Evaluation of UNRWA’s Gender Mainstreaming Strategy

Final Report

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I extend special thanks to Her Excellency Rabiha Diab, the Minister of Women’s Affairs, State of Palestine for her courtesies and discussions of the Ministries initiatives on priority gender related issues in Palestine.

Further, I wish to express my appreciation to the staff at UN Women, the Italian Consulate, and the Consulate General of Spain in Jerusalem.
**LIST OF ACRONYMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BPA</td>
<td>Beijing Platform of Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community Based Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>DV</td>
<td>Domestic Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOSOC</td>
<td>United Nations Economic and Social Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESU</td>
<td>Educational Support Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>FCPP</td>
<td>Family Child Protection Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>FCPC</td>
<td>Family Child Protection Committees</td>
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<tr>
<td>FHH</td>
<td>Female Headed Households</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIP</td>
<td>Field Implementation Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>FPPO</td>
<td>Field Programme Support Officers</td>
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<tr>
<td>GFO</td>
<td>Gaza Field Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAP</td>
<td>Gender Action Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender Based Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>GFP</td>
<td>Gender Focal Point</td>
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<tr>
<td>GMS</td>
<td>Gender Mainstreaming Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>GTP</td>
<td>Graduate Training Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>HQ</td>
<td>Headquarters</td>
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<tr>
<td>HRM</td>
<td>Human Resource Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICIP</td>
<td>Infrastructure and Camp Improvement Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRC</td>
<td>International Rescue Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JCP</td>
<td>Job Creation Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>JFO</td>
<td>Jordan Field Office</td>
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<td>LFO</td>
<td>Lebanon Field Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>MFD</td>
<td>Micro Finance Department</td>
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<td>MTS</td>
<td>Medium Term Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>OIC</td>
<td>Officer in Charge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OpT</td>
<td>Occupied Palestinian Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCBBS</td>
<td>Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSSD</td>
<td>Relief and Social Service Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADDD</td>
<td>Sex, age, disability disaggregated data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFO</td>
<td>Syria Field Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRS</td>
<td>Social and Recreational Spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVET</td>
<td>Technical and Vocational Education and Testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNEG</td>
<td>United Nations Evaluation Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNRWA</td>
<td>United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees</td>
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<tr>
<td>VAW</td>
<td>Violence Against Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>WBFO</td>
<td>West Bank Field Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>WPC</td>
<td>Women’s Program Centers</td>
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<tr>
<td>YWLP</td>
<td>Young Women’s Leadership Program</td>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UNRWA has demonstrated its long-term commitment to gender equality since its inception in providing equal access to education for boys and girls. The Agency’s Gender Equality Policy, adopted in 2007, indicates further commitment to mainstream gender in all of its programs and services. The Gender Mainstreaming Strategy (2008) outlines how the Agency will operationalize its responsibilities to Gender Equality as expressed in its Gender Equality Policy. The goal of the strategy is to enhance the quality and relevance of UNRWA’s operations through better considering and responding to the particular situations and needs of refugee women, men, girls and boys, as well as of male and female Agency staff. The Strategy’s approach is built on four levers: Creating a structure for change; Building the capacity of staff; Ensuring effective communication and outreach, and Mainstreaming gender analysis and planning.

Approach and Methodology

The data collection method involved a comprehensive desk review of UNRWA and international documents prior and during the mission. Over 170 persons participated in the evaluation through face to face, one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions with staff from headquarters and the five field offices, Women’s Programme Centres and with strategic partners over a five week period. Participants for interviews and focus group discussions were scheduled by the Gender Unit and Field Offices. Selected open-ended questions relevant for the specific participants guided the interviews and discussions.

While the evaluation design strives to follow the UNEG Standards for Evaluation, it is understood that there is no one precise way to conduct an evaluation as the evaluation framework depends on the condition of the plans to be evaluated. The first Gender Action Plans (GAPs) were not specific and measurable, and did not indicate interventions on how to address the gaps. Biennium GAPs were developed with biannual implementation reporting. However, the updated GAPs are uneven in format across fields, and underdeveloped lacking indicators and timeframes.

UNRWA plans and documents mainly reflect output indicators to measure results, such as numbers of beneficiaries accessing services rather than on the outcome. Nevertheless, the achievement of output indicators, such as numbers of teacher trained or numbers of loans provided, demonstrates tangible results that can be delivered within a short timeframe along a path way to outcomes. The evaluation, therefore, used an alternative method of inquiry to assess changes in attitudes and practices over time by matching staff perceptions, Agency documents and research of best practices. The triangulation of the data provides the basis for the analysis, conclusions and recommendations.

Limitations and Constraints

There are a number of constraints in demonstrating the effectiveness of the GMS and its approach on programme delivery. First, there was no separate funding to implement the strategy with most activities supported through the Gender Based Violence Project. Additionally, many gender related activities are ad hoc and part of what the agency is already doing, rather than directly linked to the GMS. These activities using disaggregated data, however, are an important inclusion in the evaluation report as they indicate a fertile ground for embedding gender mainstreaming in the next phase.

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1 RBM in UNDP: Selecting Indicators
2 Assessing Impact without Indicators, Demtrio Innocente, August 2009
Partnerships:

UNRWA works with an expansive network of partners in providing its services and programmes. The GBV project continues to build partnerships with a large number of Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Women’s Programme Centres (WPCs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to introduce the GBV detection and referral system to new areas. In the last half of 2013, the GBV project expanded its network of legal aid providers and child protection services across all fields. CBOs and WPCs carried out extensive workshops for community members, including large numbers of men, youth and community leaders.

Achievements:

UNRWA The introduction of the Gender Equality Policy and the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy demonstrates the Agency’s commitment to the principles of gender equality and human rights. The hiring of a Senior Gender Adviser and the development of an extensive gender focal point system provide the foundation for strengthening gender mainstreaming and institutionalizing it Agency-wide during the next phase. The focus on building a GBV detection and referral system and involving men in pre-conception care and family planning is highly relevant in a region that has a high rate of Violence against Women. Assessing improvements in gender balance, school drop-out rates and low achievement, and women’s empowerment are highly important in UNRWA’s work in shelters and services where women, men, boys and girls have different needs.

The GBV project received the most comments throughout the evaluation with staff indicating that it was strategically implemented and has been successful at varying levels in the different fields. A major achievement has been a change in staff attitudes across the fields in realizing the destructive impact of GBV, and in some fields by engaging men in combatting VAW. There is also a noticeable change in survivors’ acceptance of the need to address GBV by the increase in self-referrals reported in the WBFO Health Programme. The change in awareness and attitudes provides traction in addressing other cultural barriers for women that prevent their participation in empowerment activities outside of the home.

Challenges:

The most frequent comment of senior staff during the evaluation was the isolation of the Gender Unit in a department rather than at the top of the agency, led by the CG and Executive team. To be fully implemented during the next phase and sustainable over the long term, the Gender Unit will need its own programme and budget. The GFPs and Gender Officers will need strengthened capacities to develop Gender Action Plans using SMART criteria clearly linked to a monitoring and reporting system. The GFPs will need strengthened capacities to oversee and monitor the Agency’s needs assessments and programme plans. Accountability mechanisms will need to be developed to include responsibility for GMS implementation, supported by sanctions and incentives, included in performance plans of managers and supervisors.

Lessons Learned:
The following lessons learned are derived from discussions at headquarters and across fields, and from leading research on the successes and failures in implementing gender mainstreaming.  

1. Gender mainstreaming must be led by top management to move beyond policy rhetoric and to actively commit to the concept, and must put in place organization-wide systems and resources necessary to make gender everyone’s business.

2. Gender equality and GMS are understood differently across the Agency. Messages from top management need to communicate that gender mainstreaming is what an agency does to effectively and efficiently deliver services to men, women, boys, girls, the disabled and the elderly.

3. The Gender Mainstreaming process represents a change in management, planning and allocation of resources requiring clear communication on its goals, priorities and successes to increase buy-in and decrease resistance.

4. All Gender Officers, GFPs need to have gender expertise and sufficient leverage in the organization to influence gender mainstreaming. (Gender focal points are often marginalized. They tend not to be gender experts themselves; they are often young, inexperienced and lack authority and influence.)

5. The GMS as well as poverty, youth and disability mechanisms and processes need to be in place to support the GMS and the cross-cutting issues through clear TORs, procedures and practices such as SMART Gender Action Plans (GAPs), gender analysis, tool-kits.

6. Capacity building should focus on GMS skills specific to the job, including use of tools and checklists in programme design and planning.

7. Build on successes from GMS interventions that have gained momentum and support and expand on it through a systematic and sustained approach including allocation of sufficient financial resources to show results. (Success based on demonstrable results contributes to learning and serves as a model for replication).

8. Involving men in understanding the root causes and impact of GBV and in combatting VAW is critical in eliminating GBV.

9. Success stories must be widely shared and reported.

Recommendations:

Recommendations are based on the Agency’s limited resources, the GMS implementation stage and the level of staff capacities and the need to demonstrate measurable results. For these reasons, the recommendations focus on selected key areas, building on the achievements of the first phase.

1. Strengthen the Structure, Mechanisms and Capacities for GMS
   - Elevate the position and visibility of the Gender Unit by placing it in the CG’s Office with the full support of the CG and Executive team, supported by Gender Officers with gender expertise in each field office

2. Build capacities of Staff through short term exchange of staff who have been Agents of Change in their departments.
   - Implement short-term exchanges of staff across the fields to share successes and best practices
- Continue intra-departmental workshops, e.g. GFPs, Planning, Protection, Legal Services, Ethics

- Conduct workshops in SMART action plans and monitoring and reporting

- Develop checklists and train GFPs to use the tool to monitor needs assessments and programme plans using checklists

3. Strengthen the GMS Accountability Framework:

- Include targets, incentives and sanctions in senior managers’ and supervisors performance plans

- Include the Senior Gender Adviser as second signatory on Lead GFPs performance plans; include Field level Gender Officers as second signatory on FIPs and GAPs

- Add GMS to quarterly agenda of management meetings to address progress, challenges and needed reforms

4. Implement gender analysis and planning system-wide

- The use of SMART criteria in revising the Gender Action Plans is strongly suggested to establish a clear results chain. Hiring an external consultant to train staff in this methodology is recommended.

- Strengthen the monitoring and reporting process linking reports with indicators in biennium plans

- Strengthen coordination between the Gender Unit, GFPs and Department of Planning for alignment of FIPs and GAPs

5. Build on the achievements of the GBV project:

- Increase target for the inclusion of more men in pre-conception care and family planning

- Expand campaigns involving communities, religious leaders and men in combatting Violence Against Women

- Strengthen the feedback loop from the referral system to WPCs, NGOs or other social assistance serviced

6. Seek funding to expand the remedial education programmes and market oriented employment training interventions initiated in the GFO to all fields.

7. Seek funding to expand on the Education Support Units to address student drop-out and low achievement and the Gender Initiative and Gaza Gateway to increase non-traditional market oriented opportunities for young women.
1. INTRODUCTION

1.2 Situation and Context

UNRWA inaugurated its Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Strategy during a period of increasing demands on its corporate infrastructure and diminishing resources. The stated goal of the strategy is to “enhance the quality and relevance of UNRWA’s operations through better considering and responding to the particular situations and needs of refugee women, men, girls and boys as well as of male and female Agency staff.”3 UNRWA’s Gender Mainstreaming Strategy builds on its earlier initiatives to mainstream gender throughout the agency’s programmes and operations at headquarters and its five field operations. Since its inception under the United Nations General Assembly resolution 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949, the agency has promoted the advancement of women and girls, ideas considered radical in the middle-east context, through gender parity in education, maternal health care and employment opportunities.

UNRWA acts as the sole international body responsible for providing protection and services for the majority of Palestine refugees.4 As of January 2014, there were approximately five million Palestine Refugees registered with UNRWA.5 Approximately thirty percent live in one of 60 camps throughout five fields of operations, with the majority of the remaining refugees living close to camp areas. Poverty levels among refugees are the highest in Lebanon with 6.3 per cent males and 8.5 per cent females living in abject poverty and 67 per cent males and 61 per cent females living in absolute poverty with 5.1 per cent males and 6.1 per cent females living in abject poverty and 38.8 per cent males and 36.6 per cent females living in absolute poverty in Gaza. The numbers of camps and refugees by area are:6

- Ten camps in Jordan with 2,034,641 refugees
- Thirteen camps in Syria with 499,189 refugees,
- Twelve camps in Lebanon with 448,599 refugees,
- Nineteen camps in West Bank with 741,409 refugees, and
- Eight camps in Gaza with 1,221,110 refugees.

The numbers of refugees continue to increase due to the regional volatility and, in particular, the Syrian crisis. The former UNRWA Commissioner General, Filipo Grandi emphasized the critical urgency of needs and urged the international community to honor their obligation of support for the human security, stability and protection of vulnerable refugees. Grandi spoke of refugees’ fears of abandonment due to UNRWA’s funding shortfalls and portrays the Syrian crisis as one of the largest human displacement disasters of our times.7 A recent report indicates that one-half of the Palestine

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3 Gender Mainstreaming Strategy, Programme Coordination and Support Unit, UNRWA HQ, Amman 2008
5 Where We Work, UNRWA, January, 2014
6 Ibid, Where We Work, UNRWA, January, 2014
7 Statement by Filippo Grandi, Commissioner-General of UNRWA, to the Fourth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, November 2013
refugees registered with UNRWA in Syria (PRS) are displaced in the country and another 85,000 have fled the country. Refugees who have made it to Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt confront such difficult and risky living conditions that many decide to return to war-torn Syria.8

The Syrian crisis poses the largest challenge to UNRWA and the surrounding region since the Agency’s establishment in 1948. The Agency is responding to this crisis by shifting its traditional service delivery role to emergency response, not only in Syria but also in Lebanon and Jordan for displaced refugees fleeing there.9 There are 540,000 Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA in Syria, about 270,000 displaced in the country and an estimated 80,000 who have fled, 51,000 of whom have reached Lebanon and 11,000 in Gaza.10 A current BBC report projects there may be as many as 1.5 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon by the end of 2014 adding to social, economic and political instability in the country as well as placing unrealistic obligations on UN staff.

