the project objectives?
- Have there been any delays in the project implementation, what have been the causes, and have they been resolved? Were adequate steps taken by the project to adjust its implementation strategy to the new circumstances and needs? What lessons have been learnt from changes to the originally planned activities?
- Is the quality of achieved outputs satisfactory? To what extent are key stakeholders/project partners satisfied with the project implementation and the outputs delivered? What are some of the specific challenges that were addressed and the challenges that remained relevant?

d. Efficiency

- Have the requested and provided funds been adequate to meet the needs identified by the project partners?
- Have resources (financial, human, technical) been allocated strategically and economically to achieve the project results?
- Is the relationship between project inputs and results achieved appropriate and justifiable?
- Have there been any weaknesses in project design, management, human resource skills, and resources?
- Have the lessons learnt in Phase I been successfully implemented in Phase II of the project to maximize the efficiency of action?

e. Impact

- Has the project, through the achievements/outcomes been effective in supporting the four Western Balkans jurisdictions in the implementation of the gender equality principles, implementation of the WPS Agenda and security sector reform with a specific focus on gender equality in the military?
- What is the project impact and benefit on the implementation at the country and regional levels?
- What would the status of gender equality in the military in four partner MoDs and AFs be without the project intervention and support?
- What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, changes brought about by the project's interventions?

f. Sustainability

- To what extent are the achieved outputs and outcomes sustainable? Will the outputs lead to benefits beyond the lifespan of the project once the Phase II has been concluded?
- To what extent have the two phases of the project strengthened and promoted local ownership and leadership related to gender equality in the military? To what extent have the project partners and key stakeholders taken an active role in implementing the project?
- To what extent have the capacities of four MoDs been strengthened to sustain the results of the project?
- What are the elements that do and do not deliver sustainable results, with specific focus on Phase II of the project?
- What are the innovations/ best practices that deserve to be further built upon?
- Have lessons learned been documented by the project on a regular basis in Phase I and Phase II?

g. Communications and Visibility

- Does the project have a proper external communications strategy and action plan? Is the individual contributors' visibility adequately ensured?
- Has the internal communication with partners and key stakeholders been regular and effective? Have MoDs/donors been regularly updated about the project activities?
- Have the project partners and key stakeholders been aware of the project results? If not, what could have been improved?
- Do the project partners demonstrate ownership of the project's results through the communication of project activities through their own channels?

The following additional questions should guide the overall regional impact of the project:

- Has the project contributed to SDGs #5 and #16? Has it indirectly contributed to other SDGs? To which and how?
- Has the project been strategically aligned with the UNDP Gender Equality Strategies for the periods 2014-2017²⁷ and 2018-2021²⁸?
- Have the UNDP Country Offices established new partnerships, or consolidated critical ones as a result of the regional project?
- To what extent have there been synergies and interlinkages between the UNDP project and WPS agenda?
- To what extent has the project implementation enabled UNDP to position itself as a critical actor in security sector reform in the jurisdictions where the project has been implemented?
- Are there lessons learnt and recommendations that could guide other similar regional project elsewhere? Has the project generated interest beyond the Western Balkans? If yes, what are the benefits of such interest for the partners?
- Are there any spill-over effects that could be attributed to this project?

²⁷ <https://www.undp.org/publications/gender-equality-strategy-2014-2017>

²⁸ <https://www.undp.org/publications/undp-gender-equality-strategy-2018-2021>

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
The relevance of the project design, with a specific focus on its theory of change and how the project outputs realistically and effectively contributed to its overall objective. The coherence of	<p>*To what extent the project efforts towards meeting the gender equality goals have been relevant to the specific needs/priorities of the partner MoDs?</p> <p>*Have the GEMs in each MoD in four jurisdictions steered the project design and implementation? If yes, how? If no, why not?</p> <p>*Have all relevant risks been considered when designing the project, and have the risks been regularly monitored and updated to respond to</p>	<p>*To what extent were the MoDs involved in the design of the project?</p> <p>* Were any stakeholder inputs/concerns addressed at the project formulation stage?</p> <p>*How does the project address the human development needs of intended partners?</p> <p>*What analysis, in particular of the GESI/HRBA context and its political economy was done in designing</p>	<p>*National policy documents including NAPS on WPS; sector strategies and action plans</p> <p>*UNDP Strategic Documents incl. UNSDCF/UN DAF, UNDP CPD, UNDP Strategic Plan, UNDP GP ROL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review and desk research • Independent external research and reports • Key informant interviews • Group discussions • Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary 	N/A	<p>*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis and disaggregation</p> <p>*Data synthesis</p> <p>*Descriptive statistical analysis</p> <p>*Political economy analysis</p> <p>*Contribution analysis</p> <p>*Process tracing</p> <p>*Triangulation</p> <p>*Discussion of data amongst the evaluation team and the UNDP</p>

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria	Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/Tools	Indicators/ Success Standard	Methods for Data Analysis
the project – i.e. the compatibility of the intervention with other interventions nationally and regionally	any changes in the environment in which both phases of the regional project have been implemented? *To what extent has the project been successful in ensuring complementarity, harmonization, and coordination with other relevant interventions of the MoDs and AFs in four jurisdictions in the Western Balkans, as well as interventions supported by other donors, avoiding duplication of efforts and adding value? *Have the lessons learnt in Phase I been successfully	the project ²⁹ ? *Was the project able to adapt to evolving needs/changing context – in particular C19 but also the political, social and economic changes? * How HRBA & GE mainstreaming principles were taken into account into project design and concretely and effectively implemented? *What project revisions were made – if any - and why? *Was a stakeholder analysis conducted as part of the project development phase? *What is the level of acceptance for and	* Project Document * Project Progress Reports – quarterly and annual *Project board and other meeting minutes *Stakeholder websites, the online knowledge exchange platform and social media platforms *Relevant partner reports			SEESAC project team *Verification of data with Stakeholders *Fact checking by UNDP SEESAC/IRH comment and feedback to evaluation team

²⁹ “Gender analysis should be applied at all levels, including planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation”; 1997 ECOSOC Resolution on gender mainstreaming.