In addition to the geo-political instability, there are many challenges within UNRWA in implementing the GMS. First and foremost, there was no separate budget allocation for gender other than the project funds for GBV with all gender initiatives integrated through on-going activities. Allocations for gender are further constrained by UNRWA’s budget shortfalls that have been stagnant over the years while the numbers of refugees and demands on the agency’s services have increased significantly.

Another challenge is the traditional and long established institution’s resistance to change. Further, the cultural norms related to gender require involving the communities and local organisations to address gender issues. Women NGO’s, for example, have helped to address gender issues with Palestinian Women Refugees (PWRs) who have benefitted from their experiences with the NGOs.11 These organizations are highly respected in the region and are among the agency’s strongest advocates for gender equality and partners in service delivery.

A further challenge is the weak capacities of the fields in developing measurable indicators measurable targets in the Gender Action Plans making it difficult to establish a clear results chain.

1.3 Definitions

The term gender refers to the economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female. .... Gender thus differs from sex in that it is social and cultural in nature rather than biological. Gender attributes and characteristics, encompassing, inter alia, the roles that men and women play and the expectations placed upon them, vary widely among societies and change over time. But the fact that gender attributes are socially constructed means that they are also amenable to change in ways that can make a society more just and equitable.

"Gender equality requires equal enjoyment by women and men of socially-valued goods, opportunities, resources and rewards. Gender equity is the process of being fair to women and men.”12

“Gender mainstreaming” is defined as the process of identifying and addressing the different needs of men, women, boys and girls. Perhaps it could be more easily and culturally understood in the words

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8 Franklin Lamb, UNRWA’s Bitter Winter Solstice, December 2013
9 UNRWA Syrian Crisis Response Progress Report, 2013
10 UNRWA Launches Syrian Response Plan
11 Gender Equality and Gender Empowerment in the oPt, Joint Programme Proposal,
12 UNFPA Resources
of an architect, that is, “form follows function.” Just as an architect begins the design of the building with a comprehensive assessment of how the building will be used and by whom, and the specific purposes it will serve, so too will the architect of programmes, the organization’s chief planning organ, address the program and protection needs and issues of all of its beneficiaries (men, women, boys, girls, disabled, and elderly).

Further, gender mainstreaming is “the process of assessing the implications for women, men, girls and boys of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.”

Principles for mainstreaming a gender perspective in the United Nations system specify:

- Issues across all areas of activity should be defined in such a manner that gender differences can be diagnosed that is, an assumption of gender neutrality should not be made.
- Responsibility for translating gender mainstreaming into practice is system-wide and rests at the highest levels. Accountability for outcomes needs to be monitored constantly.
- Gender mainstreaming also requires that every effort be made to broaden women’s participation at all levels of decision making.
- Gender mainstreaming must be institutionalized through concrete steps, mechanisms and processes in all parts of the United Nations system.
- Gender mainstreaming does not replace the need for targeted, women specific policies and programmes or positive legislation, nor does it substitute for gender units or focal points.
- Clear political will and the allocation of adequate and, if need be, additional human and financial resources for gender mainstreaming from all available funding sources are important for the successful translation of the concept into practice.

1.4 Structure of the Report
The report is structured under seven sections. Section 1 provides the introduction of the evaluation, the geo-political context, UNRWA’s mandate in providing assistance and protection to the Palestine Refugees. Section 2 states the evaluation scope, objectives, the methodology and data collection, the strategic outcome areas, the analysis process and opportunities and constraints. Section 3 presents UNRWA’s GMS, the agency-wide approach and intervention logic, describes the agency’s core functions, and the mandates of the departments and their sector specific strategies. Section 4 describes the GMS implementation of strategic areas at headquarters and across the five fields; Section 5 discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the GMS approach and its four levers. Section 6 presents the findings and the analysis, by addressing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the GMS. Section 7 provides the recommendations based on the findings and conclusions, as well as lessons learned during the evaluation period.

2. EVALUATION SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

Gender Mainstreaming, Extract from Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997
2.1 Purpose:
The purpose of the evaluation is to assess and analyze the achievements of the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy (GMS) by examining the extent UNRWA’s commitments in the strategy have been translated into practice. The evaluation will explore what has worked and what has not worked in the implementation processes as defined in the GMS, and the factors contributing to implementation or non-implementation. The recommendations and lessons learned from the evaluation guide the development of agency’s GMS for the next period.

2.1. Approach and Methodology
The evaluation examines the work undertaken on each of the four levers outlined in the GMS and the enabling factors as well as the obstacles in the implementation of the strategy. Further, the evaluation assesses how far the levers have contributed to gender mainstreaming throughout the agency. The report covers all domains of the evaluation: efficiency, effectiveness, impact, relevance and sustainability and will include a series of recommendations.

Throughout the evaluation, weaknesses, challenges and constraints that are inhibiting the positive forces are identified. Based on the findings, the recommendations and lessons learnt are intended to be forward looking and to contribute to the development of UNRWA new Gender Strategy.

While the evaluation design strives to follow the standards set out in the UNEG Guidelines, it is understood that there is no one precise way to conduct an evaluation as the evaluation framework depends on the condition of the plans to be evaluated. The first Gender Action Plans (GAPs) were not specific and measurable, and did not indicate interventions on how to address the gaps. The evaluation, therefore, used an alternative method of inquiry to assess changes in attitudes and practices over time by matching staff perceptions, Agency documents and research of best practices. The triangulation of the data provides the basis for the analysis, conclusions and recommendations.

The evaluation uses a results-oriented approach by assessing the impact through changes or progress as indicated in the biannual GMS Implementation Reports from the field offices. To the extent possible, the evaluation uses the Theory of Change to assess short term outcomes following the UNEG Example of a Theory of Change.” The evaluation, therefore, looks at activities adapted from the table in the UNEG example.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Short Term Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research/studies</td>
<td>Completed and disseminated</td>
<td>Increased awareness of abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Campaigns</td>
<td>Designed and implemented</td>
<td>Increased awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings, workshops, conferences</td>
<td>Conducted</td>
<td>Reduced barriers, adoption of VAW laws, increased knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society Advocacy</td>
<td>WPCs, CBOs mobilized</td>
<td>Reduced barriers, increased awareness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14 Assessing Impact without Indicators, Demtrio Innocente, August 2009
15 UNEG Handbook for Conducting Evaluation Work in the UN System
The methods involved analyzing available documents, comparing the reported information in the documents with information from interviews and meetings and, to the extent possible, further validating the findings with research indicating best gender mainstreaming practices.

The analysis and triangulation of data from interviews, focus group discussions and observation converge in the assessment of results. The evaluation looks first at what is working well that can be strengthened, focusing on the systems processes and mechanisms that have been most effective. The evaluation also examines partnerships and networks that supplement UNRWA’s resources in addressing gender equity.

2.3 Data Collection Methods

The data collection method involved a comprehensive desk review of UNRWA and international documents prior and during the mission, covering the context, stakeholder participation, headquarters and field offices strategies and progress reports and frameworks. Over 170 persons participated in the evaluation through face to face, one-on-one interviews, stakeholder meetings and focus group discussions, as well as video-conferences over a period of five weeks with staff from UNRWA headquarters, five field offices, four Women’s Program Centres (WPCs) and with strategic partners. Participants for interviews and focus group discussions were scheduled by the Gender Unit and Field Offices. Selected open-ended questions guided the interviews and discussions.

2.4 Strategic Outcome Areas

The GMS was initially defined for 2008-2009 and linked to the field’s GAPs for 2008-2009 and 2010 and 2011, as well as 2012-2013. The 2009 report reflected that the plans were too ambitious given the tight timeframe and the agency’s limited resources dedicated to gender. It was therefore agreed that the priorities over the next period would assess selected interventions to include:\textsuperscript{16}

- \textit{Gender balance in UNRWA workforce}
- \textit{Gender stereotypes in the curricula and reducing the drop-out rate}
- \textit{Address gender based violence Including involving men in preconception care and family planning}
- \textit{Women’s economic empowerment through loans and leadership training}

The lack of log frame analyses and \textit{SMART}\textsuperscript{17} criteria in drafting Gender Action Plans constrains the ability to conduct an evidence-based evaluation. For this reason, the evaluation focuses primarily on the achievements under two strategic implementation outcome areas, Gender Based Violence and Gender Balance. The outcomes under Gender Balance cover two of the above interventions: \textit{increasing gender balance in UNRWA workforce}, and \textit{developing women leadership}. The findings from the Gender Based Violence address activities related to including men in \textit{preconception care and family planning}. The evaluation also reports on other gender related activities to the extent that data and findings from discussions converge with coherence. Also, given the importance of women’s economic empowerment

\textsuperscript{16} Planning Guidance for Gender, UNRWA Peace Starts Here
\textsuperscript{17} \textit{SMART} criteria, Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound
in the region, the report discusses activities related to vocational training and micro-finance. The evaluation also assesses the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability of the GMS and its approach using the four levers.

2.5 Opportunities and Constraints

Although the GMS has confronted many challenges including a slow start up and weak implementation, it has raised the consciousness of gender mainstreaming as an emerging issue to be addressed by the Agency. The momentum from the first phase provide senior managers and supervisors opportunities to draw on the increased awareness and to build their own narratives on the importance of gender equality and mainstreaming in providing relevant and quality services to beneficiaries.

Further, donor agencies commitment to gender equality and concerns regarding UNRWA’s attention to gender mainstreaming, can be taken as an opportunity to elevate gender mainstreaming to the highest levels of the organization and explicitly backed by the Commissioner General. This is necessary if UNRWA is serious about its responsibilities to beneficiaries in closing serious service gaps. In the words of one senior manager, “the process is counter history, counter culture and counter organizational structure. Because UNRWA is a hierarchical, rule driven agency, most staff are boxed in to traditional work expectations and relationships with supervisors.” For this reason, it needs to be driven from the top of the Agency and supported throughout implementation.

The agency is heavily dependent on volunteer contributions provided by other UN and bi-lateral agencies with the exception of the small numbers of international staff funded through the regular UN budget. The decreasing contributions from the funding sources have had a significant impact on the agency’s ability to provide needed services to increasing numbers of refugees. Consequently, the Agency’s General Fund (GF) supporting UNRWA’s work has begun each year with a projected deficit. As a result, UNRWA is “moving towards a more targeted, needs based approach away from the traditional global rights based approach, where all refugees were entitled to the same services.”

3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING STRATEGY

3.1 Agency-Wide Strategic Approach and Intervention Logic

In the years leading up to the GMS, UNRWA conducted a gender analysis in two camps in Syria, and implemented a series of projects in Gaza, responding to women’s priorities. UNRWA also has a long history of addressing gender balance in the education of boys and girls. The agency’s GMS, launched in 2009, builds on the steps initiated by the agency as early as 1998 to address gender equality and its obligations to meet the global commitments under the Convention to Eliminate Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform of Action through its Staff Circular on Gender Equality. The framework of the strategy builds on four levers:

(i) **Creating a structure for change** through a formalized Gender Focal Point system and an implementation strategy for gender-sensitive human resources management;

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18 UNRWA Programme Budget 2012-2013
19 UNRWA Concludes Training Programme on Gender Planning, 25 May 2011
(ii) **Building the capacity of staff** through a comprehensive training plan to ensure UNRWA staff and management are capable of implementing the strategy and promoting gender equality throughout operations;

(iii) **Ensuring effective communication and outreach** to ensure all staff and the global community are aware of the policy and strategy on Gender Equality through a formal gender focal point system.

(iv) **Mainstreaming gender analysis and planning** includes the development of a result based management system along with the adoption of an agency-wide monitoring system to ensure that gender issues are addressed in policies, programme design, implementation and resource allocation.

3.2 Agency Core Functions

The core functions that support UNRWA’s programmes and services in all fields of operation include its planning, monitoring and evaluation systems, human resources management, finance and budgeting, protection, ethics and legal functions.

3.2.1 Ethics Office

The Ethics Office, in its fifth year of operation, addresses gender equity through three key policy documents identified as: General Staff Circulars (i) Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment and abuse of power; (ii) Allegation and complaints and practice against retaliation for reporting misconduct and cooperating with audits or investigations, and (iii) Sexual exploitation and abuse complaints. The first two circulars were developed in consultation with the Gender Unit. The Ethics Office consists of four staff members, Chief of Office, two Associate Officers and an Administrative Assistant. Its role is to assist the Commissioner-General in nurturing a culture of ethics, integrity and accountability through its five lines of service: confidential ethics advice; ethics awareness and education; protection and education; financial and outside interest disclosure programmes, and policy support and setting of standards. The functions of the Office are mainly internal with an emphasis on advisory and advocacy services and prevention of violations.

An Ethics Coordinator and focal points are to be established in each of UNRWA’s headquarters and field offices at Grade 16 (P-3) and above to assist in processing complaints from inception through resolution. An ethics e-learning system has been rolled out system wide and included some areas related to gender awareness. This is a required learning programme for all staff and evidence of their completion will become part of their personnel files.

3.2.2 Human Resources Management

HRM is responsible for overall human resources matters of the agency’s staff in two headquarters offices (Amman and Gaza) and its five area of operation. The office oversees compliance of all UNRWA policies, staff rules and regulations as well as negotiations with UN and other agencies on personnel matters relating to staff loaned by them to UNRWA. As the principal adviser to the Commissioner-General on human resource matters, the office provides support and guidance to executives and managers on human resource management. The day to day HRM operations have been decentralized to the field offices with HRM at headquarters responsible for progressive HR practices, policies and activities in line with reform initiatives:

• Serve as a member of the CG’s senior management body and as a member of various Advisory Committees
• Maintain close and continuing contact with Directors of UNRWA Operations/Affairs to keep abreast of current and anticipated conditions in order to assure the orderly process of personnel administration and staff relations.
• Represent the Agency in discussions with staff, who are organized into one International Staff Association and 17 Area Staff Unions;
• Liaise with officials of the UN Secretariat, UNESCO, WHO and other organizations in the UN common system, and officials of governments, as Agency representative, to present and discuss recurring or special matters relating to the full range of human resources functions of relevance to UNRWA;
• Direct the development of position papers; represent the Agency at inter-agency fora on all aspects of UN and UNRWA human resources management.

3.2.3 Department of Planning

The Department of Planning Unit is a recent addition to UNRWA as planning was formerly part of the Programme Coordination and Support Unit (PCSU). The department’s mandate is to lead the agency’s programming and planning process through the Medium Term Strategy (MTS) as well as the Headquarters Implementation Plan (HIP) and provide guidance and support to field offices in the development of their Field Implementation Plans (FIPs).

The new department has made significant improvements to the Agency’s Results Based Management System by developing a Common Monitoring Framework (CMF), using disaggregated data and clear indicators, to track progress and impact under the Agency’s five goals and strategic objectives. It has also introduced an annual Harmonized Results Report (HMR) describing the Agency’s common and field specific results under the following principles:
• Indicators are based upon agency-wide internal monitoring arrangements (i.e. biennium plans)
• Baselines and targets are derived from biennium plans
• Indicators are disaggregated by Field Office and/or gender where possible;
• An analytical, technical narrative of the programmatic assessment of actual results against planned achievements is provided; and
• The monitoring matrix is updated every two years, in line with the biennium planning process.

The major challenge to the planning process is a “budget based almost exclusively on voluntary contributions from the members of the international community has failed to keep pace with its increased financial needs... despite vast increases in numbers of refugees served.”

3.2.4 Protection

UNRWA’s protection mandate has developed over recent years and in 2012 the agency adopted a protection policy,21 which formalizes its role. Protection is reflected in the MTS 2010-15 under Goal 4 with two specific objectives, (SO 12) to “ensure service delivery meets the protection needs of beneficiaries, including vulnerable groups and (SO 13) to “safeguard and advance the rights of Palestine refugees by promoting respect for human rights, international humanitarian law and international refugee law.” This reflects the internal and external dimension of UNRWA’s approach to protection. The agency’s protection role and efforts to address the denial of Palestine refugees rights is central to its overall mandate to ensure refugee needs are met in education, health, relief and social services,

21 General Assembly Resolution 67/116, December 18, 2012
microfinance, adequate living conditions including shelter as well as the rights set down in international legal instruments.22

The responsibilities of the Senior Protection Coordinator located in the Commissioner General’s office include coordinating protection activities across the agency and provide technical support and advice to senior management and protection and operation support teams in the five field offices. In some instances, including JFO and LFO, the gender coordinators are part of this broader protection team.

In UNRWA protection is provided through its programmes and services and externally, by monitoring and reporting refugee conditions and identifying the need for appropriate interventions. UNRWA has recently decided to conduct a mapping of child protection approaches in the agency with a view to developing a child protection framework. There are potential overlaps and synergies with the significant achievements that have been attained on GBV and gender more generally. In particular many protection cases detected and addressed by the agency in its clinics, schools and camps relate to various forms of violence and abuse in either domestic, community settings or within UNRWA installations.

The processes and procedures that have been developed for GBV would be particularly relevant to the overlapping protection concerns. UNRWA is also developing an agency-wide case management and incident monitoring database. It is important that this system is coherent with the information management system that has already been developed on GBV.

3.2.5 External Relations and Communications (ERCD)

External Relations has five different fields of operations: (i) Donor Relations Division responsible for Fund Raising and Quality Control Reporting; (ii) Communications Division in charge of the web-site, media, and filming, focusing this year on three themes of poverty, international year of solidarity and Memory, providing a digitalized history of Palestine Refugees from 500,000 photos (iii) Partnerships Division working with individual donors in the field to raise funds; (iv) Advisory Commission comprised of host countries and donors advises CG on policy issues, reform initiatives, and budgeting, and (v) Representative Offices in Washington, Brussels and New York and a unit in Amman working with Arab donors. Staff indicated the need for significant improvements in on-line communications. Currently, there is no structure for internal communications to provide information to the Agency’s 30,000 staff.

The intranet is outdated and hard to navigate through the working documents of the five fields. Gaza, however, has a functioning staff portal that is updated with news and has specific pages for different programs. An external UNRWA web-site, updated and with landing pages, would be a valuable resource for donors and interested persons from the general public.

According to a senior Communications staff, UNRWA has a moral obligation to inform the public about Palestine Refugees and to inform donors about programmes for funding. Gender could be a theme for the next period with success stories coming from the Gender Unit. This could be a powerful mechanism for raising the priority of gender internally and externally. ERCD has a critical potential role internally in ensuring that the success stories and innovative approaches to problem solving in one field are shared across fields, and externally, in ensuring UNRWA’s messages on its gender work reach its external partners.

22UNRWA Submission to Reports mandated by Human Rights Council
3.3 Agency Programmes and Services:

Specific Gender Mainstreaming Strategies have been developed for each sector consistent with the Agency-wide GMS. The sector strategies reflect an increased focus on partnerships with international, national and local organizations that have gender expertise. A brief overview of the programmes and services are outlined in the following section.

3.3.1 Relief and Social Services Department,

The RSS Department supports the poorest refugee families that are not able to meet their own basic needs. Additionally, the department facilitates the longer term social and economic development needs of refugees and their communities with special attention given to the most disadvantaged and vulnerable refugees. To carry out its responsibilities, the Department has a network of 65 Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and 52 Women’s Programme Centres (WPCs) that provide training to refugee women in gender awareness and skills development, along with provisions of small credit loans and small grants.

The department’s main GMS goal is to ensure that UNRWA’s Gender Policy incorporates the priority needs of women, men, girls and boys in the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of UNRWA operations. The Gender Unit, headed by a senior gender adviser, is currently located in RSS. The Gender Adviser’s work in implementing the GMS, particularly the strategic approach to GBV, is recognized throughout the agency. This was evidenced by GBV surfacing as the first and main topic during many of the evaluation meetings across the field offices.

The GFPs from the Field Offices (FOs) submit biannual GMS implementation reports on several objectives including the GBV Referral Project (a multi-sectoral approach to GBV response); men in pre-conception planning; reducing school drop-out rates; women economic empowerment; addressing gender balance and gender sensitive human resource management.

UNRWA through the Relief and Social Services Department was one of six agencies involved in the MDG-F Joint Programme for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in the occupied Palestinian Territory. The achievements of the Joint Programme advanced opportunities to address priority issues of Palestinian Women Refugees through the development, endorsement and implementation of a Violence against Women Strategy and the institutionalization of the national Gender Machinery in the oPt. The results of a first-ever gender sensitive “violence survey” facilitates policy makers’ efforts in addressing violence through a more comprehensive and targeted approach. Further, the contributions of The Joint Programme strengthened UNRWA’s technical expertise to mainstream gender and to adopt GEWE, GBV and VAW within its programme areas for the first time in the occupied Palestinian Territory (oPt).

3.3.2 Education

Education is the largest UNRWA sector, with the Agency operating 666 schools of which 193 are all female schools and 222 are co-educational schools. A full description the department’s programs is included in the annex. There are 23,366 educational staff and over 476,320 enrolled students, of which 50% are female. UNRWA’s school system has a good reputation in the region; furthermore, it was the first in the Middle East to achieve gender parity in enrollment rates, and in 1962, the Agency opened the

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first women’s Vocational Training Centre in the Arab World.\textsuperscript{24} In terms of achievement levels: the 2013 Monitoring of Learning Achievements survey showed girls outperforming boys across the board.

The Education Reform Strategy addresses education related dimensions holistically through its eight Reform areas, four substantive programme areas, and four support areas. Gender mainstreaming is implicitly addressed in all areas of the Education Reform and is included in the language used in policies, strategies, frameworks, as well as in the designing of all training materials produced for staff capacity development. Furthermore, Gender mainstreaming is explicitly addressed in its reform areas of Inclusive Education, Curriculum, Human Rights, Conflict Resolution and Tolerance (HRCRT), Teacher Development and School Empowerment and Monitoring of Learning Achievement (MLA).

Gender Mainstreaming is implicitly and explicitly embedded in the Education Programme. Fifty percent of school principals and 43 per cent of deputy school principals are women. Further, 51 percent of head teachers are women, and three of the eight unit heads are local women.

3.3.2 Infrastructure and Camp Improvement

The Infrastructure and Camp Improvement Department Programme (ICIP) provides housing, environmental health facilities such as water provision, storm water runoff and waste water management infrastructure, including the maintenance of all UNRWA facilities through an integrated, participatory and community based approach to improve the living conditions in refugee camps. The goal of the department’s GMS is to contribute to UNRWA’s Gender Policy to ensure that women’s, men’s, boys’ and girls’ concerns and experiences are an integral dimension of the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of UNRWA operations.

A comprehensive urban planning system, funded by the European Union (EU) and German Government was developed and piloted integrating the holistic needs of the community. A participatory refugee working group involved focus group discussions and camp needs assessments based on gender, age and disability for action plans. The participatory approach empowered women to become involved in problem analysis and identifying their specific needs.

An impressive operational manual that includes guidelines for gender sensitive planning was developed from the German funded initiative to guide every phase of the ICIP, including checklists for disaggregated data. Additionally, camp improvement plans (CIPs) for a future youth centre, a WPC and improving girls and boys schools have been developed. For sustainability, ICIP is working on establishing a web-based Camp Profile Information System about camps in the region with 50 quantitative and qualitative indicators.\textsuperscript{25} It was reported, however, that lack of funding has prevented full implementation of the manual guidelines.

3.3.3 Health Department

The Health Department with 3,000 staff, 500 of whom are medical doctors, provides comprehensive health services to the registered Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Gaza, and the West Bank through five programmes:

- Curative Medical Care Services;
- Health Protection and Promotion;

\textsuperscript{24} UNRWA Education Reform Strategy, 2011-2015
\textsuperscript{25} Sustaining Change – Update, ICIP
• Disease Prevention and Control;
• Environmental Health; and
• Emergency Preparedness and Response.

Services are delivered through a network of primary health care facilities and one hospital serving approximately three million. Secondary care is outsourced at governmental and nongovernmental hospitals. The Department’s GMS goal, in line with UNRWA’s GMS, is to ensure the concerns of women, men, girls and boys are integrated throughout the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases of its services. Over the last phase, the Health Department launched a reform initiative with the implementation of the Family Health Team Approach (FHT) and improved its disaggregated data system with data on children recorded by age, group, gender and need. A more extensive overview of the Health Department is included in the Annex.

3.3.5 Microfinance and Microenterprise Department (MMD)

The Microfinance and Microenterprise Department (MMD) as the largest microfinance institution in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) has contributed to improvement and rehabilitation of refugees’ business operations in Syria, Jordan, Gaza and the West Bank. The department’s strategy is to ensure that its operations are gender sensitive by considering the needs and constraints of both men and women.

UNRWA’s microfinance services targets the poorest and most vulnerable of refugees who do not qualify for formal banking services. Since 1991, the department has provided 324,994 loans and invested more than $368 million in supporting small businesses and consumptive needs of the most marginalized refugees.

In serving women entrepreneurs, the MMD confronts four main factors due to the overall gender inequality in the labor markets: a very weak participation in the labor market; corresponding high unemployment rates; a limited choice of professions deemed socially acceptable for women, and income rates dependent on gender. Despite considerable progress in improving women’s access to credit, there remains a need to better understand the issues of women as a particular client group.  

The Department’s GMS states as its Outcomes that “existing inequalities are reduced in MMD staffing structure, products offered, targeting of clients and in impact and market research.” Three outputs are identified to achieve the outcomes: (i) Gender sensitive HRM and better balanced workforce; (ii) Loan officers trained in targeting women and other marginalized groups and further research undertaken, and (iii) Product development based on gender analysis and gender perspective included in impact and market research.

3.3.6 Emergency Response

UNRWA operates in a challenging context of acute and protracted emergencies in its fields of operation. To meet the needs arising from these emergencies, the Agency works in close coordination with UN country teams in host countries to develop contingency and emergency response plans through the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery phases. To date, however, challenges and constraints at structural and operational levels have prevented the formulation of an agency-wide framework for an emergency preparedness and response plan. This situation has resulted in ad-hoc emergency systems, processes and structures. However, the gender team worked with the 2008 emergency coordinator to identify the following initiatives under its GMS that included:

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26 Supporting Women’s Livelihoods: Microfinance that Works for the Majority, UNCDF 2002
• Establishing a roster of gender aware UNRWA emergency staff and of UN gender advisers;
• Ensuring gender sensitive emergency preparedness, contingency plans, emergency appeals and fundraising;
• Tools and guidelines on gender sensitive emergency response developed; 4. Gender analysis and assessment carried out during all emergency situations, and 5. Develop indicators for measuring the gender sensitivity of emergency operations.