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
	implemented in Phase II of the project to maximize the coherence of action?	support to the Project by relevant stakeholders?				
Effectiveness – The overall effectiveness of the implemented project activities towards the expected results	<p>*Has the project results framework been well-defined and effective to measure the achievement of the project objectives and results?</p> <p>*To what extent have the project activities been implemented, and have the intended objectives and results been achieved? What are the main accomplishments of each project phase?</p> <p>*To what extent were the regional project design and management arrangements effective and appropriate for meeting the project objectives?</p>	<p>*What are the key internal and external factors (success & failure factors) that have contributed, affected, or impeded the achievements, and how UNDP and the partners have managed these factors?</p> <p>*How effective were the strategies used in the implementation of the project?</p> <p>*To what extent have stakeholders been involved in project implementation?</p> <p>* To what extent and how interventions have challenged and changed inequalities and structural causes of</p>	<p>*National policy documents including NAPS on WPS; sector strategies and action plans</p> <p>*UNDP Strategic Documents incl. UNSDCF/UN DAF, UNDP CPD, UNDP Strategic Plan, UNDP GP ROL</p> <p>* Project Document</p> <p>* Project Progress Reports –</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review and desk research • Independent external research and reports • Key informant interviews • Group discussions • Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary 	N/A	<p>*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis and disaggregation</p> <p>*Data synthesis</p> <p>*Descriptive statistical analysis</p> <p>*Political economy analysis</p> <p>*Contribution analysis</p> <p>*Process tracing</p> <p>*Triangulation</p> <p>*Discussion of data amongst the evaluation team and the UNDP SEESAC project team</p>

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
	<p>Have there been any delays in the project implementation, what have been the causes, and have they been resolved? Were adequate steps taken by the project to adjust its implementation strategy to the new circumstances and needs? What lessons have been learnt from changes to the originally planned activities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the quality of achieved outputs satisfactory? To what extent are key stakeholders/ project partners satisfied with the project implementation and the outputs delivered? What are some of the specific challenges that were addressed and the 	<p>the denial of rights and persistence of gender inequality in the AF; and whether these changes are likely to lead to the desired results of improved enjoyment of human rights and gender equality?</p> <p>*To what extent are project management and implementation participatory?</p> <p>- In what way did the Project come up with innovative measures for problem solving?</p> <p>- What good practices or successful experiences or transferable examples were identified?</p> <p>- What are the direct and indirect results (at both output and impact level) of the project implementation and their sustainability?</p>	<p>quarterly and annual</p> <p>*Project board and other meeting minutes</p> <p>*Stakeholder websites, the online knowledge exchange platform and social media platforms</p> <p><i>*Relevant partner reports</i></p>			<p>*Verification of data with Stakeholders</p> <p>*Fact checking by UNDP SEESAC/IRH comment and feedback to evaluation team</p>

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
	challenges that remained relevant?	*In which areas does the project have the fewest achievements? Why is this and what are the constraining factors? How can or could they be overcome?				
Outcome 1 <i>Strengthened capacities for gender-responsive and evidence-based policy development and implementation</i> OUTPUT 1.1 Strengthened Gender Equality	*How would you assess the level of institutionalization of the GEMs? What more needs to be done to further strengthen this? *What efforts have been made to strengthen the capacities of the MoDs for gender-responsive policymaking and implementation and enhance their response to gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, and abuse? What has been most and	- What are the key achievements under this outcome? - What are the key challenges? - Is progress on track? - What are the main lessons learned so far? - Has the approach changed during the project implementation period? If so, why? - How are results measured and progress tracked? - To what extent are GESI and HRBA considerations addressed	* Project Document * Project Progress Reports – quarterly and annual *Project board and other meeting minutes *Stakeholder websites, the online knowledge exchange platform and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review and desk research • Independent external research and reports • Key informant interviews • Group discussions • Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary 	Capacity of GEMs increased through information sharing, knowledge exchange and learning though and support for the implementation of small scale projects. Capacities of HR Departments in MoDs increased to collect and analyse gender sensitive data for development of informed and gender sensitive human resources policies. Increased capacities of HR Departments in the MoDs to develop advisory	*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis and disaggregation *Data synthesis *Descriptive statistical analysis *Political economy analysis *Contribution analysis *Process tracing *Triangulation *Discussion of data amongst the evaluation team

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
<p>Mechanisms (GEMs) in the MoDs</p> <p><i>OUTPUT 1.2</i></p> <p>Increased capacities of Human Resources (HR) Departments in the MoDs</p>	<p>least successful? What more needs to be done?</p> <p>*Which methods and approaches have proven most successful and why - information sharing, knowledge exchange, learning grounded in regional meetings, or support for the implementation of demand-driven small-scale projects.</p> <p>*What types of small-scale projects have been supported – what have been the results?</p> <p>How is success measured?</p> <p>*How have the capacities of HR depts. Been strengthened? What is the evidence for this?</p>	<p>in the design, implementation and monitoring of activities?</p>	<p>social media platforms</p> <p>*Relevant partner reports</p>		<p>mechanisms and provide advisory services on gender equality and thus increase understanding on the implementation of gender equality policies.</p> <p>Strengthened capacities of Internal Complaints Mechanisms for processing internal complaints on gender based discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse.</p>	<p>and the UNDP SEESAC project team</p> <p>*Verification of data with Stakeholders</p> <p>*Fact checking by UNDP SEESAC/IRH comment and feedback to evaluation team</p>