An Education in Emergency programme was funded by the EU and IFS in response to the Syrian crisis and its impact on the country as well as neighboring countries. The emergency programme provided 49 trained psycho-social workers to work with Syrian children in schools in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. In addition, a Psychosocial Training Manual was developed with practical exercises to help children deal with loss and to help teachers support the well-being of children. According to the Education Gender Focal Point in Jordan, 4 psycho-social support counselors have been recruited to support Syrians and PRS students at schools. Further, 14 School Counselors were trained on psycho-social support.

3.4 External Partners

The discussions with external partners reflect their support for UNRWA’s gender work. Common themes running through the discussions are the importance of gender balance in UNRWA staff as a model for gender equality, improving women’s economic opportunities through non-traditional training for market oriented employment, and expansion and targeted GBV interventions. It is particularly significant that the perceptions and recommendations of external partners are consistent with those of UNRWA senior staff.

3.4.1 Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MoWA), State of Palestine

Her Excellency, the Minister indicated that violence against women is seriously exacerbated by the continuing oppressive conditions that impact every aspect of life in the oPt. The discussions with the Minister reflected her strong support of UNRWA’s gender work and its partnership in GBV by emphasizing the MoWA’s attention to VAW in two key areas. The Ministry has recently initiated wide and blunt coverage of honor killings to change the mind-set. Shaming the perpetrator of VAW has wide support in the research and is an intervention that should be expanded through the media and the religious and community leadership.

Further, the Ministry is working at policy level, with policy committees and task forces to develop national strategies to eliminate VAW. The Ministry provides a strong partner for UNRWA through its policy level work on GBV and through media coverage to address the high rate of violence against women, reported at 37 per cent.

The Minister also recognizes the UNRWA’s contributions in education by noting women’s declining literacy rates, as well as the Agency’s initiatives to counter the low employment rates of women. She expressed her concern that Palestinian women’s representation in the labor market remains low at 17 per cent and emphasized her support for gender empowerment by expanding non-traditional employment opportunities for Palestine Refugee women, as well as promoting gender balance in the government by the establishment of quotas.

27 UNRWA Education Department Newsletter, Issue 7, January 2014
28 JAC Brown, Shame and domestic violence: treatment perspectives from self-psychology and affect, February, 2004
3.4.2 UN Women

UN Women indicated it had developed a strong relationship with the GFO through the embedding of gender expert and with the JFO as a result of its response to the Syrian crisis. UN Women’s comprehensive inter-agency assessment of Syrian refugees in Jordan indicates that 80 per cent of Syrian refugees in Jordan are women and children.29 The assessment drawn from 800 participants provides a multi-sectoral analysis of the conditions and risks of PRS in Jordan including the refugees understanding, knowledge, attitudes and practices towards GBV. The recommendations included increasing safe spaces where trained professionals can provide psychosocial support, increasing availability of mobile clinics for remote areas and to involving men in combatting GBV.30

The comments from the UN Women staff followed very much along the lines of discussions with field staff particularly in areas of employment barriers for local area staff and recruitment processes. In particular, many of the barriers they identified are barriers that were repeated throughout the evaluation discussions. For example, they described some of UNRWA’s employment criteria and work hour requirements as “artificial barriers.” They pointed, for example, to the number of years of experience that discriminate against most women, suggesting that this criteria be replaced with “equivalent experience.” Again, their comments agreed with a number of UNRWA staff, that is, if women did not meet UNRWA’s criteria for years of experience, equivalent experience such as community volunteer leadership should be considered.

They also emphasized the need for evidence based research on reasons for women’s low percentages at senior levels. They were also in consensus many UNRWA staff that vocational training for women beneficiaries needs to be relevant to the new market opportunities such as IT and the media and women made aware of the options.

UN Women staff indicated that it is important for UNRWA to show its concern for issues related to boys’ education as well as girls. They believe UNRWA needs to demonstrate that it understands the gender mainstreaming as addressing the needs of women, men, girls and boys. For example, they believe that safety and protection, improvement of school infrastructure and drop out and achievement levels should be addressed for boys and girls.

Their recommendations for the next MTS are to continue initiatives that are successful; allocate funds for gender as a core UNRWA function rather than relying on donor support and strongly supported putting Gender Unit at the highest level of the Agency.

3.4.3 Italian Consulate (IC)

Italy is a strong supporter of UNRWA in strengthening of the Agency’s quality of services to Palestine Refugees in all five fields, financing core services of schools, health care facilities and social safety net assistance through un-ear-marked funds. Since 2000, Italy has contributed USD 104 million to UNRWA and recently approved another four million Euro.31

29 UN Women, Peace and Security, Interagency Assessment of Gender Based Violence and Child Protection Among Syrian Refugees, July 2013
31 Palestinian News and Info Agency, 22 May 2014
The Italian government announced an additional four million euros in April, 2014 in support of UNRWA’s basic services to Palestinian refugees. The Italian government also announced that it had recently contributed 2.5 million euros to support the healthcare system in Lebanon and half a million euros have been earmarked for food to Syria.  

Their concerns regarding the Agency’s capacities in several sectors surfaced during the evaluation discussion. They question teachers’ capacities to address gender stereotypes in the curriculum and feel this should be evaluated, as well as how teachers work with educational counselors. Further, their concerns are UNRWA’s weak capacity in setting meaningful indicators and evaluating outcomes.

As to the GBV project, the consulate feels that what happens after referral is an important question, as the GBV survivor has little choice but to stay in the community. They feel that more men need to be involved in combatting domestic violence including high status men like governors. On Women’s Empowerment initiatives, they question UNRWA’s continual support for traditional training in home based activities such as embroidery and crafts where there is no market.

3.4.3 Spanish Agency of Cooperation for Development (AECID)

Spain has been a key partner of UNRWA contributing over USD 7.2 million to core funds in 2012, as well as regional grants for projects. The Spanish Agency has initiated a number of projects in partnership with UNRWA over the years. One of its early projects was the Palestinian Localities Study in the Hebron Governorate through a Village Profiles and Azahar Needs Assessment designed to assess and analyze the conditions and needed programmes and activities in the Governorate focusing on water, environment and agriculture with the intent of mitigating the political, social and economic resources. Studies were also undertaken in the Ramallah and Hebron Governorates. While the studies provide important information for development by identifying the availability and conditions of infrastructure and natural resources, as well as priority needs, they do not include gender disaggregated data.

The agency receives frequent reports on finances from UNRWA but is concerned over the lack of analysis on data and further, the lack of disaggregated data. On a recent site visit to a WPC, they had the opportunity to observe women in traditional stereotypical training in embroidery, hairdressing and food production. Their impression was that UNRWA was not encouraging women to explore employment training relevant to the current market.

The agency’s comments on the structuring and effectiveness of the GMS pointing to the need for a strong gender unit at the top of the agency, not just linked to project funds, is in agreement with UNRWA senior staff.

4. GMS IMPLEMENTATION

This section describes and assesses the extensive gender mainstreaming activities across the fields documented in reports and described during interviews and meetings. The key findings under interventions provide the basis for the analyses of the four levers in Section 5 and the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability in Section 6.

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32 Italy gives 4 mln Euros to UNRWA for Palestinian Refugees, Anso Med, Italiano, June 14, 2014
33 Al 'Arrub Refugee Camp Profile, the Applied Research institute – Jerusalem, Spanish Cooperation and Azahar Program
The Gender Mainstreaming Framework, Annex IV, states the overall goal for the core functions and programmes is to “contribute to making men’s, girls, and boys concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of UNRWA experiences, outputs and outcomes.” The initial Gender Action Plans were not specific or measurable and did not detail the interventions to bridge the gaps. While weakness in the first generation GAPs is understandable as a new process, however, the second generation GAPs remain weak. The 2012-2013 GAPs vary in levels of development and formatting across the fields with indicators, targets and timeframes not consistently provided.

The absence of clear baseline data, indicators and targets for interventions at a given time with measurable action steps is a significant challenge in establishing a clear results chain. Further, there are UNRWA sectors where achieving gender parity using gender disaggregated data, has been a focus preceding the GMS such as in Education and more recently in Health, making it difficult to link outputs directly to the GMS implementation.

4.1 Gender Balance and Leadership Development

UNRWA employs approximately 29,000 local (area) staff and 170 international staff, mostly at senior management and technical levels. International female staff at senior levels comprise 25 per cent at D-1 level, 37.5 per cent at D-2 level, 22 per cent at P5 level and the Deputy Commissioner General is female. Only 22 per cent local area staff women hold senior level positions between Grades 16 - 20. There is, however, a critical mass of international female staff between P2 – P4, and local area female staff in Grades 12 – 15 that creates a pool of candidates for leadership development including monitoring and cross-training.

The importance of gender balance at senior levels in bringing a female perspective to change a male dominated culture is recognized in the literature. Several staff pointed to the prevalence of a male dominant culture and thinking in UNRWA that is further noted in reports on recruitment practices. One study of the deep structures of organizations indicates how gender inequality can be unintentionally perpetuated through a mono-culture without the benefit of a gender lens.34 As expressed by Oxfam staff in this report, “could we realistically expect to achieve at the programme level what we could not achieve in our workforce.”35

The Strategic Objective, under the Goal: Support Services, envisions “a skilled and diverse workforce equipped and motivated to provide high quality human development programmes to Palestine refugees. Two outcomes under the objective are a highly competent staff at headquarters and fields and a mechanism to improve the gender balance.

UNRWA studies reflect the number of local area female applicants tends to drop at each stage of the recruitment process with the exception of the WBFO. No clear trends related to different departments are indicated. The age and years of experience at the application stage favor male applicants, with candidates invited the interview stage having an average of twenty years of experience.

34 Gender Mainstreaming Since Beijing: a review of success and limitations in international institutions, Caroline Moser and Annaelese Moser, in Mainstreaming Gender in Development, A Critical Review, Edited by Finella Porter and Caroline Sweetman, Oxfam, 2005
35 Ibid, Moser, Caroline and Annaelese Moser
This automatically eliminates many capable women. An analysis of post descriptions suggest that this is more experience than required for most positions.

Further, at the interview stage, women are perceived as lacking leadership skills, such as vision, strategic thinking and confidence. As noted by a senior manager “our Agency’s definition of ‘leadership’ is a very masculine one that favors men.” Revising the hiring criteria for senior positions, placing a high value on transferable skills such as volunteer community leadership, interpersonal communication and listening skills and patience with refugees concerns is suggested by a number of staff to address these barriers.

Data as of June, 2013 indicate that 66 per cent males and 34 per cent women local area staff occupy mid-management level positions, while parity at senior level is weaker. The achievement of 34 per cent women in mid-management positions, however, has reached a “critical mass,” the “proportion, 30 per cent to 35 per cent of any group that may result in marked differences in content and priorities, often leading to changes in management style, group dynamics and organizational culture.” This critical mass of women at mid-management level provides a window of opportunity to build the pipeline for advancement to senior management positions, through local area women networks and capacity building.

### Agency-wide Gender Scorecard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective by Category</th>
<th>Gender Policy Target 2015</th>
<th>Female % as of June 2008</th>
<th>Female % June 2009</th>
<th>Female % June 2010</th>
<th>Female % June 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International D-2</td>
<td>50% women 50% men</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>International Grade P 5</td>
<td>50% women and 50% men</td>
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<td>18%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Area Local Staff Mid-Management Area Grades 12-15</td>
<td>30% women 70% men</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Women Area Grades 16-20</td>
<td>30% women and 70% men</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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37 Measuring Women’s Empowerment as a Variable in International Developmental Measuring Women’s Empowerment as a Variable in International Development, Commissioned by the World Bank, Malhotra, Anju, Ph.D., Sidney Ruth Schuller, Ph.D., and Carole Boender, June 28, 2002
The major findings of the study identify barriers in the recruitment process that need to be removed. The study further indicated that gender balance was occasionally lacking in interview panels due to limited numbers of women at equivalent ranks available to sit on the panel, that there was a lack of opportunities for women potential leaders to demonstrate leadership and a lack of recognition of the special leadership qualities of women.

Although the findings vary from field to field, female applicants decrease at the progressive recruitment stages. Additionally, HRM staff indicate that additional surveys and focus groups of women in positions under Grade 16 are needed to identify issues area by area that are preventing local area staff women from applying for senior level positions. Further, interested and qualified women for leadership advancement should be identified for the Leadership Strengthening program to build their capacity.

Based on the findings of the study and the low numbers of local area women in senior positions, a more proactive approach is needed to support local area women and to build their confidence and motivation for career advancement. The study identified two priorities for strengthening leadership across all fields that include “proactive planning for key positions, for example, through a leadership pool, and foster greater leadership opportunities for the next generation of women leaders.” 38 The conclusions from the study indicate key gender mainstreaming areas to increase the number of women at senior levels include but are not limited to: (i) improvement of recruitment; (ii) opportunities for exposure and participation in decision making, and (iii) building leadership capacity through role modeling, mentoring, and leadership development opportunities.

One low-cost initiative that could be explored is Agency support of informal networks of young women by providing them a venue and work time to address their concerns about employment and career advancement and to gain support from within the network. Women’s informal networks have been found to challenge marginalization and effect social change. 39 Organizational learning and knowledge sharing is said to occur through social networks unrelated to the organizational chart or department boundaries. Women currently gather at Women’s Centres and Safe Recreational Spaces. These opportunities could be used to discuss barriers to promotion.

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38 UNRWA Recruitment Study
One top level senior manager described an example of a good practice to be followed throughout the system. “The Director of Finance has a number of women on his team. In building the 2014 budget, a considerable portion of work was done by a local woman. He invited her to attend the meeting with the Commissioner General to participate in discussions. This recognized her work and gave her visibility. We need to institutionalize this behavior.”