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
<p><i>Outcome 2: Improved integration of women into the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans through increasing gender awareness and revision of the military education curricula</i></p> <p>OUTPUT 2.1 Gender Awareness in MoDs and AFs advanced through</p>	<p>* What have approaches and methods have been used to advance gender awareness in the MoDs and AFs? Which have been most and least successful and why? *How do you measure the level of gender awareness in the MoDs and AFs? Is this data regularly updated? *To what extent has gender been mainstreamed into the military education and training curricula? Have you seen any results arising from this? *How would you assess the level of institutionalization of the Regional network of gender trainers? How could this be strengthened further?</p>	<p>- What are the key achievements under this output? - What are the key challenges? - Is progress on track? - How do you measure results? - What are the main lessons learned so far? - Has the approach changed during the project implementation period? If so, why? - To what extent are GESI and HRBA considerations addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of activities? In what way project interventions are likely to lead to the desired results of improved enjoyment of human rights and gender equality?</p>	<p>* Project Document * Project Progress Reports – quarterly and annual *Project board and other meeting minutes *Stakeholder websites, the online knowledge exchange platform and social media platforms *Relevant partner reports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review and desk research • Independent external research and reports • Key informant interviews • Group discussions • Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary 	<p>Regional Network of Gender Trainers in the Military strengthened to further advance gender awareness in the military</p> <p>Military Curricula Revised (at the Military Academies /Officers training) to include gender perspective</p>	<p>*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis and disaggregation *Data synthesis *Descriptive statistical analysis *Political economy analysis *Contribution analysis *Process tracing *Triangulation *Discussion of data amongst the evaluation team and the UNDP SEESAC project team *Verification of data with Stakeholders *Fact checking by UNDP SEESAC/IRH</p>

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
<p>activities delivered by the Regional Network of Gender Trainers</p> <p><i>OUTPUT 2.2</i> Gender Mainstreamed into the Military Education and Training</p>	<p>*To what extent would you say that gender has been mainstreamed into military education and training? What are the remaining gaps?</p>					comment and feedback to evaluation team
<p>Efficiency in delivering outputs</p> <p>The cost efficiency of the implemented project activities towards the</p>	<p>*Have the requested and provided funds been adequate to meet the needs identified by the project partners? *Have resources (financial, human, technical) been allocated strategically and economically to achieve the project results?</p>	<p>*Have the implementation modalities been appropriate and cost-effective? *Was the project implemented within deadline and cost estimates? *Did UNDP solve any implementation issues promptly?</p>	<p>* Project Document * Project Progress Reports – quarterly and annual *Project board and other meeting minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review and desk research • Independent external research and reports • Key informant interviews 	N/A	<p>*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis and disaggregation *Data synthesis *Descriptive statistical analysis *Political economy analysis</p>

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
expected results	<p>*Is the relationship between project inputs and results achieved appropriate and justifiable?</p> <p>*Have there been any weaknesses in project design, management, human resource skills, and resources?</p> <p>*Have the lessons learnt in Phase I been successfully implemented in Phase II of the project to maximize the efficiency of action?</p>	<p>*How often has the Project Board met?</p> <p>*To what extent were UNDP able to synergize with other UN agencies?</p> <p>*Is the project fully staffed and are the staffing/management arrangements efficient?</p> <p>*Are procurements processed in a timely manner?</p> <p>* Are the resources allocated sufficient/too much?</p> <p>*What were the reasons for over or under expenditure within the Project?</p> <p>*To what extent is the existing project management structure appropriate and efficient in generating the expected results?</p> <p>*Did the project activities overlap, and</p>	<p>*Stakeholder websites, the online knowledge exchange platform and social media platforms</p> <p><i>*Relevant partner reports</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group discussions • Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary 		<p>*Contribution analysis</p> <p>*Process tracing</p> <p>*Triangulation</p> <p>*Discussion of data amongst the evaluation team and the UNDP SEESAC project team</p> <p>*Verification of data with Stakeholders</p> <p>*Fact checking by UNDP SEESAC/IRH comment and feedback to evaluation team</p>

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
		<p>duplicate other similar interventions funded nationally, and/or by other donors?</p> <p>*Was there good coordination and communication between partners in the project?</p> <p>* What measures were taken to assure the quality of development results and management practices, both in relation to process and products, and to partnership strategies?</p> <p>* What monitoring and evaluation procedures were applied by UNDP and partners to ensure greater accountability?</p>				
<p>Impact The extent to which the intervention has generated or</p>	<p>*Has the project, through the achievements/outcomes been effective in supporting the four</p>	<p>*How would you assess the level of regional cooperation now versus at the start of Phase I and start of phase II? Please</p>	<p>*National policy documents including NAPS on WPS; sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review and desk research • Independent external 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of regional cooperation though number of regional activities enabling knowledge sharing (regional 	<p>*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis and disaggregation</p> <p>*Data synthesis</p>

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects	<p>Western Balkans jurisdictions in the implementation of the gender equality principles, implementation of the WPS Agenda and security sector reform with a specific focus on gender equality in the military?</p> <p>*What is the project impact and benefit on the implementation at the country and regional levels?</p> <p>*What would the status of gender equality in the military in four partner MoDs and AFs be without the project intervention and support?</p> <p>*What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, changes</p>	<p>provide examples and evidence</p> <p>*How would you assess the level of MoD and AF capacities?</p> <p>*Has there been an increase in the level of reporting on GBD and SH and abuse since the start of the project? How would you assess the level of internal capacity to process these complaints? Please provide examples and evidence.</p> <p>* What is the percentage of women in the AF now compared with the start of Phase I and the start of Phase II of the project?</p> <p>*To what extent has the level of knowledge of teaching staff been increased on mainstreaming gender in military education</p>	<p>strategies and action plans</p> <p>*UNDP Strategic Documents incl. UNSDCF/UN DAF, UNDP CPD, UNDP Strategic Plan, UNDP GP ROL</p> <p>* Project Document</p> <p>* Project Progress Reports – quarterly and annual</p> <p>*Project board and other meeting minutes</p> <p>*Stakeholder websites, the online knowledge</p>	<p>research and reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Group discussions • Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary 	<p>meetings, workshops, trainings);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of MoD and AFs capacities through: - number of practical solutions developed and implemented, - number of policies revised; - impact of these measures; • Level of reporting of gender based discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse; • Level of Internal capacity to process these complaints. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Percentage of women in the Armed Forces; 2. Number of personnel attending gender awareness briefings and seminars and their level of knowledge on gender equality in the military; 3. Level of 	<p>*Descriptive statistical analysis</p> <p>*Political economy analysis</p> <p>*Contribution analysis</p> <p>*Process tracing</p> <p>*Triangulation</p> <p>*Discussion of data amongst the evaluation team and the UNDP SEESAC project team</p> <p>*Verification of data with Stakeholders</p> <p>*Fact checking by UNDP SEESAC/IRH comment and feedback to evaluation team</p>

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
	<p>brought about by the project's interventions? *Has the project contributed to SDGs #5 and #16? Has it indirectly contributed to other SDGs? To which and how? *Has the project been strategically aligned with the UNDP Gender Equality Strategies for the periods 2014-2017³⁰ and 2018-2021³¹? *Have the UNDP Country Offices established new partnerships, or consolidated critical ones as a result of the regional project? *To what extent have there been synergies and</p>	<p>during the project implementation period. *How do you assess the level of knowledge of commanding officers on gender equality in the military? Is there evidence for this?</p>	<p>exchange platform and social media platforms *Relevant partner reports</p>		<p>knowledge of teaching staff on how to mainstream gender in military education; 4. Level of knowledge of commanding officers on gender equality in the military; 5. Policies changed; 6. Practical solutions developed; 7. Impact of these measures</p>	

³⁰ <https://www.undp.org/publications/gender-equality-strategy-2014-2017>

³¹ <https://www.undp.org/publications/undp-gender-equality-strategy-2018-2021>

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
	<p>interlinkages between the UNDP project and WPS agenda?</p> <p>*To what extent has the project implementation enabled UNDP to position itself as a critical actor in security sector reform in the jurisdictions where the project has been implemented?</p> <p>*Are there lessons learnt and recommendations that could guide other similar regional project elsewhere? Has the project generated interest beyond the Western Balkans? If yes, what are the benefits of such interest for the partners?</p> <p>*Are there any spill-over effects that could be attributed to this project?</p>					

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
Sustainability of the outcome	<p>*To what extent are the achieved outputs and outcomes sustainable? Will the outputs lead to benefits beyond the lifespan of the project once the Phase II has been concluded?</p> <p>*To what extent have the two phases of the project strengthened and promoted local ownership and leadership related to gender equality in the military? To what extent have the project partners and key stakeholders taken an active role in implementing the project</p> <p>*To what extent have the capacities of four MoDs been strengthened to sustain the results of the project?</p>	<p>*To what extent are the project activities likely to be institutionalized and implemented by the relevant institutions after the completion of this project?</p> <p>*Describe key factors that will require attention to improve the prospects of sustainability of Project outcomes?</p> <p>*To what extent do stakeholders support the project's long-term objectives?</p> <p>*To what extent will financial and economic resources as well as political will be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?</p> <p>*Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of the project outputs</p>	<p>*National policy documents including NDS 2018 – 2030, NHRAP 2018-2022, JSRS, Strategy on ensuring equality between women and men; National Strategy on prevention and combating violence against women and domestic violence for 2018-2023; EU AA and other relevant sector strategies and action plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review and desk research • Independent external research and reports • Key informant interviews • Focus group discussions • Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary 	<p>% of Government Co-financing procured by project?</p> <p># of activities absorbed by national/regional partners/other UNDP projects</p> <p># of Adopted/amendments to relevant primary and secondary legislation/regulations/SoPs in relevant project areas</p>	<p>*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis and disaggregation</p> <p>*Data synthesis</p> <p>*Descriptive statistical analysis</p> <p>*Process tracing</p> <p>*Triangulation</p> <p>*Discussion of data amongst the evaluation team and the A2J project team</p> <p>*Verification of data with Stakeholders</p> <p>*Fact checking by UNDP comment and feedback to evaluation team</p>

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
	<p>*What are the elements that do and do not deliver sustainable results, with specific focus on *Phase II of the project?</p> <p>*What are the innovations/ best practices that deserve to be further built upon?</p> <p>Have lessons learned been documented by the project on a regular basis in Phase I and Phase II?</p>	<p>and the project's contributions to higher level results?</p> <p>* To what extent were sustainability considerations taken into account in the design and implementation of interventions?</p> <p>* How were different stakeholders engaged in the design and implementation, including those who represent vulnerable citizens? Have interventions been implemented with appropriate and effective partnership strategies? What has been the nature and added value of these partnerships?</p> <p>*Is there an exit strategy for the Project? Does it take into account political, financial,</p>	<p>*UNDP Strategic Documents incl. UNSDCF/UN DAF, UNDP CPD, UNDP Strategic Plan, UNDP GP ROL programme,</p> <p>*A2J Project Document</p> <p>*A2J Project Progress Reports</p> <p>*A2J Project Quality Assurance report, results orientated monitoring reports, M&E Framework</p> <p>*Relevant partner reports</p>			

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
		technical and environmental factors? *What is the level of national and sub-national ownership of the project activities? * To what extent has the project created a shift in attitudinal and cultural behaviour towards gender equality in the military? *Does the project provide for the handover of any activities? *What are the perceived capacities of the relevant institutions for taking the initiatives forward?				
Communications & Visibility	*Does the project have a proper external communications strategy and action plan? Is the individual contributors' visibility adequately ensured?	*What have been the biggest challenges in terms of communications and visibility? What has been done to overcome these? * How does the project monitor the impact of its	* Project Document * Project Progress Reports – quarterly and annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review and desk research • Independent external research and reports 	N/A	*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis and disaggregation *Data synthesis *Descriptive statistical analysis