Another suggestion is to appoint women as OIC when a male head of office is on leave or while a vacancy is being filled.

The recommendations under the Strengthening Area Staff Leadership initiative are being implemented as a pilot in the GFO focusing on succession planning, mentoring and supporting GFO education/women’s committee project to develop the capacity of women to advance in education. The critical mass of women now at mid-management levels, Grades 13 to 15 provide a pool for succession planning and mentoring across all fields.

Another recommendation in the pipe-line to increase senior management opportunities for local area staff is the upgrading of the Area Relief Social Services Officers, Grade 13 post to Grade 17. This is anticipated soon to be approved. Caution will be needed to ensure that the highly qualified women now occupying these positions are not lost in the reshuffle and filling of the upgraded positions.

4.1.1 WBFO Gender Balance

The Chief of the West Bank Field Health Programme has been a champion of human rights in the Health Department through his active support for gender balance, equity and empowerment of staff through education. Under the leadership of the CFHP and D/CFHP, 14 nursing staff have obtained Masters Degrees in the fields of Public and Mental Health and there is immense support for ensuring gender balance in leadership positions. Consistent with global trends, the Health Department is working to upgrade the role of nurses to assume greater health center management. While senior staff nurses are currently playing a lead role in health center management, decisions need to be signed by the Senior Medical Officer. For this reason, the Department is recommending that the Agency’s academic requirements for the post of Health Officer in charge of Health Centres be changed to allow nurses with advanced degrees to apply for the post.

During the July – December, 2013 reporting period 166 women compared to 375 men received fixed term contracts for grades 12 and above thereby strengthening the career mobility pipeline. This reflects a 7 per cent increase over the 2011-2012 gender statistics for women in Grade 12 and above with WBFO Gender Scorecards for 2011 and 2012 indicating 154 women or 28% in Grade 12 and above. Additionally, sixteen women occupy positions from Grade 16 -20, and two additional females and two males were appointed for Grade 16 positions in the last reporting period.

4.1.2 JFO Gender Balance

While the JFO has attempted to expand female staff in senior management positions through a gender sensitive recruitment process, opportunities have been limited due to low turnover at the higher grade levels. The JFO’s Gender current score card indicates that there are 220 females, 35.7 per cent as opposed to 397 males in Grades 12+, however the highest numbers are in the lower Grade 12 level for
both males and females. At Grades 16+, there are 9 women, 15.8 percent as opposed to 48 males. Where there have been openings, they have attempted to ensure gender balance throughout the recruitment process.

4.1.3 LFO Gender Balance

Senior LFO staff indicate that there is a tendency to think of Area Officers as a “male” position with five males now holding Area Officer positions. The majority of LFO female staff are still in lower positions with 72.1 per cent occupying grades 8 -10. However, there are 35 female educational specialists representing 60 per cent of G-13 level who are implementing educational reforms. These are key women for a potential senior management pipeline. Several staff emphasized that the male dominant working environment of the LFO needed to change if women are to be groomed and motivated for career advancement. One of the comments from an international, policy-level female during the evaluation pointed to male supervisors bullying behavior towards female area staff, stating that “there has to be zero tolerance for this behavior (with sanctions) and enforced.” This kind of behavior continues to create a hostile working environment for women and works against their advancement in the agency.

For beneficiaries, we see some attitude change related to girls education within communities. For example, 70 per cent of youth receiving scholarships for higher education are females. This is a change from the past when girls were not encouraged to pursue their education. Additionally, there are incremental signs of change in technical education with a few girls now taking non-traditional courses in assembling electronic boards.

4.1.3 GFO Gender Balance

A needs assessment of female staff by the Women’s Committee, established in Gaza in 2007, identified a list of barriers to women’s advancement, including but not limited to: work-loads and allocation; training, promotion; professional development; child care; harassment, discrimination, and health, safety and leave entitlements. An action plan was developed for 2008-2009 to address these issues. A fourth workshop of the Gaza Women’s Committee was held in June, 2009 to review the participation of female staff in UNRWA issues enabling increased involvement in management and policy work. The GFO Women’s Committee continues to examine factors related to increasing the number of female staff in senior positions. Twenty-three per cent of female staff completed a survey addressing women’s interests, needs and how they would like to bring about changes that would benefit all UNRWA staff.

Gender balance was achieved in the percentages of males and females who completed the Ethics e-learning course. The course sets out standards of conduct including three circulars on sexual harassment, (i) Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, including the prohibition of discrimination and sexual harassment; allegations of retaliation for reporting misconduct and sexual exploitation. Participants are required to sign a certificate of understanding of the course contents that becomes a part of their employee file.

A pilot exercise for succession planning for key senior posts, including mentoring, is also in progress in the GFO. Additionally, consultations are in process with other field offices to examine their priorities and plans for leadership strengthening.

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41 Ibid, UNRWA Gaza Women’s Committee
Discussions with key Gaza staff indicate perceptions that UNRWA human resource management practices are indirectly discriminatory with job descriptions and roles defined in a way that are obstacles for women. This is a shared perception across fields. For example, some job announcements indicate academic credentials and years of experience far in excess of the position requirements. The perceptions that human resource management processes and practices are as much to blame as the culture was reiterated throughout the evaluation. Although some of the impediments addressed in the recruitment study have been addressed, further attention is indicated for gender sensitive job postings, qualifications related to job requirements and greater sensitivity to gender issues in the interview phase.

The recruitment study indicates that leadership skills are not viewed through a gender lens but are perceived as male dominant traits and that the more female traits such as patience, communication skills and sensitivity to refugee concerns are not sufficiently valued. The Agency could provide gender-sensitive workshops highlighting success cases of women in non-traditional leadership roles. Some agencies in the middle-east are providing gender sensitive training with a strong message about the importance of gender and, in particular, women’s empowerment especially in the Arab region. For example, a gender workshop in Cairo “noted that women play a critical role in the regional economy and society, which is ever-growing based on processes of male out-migration and the increase in the number of female-headed households.”

**Key Findings**

Based on the findings of the study and the low numbers of local area women in senior positions, a more proactive approach is needed to support local area women and to build their confidence and motivation for career advancement. The study identified two priorities for strengthening leadership across all fields that include “proactive planning for key positions, for example, through a leadership pool, and foster greater leadership opportunities for the next generation of women leaders.” The conclusions from the study indicate key gender mainstreaming areas to increase the number of women at senior levels include but are not limited to: (i) improvement of recruitment; (ii) opportunities for exposure and participation in decision making, and (iii) building leadership capacity through role modeling, mentoring, and leadership development opportunities. Coaching women in interviewing skills, iused by many global companies to increase gender balances, should be explored.

Changing the Agency’s academic requirements for the post of Health Officer in charge of Health Centres to allow nurses with advanced degrees to apply for the post would be an efficient use of highly skilled nurses while increasing gender balance at senior levels. Nevertheless, increasing gender balance at senior level, overall, needs to be recognized as a long term process as vacancies at this level are not frequent. UNRWA monitors gender balance through annual Gender Scorecards at headquarters and field offices. The scorecards, indicating percentages of women, by type of position and grade levels, keep gender balance visible as an agency priority. UNRWA continues to explore ways to improve gender balance at senior levels through improved recruitment practices and leadership development.

4.2 Gender Based Violence

A study of Violence against Women conducted in 2005 by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics found that 23.3 per center of Palestinian women experienced at least one act of physical violence by their spouses, 61.7 per cent reported psychological violence by their spouses and 10.5% reported sexual

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violence. The study further indicated that over 50 per cent of children were exposed to physical violence in their homes, schools and communities.

GBV emerged as a priority need for UNRWA early in 2009. The need to address GBV is supported by research indicating a high level of VAW in the region that has been compounded by political instability and conflict. For example, in 2009, 1,100 women respondents confirmed the increasing prevalence of violence after the war on Gaza in December 2008 through January, 2009.

The establishment of the referral system was included in the donors’ harmonized framework and a GBV project was funded by the United States Government to Build Referral Systems for Better Access to Services of Gender Based Violence with the objectives were to embed it in core programs and to expand it throughout the system.

UNRWA works through a large network of partners in providing its services and programmes. The GBV project continues to build partnerships with a large number of Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Women’s Programme Centres (WPCs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to introduce the GBV detection and referral system to new areas. In the last half of 2013, the GBV project expanded its network of legal aid providers and child protection services across all fields. CBOs and WPCs carried out extensive workshops for community members, including large numbers of men, youth and community leaders. CBOs and WPCs provided targeted GBV awareness sessions in Gaza focusing on domestic violence to 12,304 community members, 1,456 men, 9,904 women and 944 youth. GBV awareness sessions focusing on women’s rights, child labour, addiction and domestic violence were provided in Jordan to 2,219 women and 1,383 men from camp communities. The WBFO conducted 119 awareness raising activities in coordination with CBOs.

Partners for Prevention\(^{43}\) (P4P) identify three acceptable objectives for GBV programmes as follows:

- Increase x% of men and women who believe that violence is not an acceptable way of dealing with conflict from x% in baseline year to x% in the targeted period.
- To increase the numbers of domestic violence clients recommended for counseling who actually utilize counseling services by x%.
- To establish 100% family health services that have health care providers who can provide referral services to high risk clients.

The GBV prevention framework follows a P4P’s logic model for programing GBV prevention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Input</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Output</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resource, competencies</td>
<td>Measurable activities</td>
<td>Numbers of Detections and Referrals</td>
<td>Increased awareness of GBV, increased knowledge of GBV services</td>
<td>Improved health and safety of GBV survivors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UNRWA’s GBV programme’s adaptation to the five fields following P4P’s logic model is based on the following five steps:

\(^{43}\) Partners for Prevention is a UNFP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNV Asia-Pacific Regional Joint Venture Programme established for GBV prevention
• Assessment of internal resources, competencies and capacities
• Mapping of external actors
• Establishment of a coordination mechanism
• Establishment of a follow up system
• Development of a monitoring and evaluation system

The numbers of survivors detected and referred have increased during all phases with 2,191 survivors detected in 2013, while the number detected in 2011 was 561. The significant increase of almost 400 per cent in the rate of detection reflects the expansion of the referral system and the efficiency of the system through which survivors are routinely detected and referred to services according to their needs. The referral process involves referrals to Women’s Programme Centres or other NGOs for counseling, medical and legal services, and social assistance services. While significant numbers of cases have been and are being referred, the feedback loop on the result of the referrals is still under development.

Staff confidence of the GFO, JFO and WBFO, using a Readiness Assessment Tool, measured an average 65 per cent confidence in their ability to handle GBV cases during the last phase that is lower than previous phases. The data on changes in staff confidence during this period are weaker due to the strike in the WBFO, the crisis in Syria and untrained staff in the LFO. Further, discussions during the evaluation indicate that the lower confidence rating has to do with staff’s inability to handle the more difficult and serious cases of rape or sexual abuse. The LFO was not originally included in the assessment as it had just initiated its first pilot in the Tyre region. Due to community resistance that resulted in unwillingness of staff to incorporate GBV detection, the LFO worked with community members to build links between the Family Protection Network and the Popular Committees.

In April, 2011, UNRWA partnered with the Center for Resources for Gender Equality “Abaad,” to produce the documentary film Ana Ahlam (I Dream) telling the dramatic and true story of a young Palestinian woman survivor of GBV who rebuilds her life with the help of UNRWA’s Family Protection Team in Tyre. This is a powerful resource for awareness building and to raise the priority of GBV detection and treatment to be shown in all WPCs.

During the third phase (December 2012 to November 2013), the project experienced significant expansion under the planned twin-track approach of building and consolidating new partnerships and the introducing of the GBV project to new regions. In the third phase 2,913 survivors were detected. GBV guidelines were developed and submitted to all offices during this phase and over 1,600 staff participated in specialized GBV training.

The data from surveys during the end of the third period reflect an average of 80 per cent client satisfaction rate with GBV services indicated from the GFO, JFO and SFO. Data from WBFO is missing due to the strike and from SFO due to the crisis. Phase III reports the lack of a coherent, system-wide approach on GBV prevention, indicating that interventions are carried out on an ad hoc basis and without measurable impact across fields.

Interventions to raise awareness on violence against women and disability issues are targeted to geographic areas around camps. For example, in the JFO, a pilot was initiated at the Zarka Camp for
Palestine refugees through a Community Development Centre. In Gaza, GBV awareness is conducted in CBOs in the most marginalized areas of the Gaza Strip with groups of men, women, and youth. JFO’s activities are still in the planning process. However, there are Community Based Rehabilitation Centre (CBRC) volunteers in JFOs GBV Teams who are helping in detecting and referring GBV cases with disabilities. A site visit to a CBRC during the evaluation mission showcased its work with hearing impairment in a camp that a high incidence of congenital hearing loss.

The LFO is working with a new community based GBV support group initiative to help build community structures and in the WBFO, prevention and social transformation are part of its community based child protection approach. In order to ensure the protection of Palestine women refugees, and particularly the PRS women and children separated from their communities, the LFO established six community based support groups in three refugee camps in Tyre. It is indicated that the different approaches make it difficult to develop common system indicators and measurement protocols and to establish common oversight through monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

Reports from Headquarters Health Services, as well as reports from the field offices, indicate that discrepancies in reporting survivors’ access to GBV services are a challenge to the GBV system. If survivors access services at two different health clinics, they are recorded in both cases. On the other hand, the Gaza Office found that not all cases detected and referred by the CMHP were added to the database. An earlier evaluation of the GBV databases in the five fields indicated the need for a unified reporting, data collection and classification system across all fields identifying types of violence, perpetrator and other classifications, and taking into account the differences in approaches and resources of the fields. UNRWA is in the process of unifying the definition and forms to be used system-wide and is eliminating redundant forms.