ANNEX II - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
	<p>*Has the internal communication with partners and key stakeholders been regular and effective? *Have MoDs/donors been regularly updated about the project activities? *Have the project partners and key stakeholders been aware of the project results? If not, what could have been improved? *Do the project partners demonstrate ownership of the project's results through the communication of project activities through their own channels?</p>	<p>visibility and communications data? *Does data exist for number of visitors to websites, number of hits or responses for social media posts etc.? *What have been the lessons learned and best practices for raising visibility and communications? What more could be done going forward?</p>	<p>*Project board and other meeting minutes *Stakeholder websites, the online knowledge exchange platform and social media platforms *Relevant partner reports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key informant interviews • Group discussions • Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary 		<p>*Political economy analysis *Contribution analysis *Process tracing *Triangulation *Discussion of data amongst the evaluation team and the UNDP SEESAC project team *Verification of data with Stakeholders *Fact checking by UNDP SEESAC/IRH comment and feedback to evaluation team</p>

ANNEX III - INFORMED CONSENT PROTOCOL AND DATA COLLECTION TOOLS AND INSTRUMENTS

Annex 3.1. Informed Consent Protocol

Informed consent template

Purpose and procedures

Hello, my name is Joanna Brooks. I work with UNDP SEESAC. I am speaking with you today because we are conducting an evaluation of the SEESAC project “Strengthening of Regional Cooperation on Gender Mainstreaming in Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans” Phase I (2012-2016) and Phase II (2018-2023) - about gender equality in the military. We are inviting you to participate in this evaluation through this (interview/group discussion), whose purpose is to discuss the project implemented by UNDP SEESAC/IRH. This will take approximately (60/90 minutes) of your time.

We hope that this evaluation will help us better understand what has worked well or less well in order to improve future programming. If you choose to participate, you will be asked a series of questions about the project and its role in gender equality in the military. For this evaluation, participants were identified based on their role in the project (*experimental assignment*).

Risks and rights

Your participation is completely voluntary. You are free to decline participation, skip any question that makes you feel uncomfortable or stop the interview at any time.

Confidentiality

The answers you provide will be kept confidential. The answers you provide will only be accessible to the evaluation expert. The evaluation expert will not record this meeting but will only take notes and will destroy your personal data as soon as it is no longer needed for the evaluation. Aggregate data that cannot be linked to you personally may be used for publications, and UNDP evaluations are made public. Only information that does not identify you may be shared with other people or organizations. You may be contacted to participate in follow-up data collection or another evaluation at a future date.

You can get in touch with the evaluation expert to request access, verification, rectification, and/or deletion of your personal data at any point in time during the course of this evaluation.

Contact information and questions

Please contact Joanna Brooks (email: joannalbrooks@gmail.com) if you have questions about the evaluation. Do you have any further questions?

Response

If I have answered all your questions, do you agree to participate in this evaluation? (*Provide participant opportunity for verbal or written consent.*)
Do you agree to be contacted in the future for follow-up data collection?

Annex 3.2. Draft Informant Interview Guides

Interview questions for representatives from the Ministries of Defence and Armed Forces

Introduction

1. Can you briefly describe your role within your organization? When did you begin cooperating with UNDP SEESAC and in which area(s)? What is your level of engagement with the WinMil project?

Relevance and Coherence

3. Do you think the project is relevant in your country/the region?
4. Were you involved in the design of the project?
5. What do you think are the biggest challenges for women in the military in your country/the region? Are there different challenges for different groups of women (e.g., women with disabilities, women from ethnic minorities etc.)?
6. To what extent has the project assisted you in addressing these challenges?
7. How have your needs changed during project implementation, in particular due to COVID-19 and other challenges? Was the project able to adapt to continue to meet your needs?
8. Among the activities conducted under the project, which of them are most relevant and why? Are there any less relevant activities?
9. In your opinion, has the project strengthened national/regional capacity for gender equality in security sector reform? If yes, in what areas?
10. Which other stakeholders provide support in the field of WinMil? In your opinion, what is the extent of synergy and cooperation between these other stakeholders and the project? Could this be further strengthened?

Effectiveness

11. In your view what have been the biggest results made by the project activities?
12. Would these have been possible without the support of the project?
13. What have been the biggest challenges and how have these been overcome?
14. Has the project achieved any unintended results so far, either positive or negative? For whom? What are the good practices?
15. What did you do to promote the visibility of the project? Could more have been done?

Efficiency

16. Were the deliverables implemented according to the initial timeline? Were there any delays in implementation and what were the reasons for that?
17. What is your perception of the capacities of UNDP SEESAC/? (Administrative, financial, thematically etc.) What do you think are UNDP SEESAC's strengths and weaknesses with regards to strengthening gender equality in SSR?
18. Were there any challenges in your cooperation with UNDP SEESAC? Could anything have been improved?

HR/GE

19. To what extent is the Project bringing about gender transformative changes that address the root causes of gender inequalities – including prevailing social norms, attitudes and behaviours, legislation, policy, discrimination and social systems in particular those affecting women in the military?

Sustainability

20. Will you continue with any of the project activities beyond the lifespan of the project? If so, which ones? Please share with us any specific actions that your institution/unit has taken to carry forward the work with UNDP SEESAC (adopted training curriculum, budget, framework, action plan, etc.) And if not, why not?
21. In your opinion, what is the level of ownership of the project activities by the national/local authorities? Could this be further strengthened and if so, how?
22. Do you see any changes in behaviour and attitudes, either among women trying to access the military or progress through it, or among the MoDs/AFs during the lifespan of the project?

Lessons Learned

23. What do you think are the most important lessons learned arising from the project? (Can be positive and negative)

Recommendations

24. What are your priorities in terms of gender equality in security sector reform in the short (1-2 years) and mid-long term (3+years)? How can the project support you with these priorities?

Interview questions for UNDP SEESAC/UNDP IRH

Introduction

1. Can you briefly describe your role in the project and which activities you have been mostly involved in.

Relevance and Coherence

2. To what extent is implementation matching your vision for the project? Why/why not?
3. How has the changing context impacted on the programme implementation?
4. What advantages do you think the regional approach brings to programming? How does this approach complement the country-level activities? What about complementarities with other UN and non-UN projects in the region working on gender equality in the military etc.
5. How would you assess the partnership and coordination between UNDP SEESAC and UNDP IRH? Could anything be strengthened?
6. How is the partnership and coordination among the project and the stakeholders/partners?
7. To what extent do you think the project has been able to adapt and be flexible to changing needs and demands, including the COVID-19 pandemic?