There have been significant increases in the numbers of GBV survivors detected and referred in the last phases and a gradual increase in the number of men attending pre-conception care and family counseling. The confidence of health care staff has increased from the first phase but has not increased in recent phases due to more untrained staff included in the last surveys and the lack of training in addressing serious, complex cases.

### Building Referral Systems for GBV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JFP</td>
<td>Training provided for Health, Education, RSS staff by Health Dept in identification and detection of GBV cases</td>
<td>New external partners identified; specialized training for case managers. Staff survey on referral system. 121 men accompanied wives for pre-conception care</td>
<td>Expanded to all camps in 4 areas, capacity building of case management teams, MoUs with 8 service providers; Education detecting a high number of cases (47/100). 9 PRS cases detected. 80 per cent satisfaction of service users. 1,706 GBV survivors access services in Phase III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFO</td>
<td>MoUs in process with 8 organizations; 22 lawyer volunteers and 8 case managers trained; 4 cases referred</td>
<td>No services running except some through CBOs; clinics are closed</td>
<td>Referral system launched in 16 IDP shelters, including 6 health points and 7 WPCs. GBV referral system launched in 16 IDP shelters including 6 health points and 7 WPCs Satisfaction with services not possible under the crisis.</td>
</tr>
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45 UNRWA Response and Services to Palestine Refugees from Syria (PRS) in Lebanon, 2013
### 4.2.1 GFO GBV

The GFO established the first of its one-stop centres for GBV survivors to access all services in 2010. It also established men’s committees as part of a leading experience in focusing and emphasizing men’s role in combating GBV.

The GFO employed psychosocial counsellors across Women Programme Centres (WPCs) in 2012 with seven of the counselors, funded by the Gender Initiative, to support survivors of GBV. The counsellors also provided GBV awareness sessions to 3985 participants. The UNRWA Gi in partnership with the Palestinian Centre for Democracy and Conflict Resolution conducted two training of trainers (ToTs) sessions on GBV for 20 RSSP social workers and five Gi field coordinators on improved techniques and tools for GBV, including training on how to involve men and youth in combatting VAW and GBV.

The GBV project in Gaza, anchored in the Community Mental Health Programme, continues its work with the Child Protection Network and Legal Aid Providers, as well as maintaining informal referrals with CBOs through the last phase of 2013. On 8 December, 2013, UNRWA organized a panel discussion on the role of men in tackling violence against women. The workshop was attended by 300 people, mostly men, as well as key persons from the local communities. The Director of UNRWA Operations in Gaza, Robert Turner, spoke with participants about the responsibility men have in fighting violence against women as well as the consequences, not only on women, but also on sons and daughters across generations. Violence against women fractures families and communities, he reminded the audience, posing a threat to social and economic development. The recognition of the consequences of GBV on the family, the community and future generations must be more proactively communicated across all fields.

The impact of GBV awareness sessions conduct, and particularly the involvement of men in Gaza provides a rationale for broadening these sessions. The importance of helping the perpetrators to

| WBO | Piloting national GBV referral system within 2 camps; training of medical staff in identification and detection of GBV cases; 7,965 community members participate in GBV awareness; counseling of 162 victims in cooperation with CMHP | SOPs implemented in 9 camps, high readiness to address GBV; Integration of family and child protection in health service delivery; success in engaging community leaders in critical cases; 12.5 per cent men accompanied wives in pre-conception care, 15.7 per cent increase in 2nd half of 2012. | Referral system expanded to 8 camps and one city in northern region. WBFO collaborating with UNFPA and UNICEF on GBV; 89 per cent satisfaction of service users at end of March 2013; 674 GBV survivors accessed services; no follow up at end of year due to the strike; |
| LFO | LFO establishes agreements with three partners (Terre des Hommes, Soumoud and Najdeh) for GBV referrals; however they decided not to participate in the GBV project in 2010 due to initial strong resistance | LFO introduced the Family Protection Programme to address GBV. Capacity building of staff, 66 staff trained on practical tools, awareness training | Expanded referral system to 3 sites in 2 camps. Reaching out to other partners; 80 UNRWA participated in GBV training; 32 per cent of caseload are PRS with 18 per cent rape and sexual assault against PRS women. 73 GBV survivors accessed services; 83.3 per cent satisfaction of service users. |
| GFO | Establishment of a unified data base on VAW to identify types, trends and quantities of GBV. Introduced a referral system for comprehensive GBV services. Initiated one-stop centres | 50 men accompanied wives in pre-conception care. Men’s committees to stop GBV operating in 7 camps | 18 one-stop centers in UNRWA’s health centers, providing medical, legal /psychosocial support and referrals to RSS. 1,706 GBV survivors access services. 80 per cent satisfaction. 24 CBOs and 7 WPCs provide GBV awareness, anger management to 294 women, 235 men and 253 youth |
understand the damage of GBV and evoking their feelings of shame have been documented. One 44 year old male participant tells his story.

“When I was first invited to attend a session, I came for a coupon that was said to be distributed. I stayed for the first session and wondered why I was there and what they are talking about, but things changed when I became part of the dialogue. The next day, I was battling whether to go to the session or stay at work. Finally, I decided to go. A lot of real stories were told and every time I felt ashamed of myself because I beat my wife and children. After that session, I went home and I found that my wife had not prepared lunch. I was really mad but I remembered what the facilitator had said. I counted to ten and I relaxed myself then attended the third session where we talked about CEDAW. I wrote all its articles on a paper so I wouldn’t forget and asked my son to search the internet about it. I wanted to show my wife that I am a good husband who understands this agreement. On the fourth day of the sessions, I talked with the trainer about CEDAW. She was really happy with me and asked the audience to clap for me. At that moment, I really wished I could have completed my university studies because I felt different from inside. I hope you can do more of these sessions so all men can learn like me.”

4.2.2 LFO GBV

The LFO’s capacities to address GBV have been seriously challenged due to the massive increase of Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRS) adding to the already overcrowded conditions in camps. The crisis not only affects the PRS but is overwhelming for the surrounding communities. Nevertheless, the LFO has responded by initiating discussion groups in camps to build awareness of the challenges confronted by the PRS, including the risk of GBV. The discussions provide help to reduce the sense of isolation and break down barriers as well as help in rebuilding social support structures during the crisis.46

Syrian women who comprise 75 per cent of the registered refugee population in Lebanon are reported to be disproportionately affected by sexual and gender based violence (SGBV). This is particularly the case for the most vulnerable, unaccompanied adolescents, single heads of households, child spouses and child widows.47

The LFO expanded its referral system to three gatherings in Tyre, Wavel camp in Beqaa and Ein el Hilweh camp in Saida. Several GBV specific trainings were offered to 80 UNRWA staff during 2013 through the SGBV trust fund in Gender Based Violence Prevention and Response in Emergencies, Clinical Treatment of Sexual Violence, Survivor Centered Approaches to counselling GBV survivors. The LFO noticed a slight increase in Phase III over Phase II in the number of GBV cases detected and referred. Thirty-Three cases of PRS GBV cases were detected during Phase III with less than one-half accessing services. There are divided opinions among LFO staff on the reason for the low access of services with some staff linking this to early marriage. The same explanation was also given for the reason for school drop out for girls. Other staff, however, feel that these conclusions are not evidenced based due to the high mobility among the PRS and difficulties in tracking movement and time to follow up. During phase III, LFO expanded the referral system to three gatherings in Tyre, Wavel camp in Beqaa and Ein el Hilweh camp in Saida.

46 Gender Bulletin, June, 2013, Issue 32
4.2.3 WBFO GBV

The WBFO addresses GBV through its Family and Child Protection Programme (FCPP) to protect the rights of vulnerable groups in refugee camps—children, youth, women, elderly, and people with special needs—from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect, and discrimination. The Programme’s mission is to ensure that every individual of a family is empowered with the knowledge and skills to protect themselves and their communities from all forms of violence, injury, abuse, neglect, and discrimination. The Programme operates through a network of 129 psychosocial counselors in health centers, schools, and communities throughout the West Bank, as well as all staff in health, education, and RSSP departments.

The health programme staff highlighted the importance of engaging men in raising awareness sessions and pre-conception care and family planning, as well as encouraging men to be with their wives during child birth at Qalquila Hospital where it is possible. The programme also targeted men through its FCPP that involved 529 men during 2013. Sixteen groups of 167 male sanitation workers are involved in on-going counseling in 2014.

The extensive discussions with the Chief Field Health Officer, senior nurses and GFP Officer indicate the Health Department’s strong commitment in addressing GBV prevention that was developed and implemented in 2009. UNRWA’s 2012 Annual Report notes that the health programmes in the West Bank and Gaza are leading the GBV referral system. The increase in self-referrals, representing 64 per cent of all detections with 80 per cent of survivors accessing psychosocial services, indicates an increased willingness of survivors to address GBV. Including men in pre-conception planning brings men to the table for broader discussions of family health and protection.

The Department’s GBV response system involves four key mechanisms to include Integrating GBV response into service delivery departments, Health, RSSP, and Education with standard operating procedures and protocols implemented in 18 health centres; capacity strengthening of front line staff; community awareness, outreach and advocacy and information and data collection.

The Department’s GBV prevention system involves a community based approach in the identification and response to GBV through Family and Child Protection Committees (FCPC) established in camps. The FCPCs are a multi-sectoral network of members from UNRWA and NGO, health/mental health and social services, schools, community-based organizations and associations as well as religious and community leaders within each refugee camp and locality who identify and respond to GBV risks. Programmes focus on strengthening families’ problem solving and parenting skills. Maternal and child health services involve home visits and counseling. Family Counseling is provided through UNRWA’s community mental health centers.

4.2.4 JFO GBV

The JFO collaborates with the national referral system that uses a multi-sectoral, multi-functional, inter-agency approach based on Standard Operating Procedures and coordinating mechanisms. Jordan’s national referral system is framed by a rights based national law requiring obligatory reporting of incidences of violence by Agency staff. While the intent of the law is to protect women against violence, ironically, JFO staff indicate that the reporting requirement has weakened the referral system and possibly, victims’ willingness to seek help. Staff have been summoned to testify in court despite

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48 Violence Against Children in the Home and in the Family, UNICEF

49 UNRWA Coomunity of Practice in Building Referral Systems For Women Victims of Violence, July 2010
their UNRWA privilege of immunity that is not honored by Jordanian courts. They fear they will experience backlash, including violence, from the Palestinian refugee communities. The Chief Officer of the Health Programme indicated that women resist referrals because fear of divorce or backlash from family.

Additional challenges in addressing GBV are the JFO’s huge caseloads, as more time and private space are needed for confidentiality. Nevertheless, the FHT approach has contributed to building trust with clients who are more willing to discuss GBV. The Chief Officer of the Health Department indicated that the department would benefit from inter-field exchanges, with champions from one field visiting another field to share lessons learned.

GBV interventions are being addressed through a number of programmes. Inter-agency GBV response efforts, led by UNFPA benefitted 2,450 women, girls, men and boys in 14 women’s safe places inside Zaatari camp and in host communities through psychosocial support, legal representation and GBV awareness activities.50

The strongest GBV trainers are reported to be in the Education Programme. The Women Programme Centres indicate they have had major successes in building trust with communities so that women feel comfortable in talking about GVB. The centres have been able to provide support and advice to GBV survivors on how to access legal services. Additionally, Health Centres were able to reach 12,000 women during 2013 by providing awareness sessions on GBV when women came in for vaccinations.

4.2.5 SFO GBV

UNRWA Syria Crisis Response Update reports that the Agency is sheltering 7,989 displaced PR and Syrians in 17 Agency facilities in the country with an additional 4,011 PR sheltered in other facilities.51 A video-conference with Syria staff indicated that the number of resources available are decreasing with only seven UNRWA health clinics open, and three are open part time. Only five out of 15 clinics in Damascus area are operational. Discussions further pointed to the shortage of staff and their inability to use uncertified health care volunteers in the clinics. The WPCs are playing a huge role during the crisis in areas where health care staff cannot reach refugees. The remaining operational health centers are over-burdened, lack space for privacy and confidentiality. At times, there are four doctors, each one dealing with a patient in the same room. GBV survivors can receive support at WPCs where there are trained social workers and expert volunteers.

Key Findings, GBV

Information from interviews and data indicate that there in an increasing awareness of the destructive impact of GBV among Palestinian Refugee men as a result of their participation in pre-conception planning and through their involvement in campaigns in VAW prevention. A significant number of men participated in UNRWA’s 16 Days Campaign to Combat Violence against Women. The theme for 2013 was ‘Time for Change: Men to Say No to Violence against Women’. A panel discussion on the role of men in tackling VAW with 300 participants, mostly men, was conducted in December, 2013. The increased awareness and involvement of men provide a window of opportunity to expand their involvement in combatting GBV.

50 Inter-Agency Regional Response, 7 – 13 March, 2014
51 UNRWA Syria Crisis Response Update, Issue No. 72, March, 2014
As indicated from the Agency’s experience in involving men, and as stated in the research, the value of men participating in combatting VAW cannot be overstated. According to IRC, “in order to effectively engage men in GBV prevention, they need to be able to reflect on the role of masculinity, socialization, power and control in their own lives.” Further, IRC found that it was not workable to simply involve men in women’s groups. Accustomed to taking control and the lead, the men dominated the sessions and women’s voices were silenced. After researching several successful male involvement programs worldwide including Engender Health’s Men as Partners (MAP) in South Africa, Men Against Violence in Nicaragua, and Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) in the United States, IRC staff recognized that before developing men’s engagement in prevention, it is first necessary to ensure that men understand the root causes of violence from a genders specific lens and their own role in maintaining gender norms and inequality.52 Based on the success stories on involving men in GBV initiatives and supported by the research, expanding on these interventions should be considered a priority during the next phase.