Effectiveness

8. What have been the key results to date at both the regional and national levels?
9. Do you think these have been possible without the support of the project?
10. Which aspects of the project, and which of the approaches used were most successful in bringing about change and why? Which approaches did not work and why?

11. Overall, which were the most important or relevant changes you have noticed as a result of the project?
12. In your opinion what are the biggest challenges in implementing the project?
13. How did the project promote its visibility and communications? How satisfied you were this? Could anything be improved?

HR/GE

14. What is the composition (gender, ethnicity, etc.) of project staff and does it reflect the diversity of project stakeholders? What is the representation of women in senior/decision-making positions among the project staff?
15. To what extent are GESI and HRBA considerations addressed in the design and implementation of activities? To what extent has the project adopted an intersectional approach – i.e. the intersection of gender, ethnicity, disability status etc.
16. To what extent has the project contributed to addressing underlying social norms and structural barriers to achieving gender equality in the military in the Western Balkans? How?

Efficiency

17. What are the project's mechanisms for MEL? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the M&E system, and the extent to which it has been used for decision-making? Were donor reports submitted in a timely manner?
18. To what extent have you used your human and financial resources efficiently? Were funds received/dispensed on time? Are the planned interventions delivered on time? Why or why not?
19. In your opinion, do your organizational structures, managerial support and coordination mechanisms effectively support the coherent delivery of the project? Please elaborate using examples of what has worked well and/or less well.
20. How would you assess the capacities, in particular the thematic capacities of UNDP SEESAC/UNDP IRH?
21. Have you observed any unintended impact (could be negative as well as positive) of the project?

Sustainability

22. How have you engaged your national counterparts in the project? What strategies have worked best for building national ownership?
23. What were the strategies for sustainability of the results and how successful have these been? What level of national and local ownership for achieved results has been created?
24. Do you see any changes in behaviour and attitudes, either among women trying to access the military, or progress through it, or among the MoDs and AFs?
25. How have you integrated environmental considerations into your work? (i.e. reduction of travel, no printing, analysis of impacts of initiatives in pro-docs)

Lessons learned

26. What are the key lessons learned arising from the project?
27. What would you do differently now, if you were to start the project again?
28. Which areas of work have the most potential for catalysing further advancements for gender equality in the military?

Recommendations

29. What are the short and longer term priorities of a potential next phase of the project?

Interview Questions for MoFA Norway and the Slovak Republic

Introduction

1. Can you briefly describe your role within your organisation and how long you have been engaged with the SSESAC project.

Relevance and Coherence

2. How relevant do you think the project is for a) Norway/Slovak Republic, b) the region, c) Western Balkans countries, d) the project's partners (i.e. women in all their diversity)?
3. To what extent were you involved in the design of the project? Were your views/inputs taken into account? Have they been since throughout the project implementation? How do you assess the project's results framework and how this fits with your priorities?
4. How satisfied are you with the communication procedures and mechanisms with the project and with UNDP SEESAC/UNDP IRH?
5. Why did you choose to support this project? What do you perceive UNDP SEESAC and UNDP IRH's comparative advantages to be? What about each organisation's respective thematic capacities?

Efficiency

6. Do you receive narrative and financial reports in a timely manner? Are you satisfied with the quality and timeliness of the reports?
7. Were there any issues related to efficiency in your cooperation with UNDP SEESAC/UNDP IRH?
8. Do you feel that the project offers value for money? Are its approaches and methods efficient?

Effectiveness

9. How satisfied are you with the results achieved by the project to date?
10. Do you think the same results would have been possible without the support of the project?
11. What have been the biggest challenges in the project?
12. What have been the biggest achievements in the project?
13. How satisfied were you with the visibility of the project? Could anything have been strengthened?

Sustainability

14. What were the strategies for sustainability of the results of the programmes and how successful have these been? What level of national ownership for achieved results has been created? Are you confident that the project/programme has a well-designed exit strategy?
15. Where do you think gains made could be lost or stalled if the project is not able to continue its support? What could the project do in the remaining implementation period to improve sustainability of results?
16. Do you see any changes in behaviour and attitudes, either among women trying to access the military, or progress through it, or among the MoDs and AFs?
17. Would you support a follow on phase of this project? If not, why not? If yes, what do you think the priority areas should be? Do you think the same project structure and approach be continued?

Lessons Learned

18. Based on your experience and cooperating with the project, which areas of work have the most potential for catalysing further advancements strengthening gender equality in the military?
19. What are the key lessons learned from the project?

Recommendations

20. What are your recommendations for the next steps in terms of any further iterations of the project and/or its activities ?

Interview questions for other international organisations

Introduction

1. What is the mandate of your organisation and to what extent do you cooperate with the UNDP SEESAC Project?
2. How did this cooperation come about?

Relevance and Coherence

3. How relevant do you think the project is in the region/countries of the Western Balkans?
4. To what extent does the project complement or overlap what your organisation is doing?
5. Have opportunities to synergise been taken by UNDP SEESAC? Could anything be strengthened?

Efficiency

6. Do you think that the project is focused on the right areas?
7. In your opinion, do the activities undertaken by the project correspond to the needs of the MoDs/AFs and the needs of women in the military?

Effectiveness

8. What do you think have been the biggest achievements of the project to date?
9. Do you think these would have been possible without the support of the project?
10. Are you aware of any challenges in the project?

Sustainability

11. How would you assess the level of national ownership of the project activities?
12. Do you see any changes in behaviour and attitudes, either among women trying to access the military, or progress through it, or among the MoDs and AFs?

Lessons Learned

13. Based on your experience and cooperating with the project, which areas of work have the most potential for catalysing further advancements strengthening gender equality in the military?
14. What are the key lessons learned from the project?