The UN Joint Programme, Partners for Prevention, outline outcome measures as a change in knowledge, behavior and attitudes.53 The beginnings of change in these areas are reflected in discussions and reports. A link between GBV prevention results and seeds of institutional change is documented through an increase in detections. The overall increase in detections and the significant increase in self-referrals in the WBFO Health Programme reflect a change in GBV survivors’ behavior and attitudes through their confidence and trust in the GBV programme to address their needs.

Furthermore, a consensus across fields indicates that there is a change in staff attitudes in realizing the destructive impact of GBV on families, the community and future generations. There is also increased understanding of the importance of engaging men in combatting VAW. Including men in pre-conception panning brings men to the table for broader discussions of family health and protection. While changes are in the nascent stage, the attitude among staff, survivors and their spouses provides traction in addressing other cultural barriers that prevent women’s broader participation in empowerment activities outside the home.

One option for further increasing GBV detection suggested during discussions with the WBFO Health Department could involve incorporating GBV as part of a broader health assessment. This option is supported by the literature suggesting that GBV related questions be included as part of a broader sex health programme, explaining to clients that all women are screened for GBV as a matter of course.54

Continuing to expand and strengthen the WPCs in engaging the communities and involving men is an important consideration for the next phase. The trust gained by the WPCs through their involvement with women, their families and the communities was addressed throughout discussions. Further, the respect earned by the WPCs was obvious during site visit to the centres in the fields.

4.2 Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEM)

Women’s empowerment is addressed through Technical Vocational Education and Micro-finance initiatives across all fields in response to Goal 2, Knowledge and Skills and Goal 3, a decent standard of living. Micro finance activities have provided an invaluable service to women and youth across all fields

52 Engaging Men in Ending Gender Based Violence In Libya: Case Study and Promising Practices: Male Involvement Project, Year One, International Rescue Committee
53 Monitoring and Evaluation of Gender Based Violence Programmes, Partners for Prevention
54 Bridge, Gender Indicators: Overview Report, Ann Moser, 2007
through loans for small, mostly home based businesses, who are excluded from the formal banking sector because they lack collateral. Over the last two decades, UNRWA financed 104,203 loans to Palestinian Refugee and Non-Refugee women valued at 77.16 million dollars, 32 per cent of all loans and 21 per cent of the historical value of the loans financed.

In 2013, loans to Palestinian refugees represent 44 per cent of the total number of loans. Thirty-seven per cent of loans, representing 27 per cent of the total loan portfolio, were allocated to women refugees. Young women, 18 to 30 years of age, received 35.4 per cent of all loans to youth. During the second half of the year through November, 2013, the department financed 4,826 loans to women valued at USD 3.86 million representing 35 per cent of the total MD for this period. The annual Micro Finance Report and personal stories talk about the improvement in Palestine Refugee women’s lives through earnings and increased social interactions.

Technical and vocational training are reported to have a high impact on employment, although the data and reports from the field indicate that TVET continues to favor market oriented opportunities for males. Female enrolment in TVET in 2010 is reported at 39.25 per cent with the majority of training in technical level and traditional home-based employment training in areas such as embroidery, crafts, cooking and fashions. Examples of market-oriented training are the WBFO innovative filming project that has had measurable success, the management training for young women in Gaza and the LFO pilot in mobile phone maintenance.

Countries in the Arab Region rank among the last ten out of 135 countries in female employment. A recent mapping of business employment in the MENA region by UNRWA, as reflected in the chart below, indicates that the region lags far behind the rest of the world in employment opportunities for women. Unemployment in Gaza is over 40.8 percent and as high as 64.7 per cent for youth and 79.2 per cent for female youth. The statistics in the reports emphasize the importance of training opportunities under TVET relevant to market opportunities for the Palestine Refugees.

Currently, there are nine VTCs in five fields offering one year, skilled labor courses, two year craftsman level courses and two semi-professional courses, a two year duration and a short term course. The more favorable market oriented courses heavily favor males with courses such as cooking, sewing, hair dressing and handicrafts open to women. There is agreement with across sectors and development partners on the need for more relevant market-oriented training to increase more lucrative employment opportunities for women. A number of staff and external partners participating in the evaluation expressed concerns that the limited and traditional courses are reinforcing the stereotypical role of women and limiting the earning potential of female single heads of households.

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55 Harmonized Report, 2013
56 Mapping of Business Inside the Palestinian Refugee Camps, LFO 2013
It is important to compare the employability data between youth in general across all fields to graduates employed or continuing their studies among active job seekers in the following charts.

**Percentage of Graduates employed or continuing studies among active job seekers**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WBFO</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFO</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GFO</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LFO</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JFO</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percentages of Unemployment Amongst Youth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field – Year</th>
<th>Male – youth</th>
<th>Female youth</th>
<th>Overall Youth</th>
<th>Total unemployment rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GFO – 2010</td>
<td>61.2%</td>
<td>75.8%</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
<td>37.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBFO – 2010</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JFO – 2009</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LFO – 2007</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFO – 2007</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
<td>49.7%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

57 Harmonize Results Report, 2012, Source Education Management Systems (EMIS)
58 UNRWA Engage Youth, EU Project
4.3.1 LFO (WEM)

Gender empowerment activities through training and micro-finance loans for businesses are significantly constrained due to the Government restricted employment barriers. The Agency has been working with the Government of Lebanon in removing the barriers.

Currently, 84 per cent business owners in camps are men. However, compared to 2004, there has been a 78 per cent increase of female business owners with the majority living inside camps. In the stagnant business environment, female businesses have a higher rate of growth in value than males’ enterprises, though an overall lower value.

Over 11,000 poor and vulnerable persons (66 per cent females and 34 per cent males) participated in life skills training organized by nine WPCs with Palestine Refugees from Syria (PRS) representing nine percent of the beneficiaries. Overall, the training opportunities for women are in traditionally identified female areas such as food services, cooking, sewing, embroidery and hair dressing.

The WPCs play a significant role in this environment in providing social support and training for women in the camps. Their approach, however, has been motivating women to seek training so they will be better mothers, rather than empowering them. Nine WPCs have been targeted for participation in capacity building assessments in three areas, governance, programmes and services and financial management. The capacity building assessment was more of a learning tool than measuring capacity as each question describes what is to be done under each area.

There is some progress in exploring non-traditional employment training, including a photography course in Tyre for males and females. Two girls enrolled in a one year photography and editing course that included practical experience in a studio. Both girls are now working in a studio in Sidon. The LFO is also working with the Government to have the WPCs accredited so that graduating beneficiaries can go on to universities. More courses with employment potential are needed for females.

Recommendations from LFO’s comprehensive mapping of businesses include better integration of businesses into the host society’s workforce through wage work as part of a broader employment strategy. Tailored interventions should be aimed at improving the involvement of young women in income generating activities. Traditional household owned businesses are an important source of income for older female refugees with limited education and with children, however, a broader range of market oriented employment training are needed for younger women.

4.3.2 WBFO (WEM)

The WBFO financed 37 per cent of the loan portfolio to women, representing 21 per cent in value, for small, mostly traditional home operated businesses. In 2011, 39,998 loans were financed to youth for new business: 3,443 loans, 9 per cent percent to GFO; 7,654 loans, 19 per cent to JFO; 11,184 loans 28 per cent to WBFO and 17,717 loans, 44 per cent to SFO. Young women received 15,000

The students in the Am’ari photograph school have already had the opportunity to collaborate with the local telecommunication company, Jawwal, producing short publicity ads and films.

59 EU Funded Education Project
60 Ibid, Mapping of Businesses inside refugee camps
loans or 37 per cent of the total loans to youth.\textsuperscript{61} Although there is no follow-up on the economic gains of businesses, women’s higher loan repayment rates than males are one indicator of success.

The RSS has worked with 15 refugee camps in the West Bank by providing grants to help women establish income generating projects as well as grants for the rehabilitation of community based organization. Additionally, the Jenin artificial limbs unit is one of the 18 income generating projects that is providing a stable source of revenue for the local community-based rehabilitation centre as well as employment opportunities for refugees. The RSS has also provided grants for an innovative, non-traditional vocational training course with great potential for women empowerment as well as males.

The Am’ari Centre was awarded USD 15,000 grant from the MDG achievement fund to initiate intensive courses in photography, filming and editing to university students and marginalized women. The WPC expects that women graduates will be able to use their skills in a number of ways, including filming weddings and other celebrations. The students in the Am’ari photograph school have already had the opportunity to collaborate with the local telecommunication company, Jawwal, in the production of short publicity ads and films. UNRWA needs to build on this initiative in exploring other opportunities to provide non-traditional training with greater income generation.

4.3.2 JFO (WEM)

Micro-finance in Jordan works through a network of five branch offices that are structured as private MFIs to provide loans for existing businesses. In 2010, Jordan invested more in young Palestine Refugees in Jordan than all other regions, representing 27 per cent of clients with 1,258 loans valued at USD 1.5 million. As of 2011, a women household credit product was added and in 2012, a youth start up project was launched.

Site visits to the Irbid WPC included side-visits to two successful household owned businesses, one in artistic crafts made from recycled materials and one selling and tailoring high-end used clothing purchased from the Gulf Region.

4.3.4 SFO (WEM)

The Syrian micro-finance operations continue to operate in crisis mode with the closing of branches, a 20 per cent reduction in workforce and a programme write-off of 1,111 loans valued at SYP 18.94 million. Three new branches were opened in three safer areas of the country in 2013 helping to compensate losses. The programme is operating in a crisis mode through 2014 despite EU contributions in the amount of Euro 1.66 million.\textsuperscript{62}

4.3.5 GFO (WEM)

The GFO was the first field to initiate micro-finance activities and over the last 22 years has represented 34 per cent of the Agency’s work. Significant achievements to gender empowerment have been realized through contributions of the Gender Initiative (GI). The Young Women’s Leadership Programme has been successful in placing 816 female graduates in work internships pushing the cultural barriers on the capabilities of women in the work force. Traditionally, it is not seen as appropriate for

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid, Engaging Youth, UNRWA, March 2012
\textsuperscript{62} Socio and Economic damage assessment report, UNRWA Micro-finance clients in Syria (situation in June, 2013)
women to work in the private sector in Gaza, however, employers have become interested in hiring women after favorable experiences with a YWLP graduate.

In addition to the YWLP, young women have been provided a new profession by organizing and presenting graduation and other UNRWA ceremonies that were previously provided by an outside resource. GI also provided 615 vulnerable female heads of households training in micro-credit including financial and micro business management and home based business development. Additionally, 276 vulnerable female heads of households were trained in micro-credit including financial and micro business management and home based business development through the GI.

The scope of the interventions in addressing the vocational training and employment needs of women in Gaza is impressive with a range of educational, training and empowerment activities. The interventions include providing Social and Recreational Spaces project providing arts, literacy and computer training to more than 72,568 women and leadership development and life skills training under the Young Women’s Leadership Programme (YWLP) to over 2,842 university graduates. The successes of these programmes provide a catalyst to expand the initiatives to other fields.

It is important to note that although low, female labor force participation in Gaza has been steadily growing over the years: from 6.4 per cent in 2002 to 11 per cent in 2007 and up to 16 per cent in 2013. In the first quarter of 2014, employment rate increased to 20.5 per cent. There is reason to believe that the blockade and the closure of tunnels and subsequent rapid fall in food security and the economic situation in Gaza is forcing women to work as families need every income they can attain.

GFO has recently secured funding for 763 YWLP graduates for jobs in the UNRWA graduate training programme that will provide skilled and paid job opportunities for a duration of 6 months. In addition to the YWLP and the skilled GTPs for YWLP graduates, the GFO is supporting a social enterprise for Gaza's IT employment, called the Gaza Gateway. The Gaza Gateway will contract with international buyers of outsourced services, and train recent IT graduates to deliver industry projects, integrating soft skills growth with their work experience.

Graduates will leave the enterprise after approximately 12 months of work experience as qualified Project Associates with employable CVs including technical and soft skills, and practical work experience. The Gaza Gateway's first project team, consisting of 9 women and 6 men recent graduates, is midway through a year of providing services to UNRWA's enterprise resource planning project. A second project team is being recruited, to manage the data and user support for a regional educational management information system.

Gazan women figure prominently in the study and profession of IT. In a 2013 study by Mercy Corps, 30 Gazan companies reported that 31% of their technical staff is female. Gaza's fledgling IT industry is the object of many hopes, and investments in its development are equally investments in women's mainstreamed, merit-driven professional prospects.

Key Findings

The 2013 Harmonized Report indicates that the Agency met its target to serve the subsistence needs of 70 per cent of refugees identified as poor by providing them with a social transfer in the form of food, cash or cash-for-work, however, the report does not indicate the percent of women served.
Overall, the trend in reporting includes input indicators, percentages and values of loans financed, but there are no outcome indicators for measurement or analysis on how the loans were used, for what types of businesses or livelihood or quality of life improvements. A number of examples are provided for entrepreneurship but are not linked to outcome targets. Evidenced based results and analyses in the next phase will help to more effectively target future micro-finance activities and encourage marginalized women and men to participate in employment training and entrepreneurship.