Recommendations

15. What are your recommendations for the next steps in terms of any further iterations of the project and/or its activities?

Annex IV. List of Partners met

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces of BiH			Role	Data Collection Method
1	PhD Muhamed Smajić	Secretary of the Ministry of Defence	Decision maker participating in the regional platform of Gender Equality Mechanisms from 2012; Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Baseline Studies (2012 and 2020) on the Position of Women in the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans	Joint key informant interview
2	PhD Sead Muratović	Assistant Minister for Personnel Management, Ministry of Defence	Decision maker participating in the regional platform of Gender Equality Mechanisms from 2012.	
3	Mr. Enes Hadrović	Head of Department, Ministry of Defence	Decision maker participating in the regional platform of Gender Equality Mechanisms from 2012;	
4	Major General Ivica Jerkić	Deputy Chief for Operation, Joint Staff of Armed Forces of BiH	High Military Commanding Officer participating in the regional platform from 2020; Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Study on Integrating Gender Perspective in Military Education and Training.	
5	Brig General Mirsad Ahmić	The Inspector General, Ministry of Defence	Completed Gender Coaching Programme in 2020; Decision maker actively participated in seminars/training for MoDs on internal complaints mechanisms; Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Handbook for Combating Gender Based Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Abuse	Individual Key Informant Interview
6	Ms. Zeljka Blagovčanin	Senior Professional Associate, Ministry of Defence	Gender Coordinator in MoD BiH; Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Baseline Studies (2012 and 2020) on the Position of Women in the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans;	Joint Key Informant Interview

			Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Handbook for Combating Gender Based Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Abuse	
7	OF3 Jasmina Omerbegović	Gender Advisor to the Chief of the Joint Staff	Gender Adviser in AFs BiH	
8	Colonel Goran Brankovic	Chief of Training Section in J3/7 Department, Joint Staff of Armed Forces of BiH	Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Study on Integrating Gender Perspective in Military Education and Training.	Joint key informant interview
9	Ms. Vildana Ganija	Advisor for HRM information system, Ministry of Defence	Member of the Regional Network of Military Gender Trainers; Gender Focal point for Development of MoD BiH Gender Training Handbook;	
10	OF-4 Dragan Pejović	Chief of the career management department, Joint Staff	Member of the Regional Network of Military Gender Trainers;	
11	Colonel Fahir Zilic	Head of CIMIC section, Joint Staff	Member of the Regional Network of Military Gender Trainers	
12	Master Sergeant Nura Mulavdić	Directing staff, Peace Support Operations Training Centre	Member of the Regional Network of Military Gender Trainers	
Other stakeholder meetings in BiH				
13, 14	RCC Amer Kapetanovic + Jorida Shytaj	Head of Political Department		Individual Key Informant Interview
15	UK Embassy in Sarajevo Emir Šabić	Project Manager for Conflict, Stability and Security Fund		Individual Key Informant Interview

Montenegro

Ministry of Defence of Montenegro			Role	Proposed Data Collection method
1	Colonel Željko Radulović	Deputy Chief of General Staff	Completed Gender Coaching Programme in 2023;	Individual key informant interview
2	Colonel Velibor Bakrač	General Director of the HR Directorate	Completed Gender Coaching Programme in 2022; Decision maker participating in the regional platform of Gender Equality Mechanisms from 2020;	Individual key informant interview
3	Captain Tanja Katnić	Gender Advisor to the ChoD	Gender Adviser in AF of Montenegro; Member of the Regional Network of Military Gender Trainers; Member of the Regional Working Group for the Regional Study on Integrating Gender Perspective in Military Education and Training . Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Handbook for Combating Gender Based Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Abuse ; Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the 2 nd Study in 2020 on the Position of Women in the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans; Member of the working group for development of the Gender Training Handbook in MoD Montenegro	Joint key informant interview
4	Ms. Nataša Mijanović	Chief of Human Resource Planning Section	Gender Focal Point in MoD; Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Handbook for Combating Gender Based Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Abuse . Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the 2 nd Study in 2020 on the Position of Women in the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans;	
5	Captain Ivica Vukovic	Staff officer, gender military trainer, Air Force/Armed Forces	Member of the Regional Network of Military Gender Trainers Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Study on Integrating Gender Perspective in Military Education and Training . Member of the working group for development of the Gender Training Handbook in MoD Montenegro	
6	Lt Erdan Kunjić	Pilot in Helicopter Squadron, Airforce, Armed Forces	Member of the Regional Network of Military Gender Trainers Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Study on Integrating Gender Perspective in Military Education and Training .	

			Member of the working group for development of the Gender Training Handbook in MoD Montenegro.	
7	LTC Stanko Popović	Head of Human resources section, J-1	Member of the Regional Network of Military Gender Trainers; Member of the working group for development of the Gender Training Handbook in MoD Montenegro	
8	Ms. Radmila Djakonovic	Retired, former employee of the MoD – Human Resources Senior Adviser and Gender Coordinator	Participant of the Phase I and II of the Project,; Member of the Working Groups: for development of the Regional Handbook on Preventing and Responding to Gender-based Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Abuse and for the First and the Second Regional Study on the Position of Women in the AFs.	Key informant interview
9	Major Sanja Pejovic	former Gender Advisor in the NATO HQ	Participant of the Phase I of the Project	Key informant interview

North Macedonia 19 June 2023

Ministry of Defence of North Macedonia		Role	Data collection method
1	Ms. Julijana Stojanova, PhD	Deputy Head of Human Resources Department	Joint key informant interview
2	Colonel Antonela Stankovska	Budget and Finance Advisor at MSSI Decision maker participating in the regional platform of Gender Equality Mechanisms from 2012. Member of Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Study on Integrating Gender Perspective in Military Education and Training.	
3	Mr. Dragan Nikolic	State Counselor, Ministry of Defence	Key informant interview
4	Ms. Lence Belcovska	Advisor, J-1, Staff, ARM	Key informant interview

5	Ms. Minevere Leskovic, MA	Advisor, Personnel Planning and Policy Section, Human Resources Department	Member of the Regional Network of Military Gender Trainers Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Study on Integrating Gender Perspective in Military Education and Training .
7	LtCol Aleksandra Donevska	Gender equality officer in the CHOD's	Member of the Regional Network of Military Gender Trainers Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Study on Integrating Gender Perspective in Military Education and Training .

Serbia 12 June

Ministry of Defence of Serbia			Role	Data Collection Method
1	Mr. Predrag Bandić	Acting Assistant Minister for Defence Policy	Decision maker participating in the regional platform of Gender Equality Mechanisms from 2020.	Individual Key Informant Interview
2	Colonel Snežana Vasić, PhD	Head of the Section for Planning Defence Preparations	Decision maker participating in the regional platform of Gender Equality Mechanisms from 2012. Former Gender Adviser to the Minister of Defence on UNSCR 1325 Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the 2 nd Study in 2020 on the Position of Women in the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans;	Individual Key Informant Interview
3	Colonel Dejan Petrović, MA	Teaching Associate, University of Defense Belgrade	Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Study on Integrating Gender Perspective in Military Education and Training .	Joint Key Informant Interview
4	Mr. Mladen Dubovina	Financial Analyst	Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Study on Integrating Gender Perspective in Military Education and Training . Member of the Regional Network of Military Gender Trainers Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Handbook for Combating Gender Based Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Abuse . Member of the working group for development of the Gender Training Handbook in MoD Serbia.	

5	LTC Damir Jeina	Officer in the training evaluation department, Directorate for Training and Doctrine (J-7)	Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Study on Integrating Gender Perspective in Military Education and Training . Member of the Regional Network of Military Gender Trainers; Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Handbook for Combating Gender Based Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Abuse . Member of the working group for development of the Gender Training Handbook in MoD Serbia.
6	Ms. Jelena Krdžavac Skakić	Head of the Group for Project Management, Defence Policy Sector	Member of the Regional Working Group for development of the Regional Study on Integrating Gender Perspective in Military Education and Training . Member of the working group for development of the Gender Training Handbook in MoD Serbia

List of other partners included in the evaluation					
	Organisation	Name/Title	Contact	Role in project	Data collection method
1	UN Women	Milana Rikanovic		UN organization	On line
2	Nordic Center for Gender in Military Operations	Major Linda Johansson, Officer in Command		International organization/project partner	Online KII
3	Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces	Megan Bastick, Gender & Security Fellow		International organization/project partner	Online KII
4	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway	Elin Cristoffersen, Focal Point for the Regional Project		Donor	Online KII
5	Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovak Republic	Monika Suhajdova, Deputy Head of Mission		Donor	Online KII
6	UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub	Ms. Viktoria Mlynarcikova, Programme Specialist, Governance and Peacebuilding Team		SEESAC is part of the GPT under IRH	KII
7	UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub	Ilaria Mariotti, Research and Knowledge Management Analyst, Gender team		Quality Assurance	Online KII
8	UNDP	Mr. Ivan Zverzhanovski, Deputy Resident Representative, CO Cuba		Former project manager Phase I	Online KII
9	UNDP SEESAC	Ms. Bojana Balon, Head of UNDP SEESAC		Programme Manager	KII

10	UNDP SEESAC	Ms. Danijela Djurovic, Project Analyst	Coordinator of Phase II	KII
11	UNDP SEESAC	Ms. Vesna Ciprus, Gender Adviser	Project team	In person joint KII
12	UNDP SEESAC	Ms. Tatjana Visacki, Gender Project Officer	Project team	
13	UNDP SEESAC	Ms. Jana Ilic, Programme Assistant	Project team	In person individual KII

Annex V Bibliography

General Project Documents

1. Strengthening of Regional Cooperation on Gender mainstreaming in Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans - Phase II, available at: <https://www.seesac.org/Strengthening-Regional-Cooperation-on-Gender-Mainstreaming-in-SSR-in-WB/>
2. Project document available at [link](#)
3. Annual Progress and Visibility reports, available at [link](#)
4. Quarterly Progress and Visibility reports available at [link](#)
5. Annual Consultations Meetings available at [link](#)
6. Strengthening of Regional Cooperation on Gender mainstreaming in Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans - Phase I, Final report and Project results available at [link](#)
7. Project Board Meeting documents available at [link](#)
8. Regional Network of Gender Military Trainers in the MoDs and AFs in the WB, meeting minutes available at [link](#)
9. Regional Gender Equality Mechanisms Meeting Minutes available at [link](#)

List of publications developed within the Regional project (Phases I and II)

1. Project Leaflet available at [link](#)
2. Regional Handbook on Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Discrimination Sexual Harassment and Abuse available at [link](#)
3. The Second Regional Study *Position of women in the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans* available at [link](#)
4. The First Regional Study *Position of women in the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans* available at [link](#)
5. UNDP Global Policy Network Brief - Contributing to resilience through the integration of gender perspective in the defence sector reform in four countries of the Western Balkans available at [link](#)
6. The Regional Baseline Study *Integrating the gender perspective into military education and training in the defence system of the Western Balkan countries* available at [link](#)
7. Gender Training Manual for the Ministry of Defence of Republic of Serbia and Serbian Armed Forces available at [link](#)

Other recourses

1. [Gender in Security Sector Reform](#) news item section on SEESAC website
2. SEESAC [Twitter profile](#)
3. SEESAC [Instagram profile](#)
4. SEESAC [LinkedIn profile](#)

Project partners websites and social media accounts

1. Ministry of Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina [official website](#)
2. Ministry of Defence of the Republic of North Macedonia [official website](#)
3. Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Serbia [official website](#)
4. Ministry of Defence of Montenegro [official website](#)
5. [Dedicated page](#) about women in defence sector on MoDs Montenegro official website
6. Official Twitter accounts: [Montenegro](#), [Serbia](#), [North Macedonia](#)

Annex VI Terms of Reference

The evaluation Terms of Reference can be found here:

https://jobs.undp.org/cj_view_job.cfm?cur_job_id=112145