Field visits to talk with female entrepreneurs in Lebanon, Jordan and West Bank reflect Palestinian women’s engagement in home based businesses. Meetings with two female home based businesses in the Irbid and Baqa’a Camps in Jordan (one selling high quality used clothing and another selling unique hand-made crafts) indicated a high level of satisfaction from their enterprises.

Meetings with groups of women indicate that the WPC is one of the few culturally acceptable places they can meet outside the home and receive training. There are different opinions among UNRWA staff on the relevance of training in traditional, home-centered occupations and loans for small, home-based business. Some staff believe that we are reinforcing the traditional role of women, while other staff indicate that the additional income increases the women’s self-esteem and negotiating power within the family. Several staff further indicate that traditional business training and Home Based Businesses (HBBs) are the only option for older women with limited education and with children. While all of the reasons stated have merit, the data indicating the high percentage of the population under age 30, emphasize the need to for a greater focus on non-traditional, market relevant training for young men and women.

Several initiatives have been developed in the fields, and particularly in Gaza, to develop more non-traditional and market oriented employment training programmes for women. Examples of non-traditional employment for women are also indicated in the WBFO, such as the filming unit, a service helping women prepare their CVs for application to universities and woman owned carpentry shop. Opportunities to expand on these initiatives are encouraged by UNRWA staff across all fields.

Eighty-three per cent of males and 76 per cent of female TVET graduates who are employed or continuing their studies meet the targets set out in the HIP. The percentages, however, do not differentiate in the percentages who are employed from graduates who are continuing their studies.

4.3 Reducing the Drop-Out Rates

Addressing low achievement and drop-out rates of youth is particularly important given that 60 per cent of the Palestine Refugee population is reported to be under the age of 25. These statistics alone demand that attention to youth be given the highest priority. The lack of an education not only further impairs the ability of youth to find employment in a tight market, but this population needs to be prepared for the time a peaceful resolution is established. The Education Department has undertaken aggressive measures to address student drop-out and low achievement through its education reform programme.

The March, 2014 GMS Implementation Report for the July-December 2013 period reflects considerable activities across all fields to reduce the drop-out rates and low educational performance.

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63 Percentages in reports differ, however, all reflect high rates under age 30. “Youth (aged 15 – 29) account for almost 29 per cent of the registered refugee population; they are growing at an unprecedented rate… 27 per cent of the total population) were aged below 15 years of age.” UNRWA, Engaging Youth, EU
Remedial support through after school and Saturday classes has been implemented by the GFO and the WBFO.

A survey to identify percentages and reasons for drop-out at elementary and preparatory levels, undertaken for the 2010-2011 school year, found that the drop-out rate was higher at the preparatory rather than the primary level with the exception of Gaza. In Gaza, the average drop-out rate for a single grade level remains lower at the elementary than at the preparatory level. In four of the five fields, 89 per cent of students who had dropped-out had repeated at least one grade.

A 2013 study identified three major reasons for school drop-out across four fields. Although ranked differently, the number one reason in Lebanon and Jordan and the number two in Gaza and the West Bank was under achievement. Lack of interest was identified as the most common reason across all fields. These factors indicate the importance of the educational reform initiatives in process throughout the Agency.

A general decrease in drop-out rates in most fields and for both genders is reported between the 2011 and 2013 school years. Although the results at different levels in the fields are mixed, positive increases are noted. For example, Agency-wide figures show an improvement in female elementary and male preparatory drop-out rates and a decline in female preparatory and male elementary drop-out. Overall survival to Grades 9 and 10 has improved for both boys and girls in Jordan. The numbers of first graders not reaching Grade 9 in the West Bank has declined from 400 to less than 100 in 2013.

4.3.1 JFO Drop-out rates
The JFO’s activities to address drop-out rates centered mainly on the risks and disadvantages of early marriage and the importance of education with over 2,000 female students in grades 7 to 10 in 18 schools participating in awareness sessions. Additionally, awareness activities on school drop-out were provided to 200 mothers in Zarqa and 62 mothers in Irbid. The JFO’s attention to early marriage as a result of drop-out for girls was based on the UNICEF’S 2010 assessment of the rights of the child.

Overall survival to Grades 9 and 10 has improved for both boys and girls in Jordan, despite a mixed picture with trends moving in different directions.

4.3.2 SFO Drop-out rates
Teleconferencing discussions with UNRWA staff in Syria indicate that educational opportunities have been significantly impacted due to crisis and security situation on Syria making it difficult to reach all students. The discussions, along with the most recent GMS implementation report, indicate impressive efforts of the Syrian staff to mitigate the effects of the crisis on students and to minimize disruption in education.

Only 49 out of UNRWA’s 118 schools opened for the 2013/2014 school year. The government has allowed the use of an additional 41 schools for Palestinian Refugees. In Yarmouk, which is constantly under siege, teachers and volunteers are organizing classes where children are gathered, and in some cases, classes taking place in basements. The Government is allowing students to use government schools where security conditions allow. Despite the security conditions, the lack of learning material,

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64 UNRWA School Drop-out: An Agency-wide study, 2013
65 UNRWA Harmonization Report, 2013
66 The Situation of Palestinian Children in the Occupied Territory, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, UNICEF, 2010
displacement of teachers and students and irregular classes, 50 per cent of students were able to sit for final exams.

Although data was collected at the school level and field staff with an initial analysis made by field staff based on paper forms, data collected became unavailable due to changing circumstances. For this reason, drop-out data is not available for Syria.

### 4.3.3 GFO Drop-out rates

The GFO’s initiatives to reduce drop-out rates of boys and girls have been through the enrichment of educational levels and involvement of parents in their children’s education. The Educational Support Units (ESUs) classes are offered in the core subject areas of Arabic, English, Mathematics and Science. IT classes have been added to respond to the increased demand for IT training in the Gaza area and the popularity of computer training.

ESUs have been created in the form of after school classes to support girls from falling behind in class with 10,895 students benefitting from services. The GFO extended the ESU to target boys through a pilot partnering with a CBO in Khan Younis reaching 493 boys aged between 13 and 18 years of age through May, 2014. During the first semester, September to January, 2013, 189 boys participated in the ESU resulting in an 87.5 per cent improvement in their school marks. The most recent evaluation from midterm exams indicates improvements in school performance. It is important to note, however, that performance improvements will fluctuate over different period particularly as the same children continue to participate and cannot continue to improve grades indefinitely. Performance improvements from the evaluation of mid-term exams indicate:

- Boys and girls – 1672 from 2,392 = 69.98 per cent improvement
- Boys – 155 from 177 = 87.57 per cent
- Girls – 1,517 from 2,215 = 68.4 per cent

Involvement of parents in orientation sessions on the Palestinian Education Curriculum is offered to familiarize them with the curriculum and to promote their awareness in the need to be involved with their children’s learning. This initiative is supported by international research showing that “parental involvement is associated with higher student achievement.”

### 4.3.4 WBFO Drop-out rates

As previously indicated, the Agency-wide study on school drop-out, identified under achievement as a major reason for drop-out in the West Bank. Excessive time watching television was quoted as a major reason by 48 per cent of the boys and 38 per cent of the girls. According to the study, a significant percentage of the students who dropped out were perceived to be from families disinterested in education.

Following the study, the WBFO collected additional information through interviews with parents, teachers and Principals. The interviews involved a set of questions regarding contributing factors to student drop out and what efforts were made to prevent drop out. Eighty-six percent of teachers, 50 per cent of School Principals and 63 per cent of parents indicated that students themselves were responsible for drop-out. Twenty per cent of Principals identified socio-economic reasons as

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contributing factors. To a degree, parents agreed with school staff that family factors contributed to drop out.

School representatives indicated that they thought the family had done nothing to prevent drop-out. However, 79 per cent of parents indicated they had provided guidance and advice to their child. Ninety-three per cent of parents indicated they had received communication regarding their child from the school. This snap-shot study suggests the need for better communication between the schools and parents.

The Agency-wide study also cites a number of risk factors that may place students at risk of drop out to include marriage, work or death of a parent. The majority of students in four fields had experienced at least one of the risk factors.

4.3.5 LFO Drop-out

There was an overall increase in the number of students who passed the national exam in 2013 compared to 2012. This is attributed partly to strengthening the school-parent link in involving and helping parents to support their children’s learning. Survival for boys through the ninth grade improved for boys and declined for girls.

Awareness sessions on the risks of early marriage in the LFO have been provided to parents and students, although LFO staff believe there is no conclusive evidence to support this risk as the reason girls are dropping out of school. Reports from the LFO indicate that early marriage is assumed to be the reason for PRS girls’ drop-out, however, in Lebanon, this population has been too mobile to determine the cause. Ambiguous reasons for drop-out rates in LFO are cited as “low motivation” and “poor academic achievement,” but the analysis is shallow. There is no further analysis on the reasons for low motivation and achievement.

Key Findings, Drop-out Rates

Although drop-out rates in UNRWA schools are relatively low, the Agency has demonstrated a commitment to further reductions in drop-out rates and low academic achievement. The success of the remedial after-school and Saturday programmes in raising scores of both boys and girls should be explored for expansion to other fields, targeting schools the lower performing schools.

The study on drop-outs emphasizes the importance of the Education Reform initiatives, and particularly the EMIS system and strategic planning in providing timely, accurate and relevant data. The reform initiatives cover teacher development, new classroom approaches, school based capacity development for principals and teachers. The full involvement of parents in their children’s education is another major objective of the Education Reform Plan. The objectives of the Education Reform are consistent with global education best practices.

The Common Monitoring Framework (CMF) of 15 August 2013, under Goal 2 Acquired Knowledge and Skills, SO 4 Ensure universal education to and coverage of basic education indicates the following results on reducing drop-out rates:

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<tr>
<th>SO</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Color codes, red – indicators not met, yellow – partially met, green – met</th>
<th>Color-Code Results</th>
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The Education Reform Strategy involves a comprehensive and holistic approach that ensures student centred learning, support of teachers and empowered schools. Inclusive education is designed to meet the needs of all students to reduce drop-outs. Toolkits have been developed to meet the diverse needs and to detect early warning signs of drop out. The Human Rights Education programme ensures that children know and take advantage of their rights to education.

An agency wide study of low achievement and drop out reflected that the low achievement rates of boys was higher than girls. The results of the survey link drop-out rates due to two main reasons: (i) the students’ need to contribute to work and support of families, and (ii) the low education of students’ parents. School violence as a factor in the low achievement and drop-out of boys was also mentioned in discussions and included as one of the reasons in a study of four UNRWA schools in Lebanon.  

Schools are overcrowded and teachers often see physical discipline as the only way to manage large classes. According to one teacher in Jordan, “teachers are no longer able to control classes due to harsh punishments by the ministry and UNRWA of those who hit students. The end result is that many students end up without a proper education as chaos spreads in many classes,” said the teacher, who admits he continues to resort to physical punishment.” This is supported by a study of 300 students from Nuserit Camp that links school violence to academic achievement.

UNRWA reports indicate that efforts to combat physical violence in schools “face road blocks due to the deeply rooted culture of punishment in society, particularly in refugee camps where poverty is widespread,” however, it is further noted that the challenges do not mean the problem is not addressed. Corporal punishment in schools is banned and enforced under UNRWA policy and is addressed in the Human Rights Education Programme. However, more work is needed, focusing on schools with the highest incidence of reported violence. Attention to the selected schools should include further support to strengthen school parliament systems as a mechanism to promote a culture of respect, peer support and schools free of violence. It is well known from the research, that violence is handed down generation to generation. As indicated in one study:

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68 UNRWA School Drop Outs in Palestinian Refugee Camps in Lebanon, Anies Al-Hroub, American University Beirut
69 UNRWA Moves to Combat Violence in its Schools, IRIN Humanitarian News and Analysis
71 Middle East: UNRWA Moves to Combat Violence in Schools, IRIV, Humanitarian News and Analysis, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 12 June 2014
“The tendency to be violent is an acquired attitude, and juvenile violence that leads to adult violence is a learned behavior. Although violence begins with the individual and is not an inherited trait or an ancestral throwback, there are contributing elements that are far beyond the individual. Children who are maltreated may store up there hatred and anger and manifest violent behavior in adulthood. This tradition of violence and abuse continues to be handed down from generation to generation because of society’s causal acceptance of violence in general.”

Remedial education and use of schools as year-round learning and recreational centers was suggested by the WBFO Director of Education. As part of the two year Education Recovery Plan (2009-2010) the WBFO expanded its remedial education programme and added Saturday as a day of learning and fun. The impact of remedial education through the Education Support Units in Gaza is noted by improvements in grades.

5. APPROACH, THE FOUR LEVERS OF THE STRATEGY

5.1. Creating a Structure for Change

A senior gender adviser was hired to lead the GMS Implementation and the GFP system, the main mechanism for mainstreaming gender throughout the agency, grew to over 70 members by the end of 2010 providing support to headquarters and field offices in issues related to gender mainstreaming and gender equality. The addition of a Gender Adviser and Gender Unit provide the foundation for gender equality and gender mainstreaming.

The Terms of Reference for the Senior Gender Adviser are outlined in Annex V of the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy emphasizing a coordinator and advocacy role. Adding language to the TORs to reflect the senior adviser’s leadership role would provide increased support for her functions in areas such as providing policy advice to the Commissioner General and the Executive team to ensure implementation of the GMS; developing and strengthening partnerships with UN and bi-lateral agencies, WPCs and CBOs; identifying advocacy opportunities, forums and networks to advance gender equality in the region, and facilitating internal and external communication to promote gender equality and advance the GMS.

GFP responsibilities are broadly outlined in Annex V of the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy indicating that 20 per cent of a department’s GFP will be allocated to responsibility for gender mainstreaming. Their main functions are defined as facilitator, catalyst and adviser. There is a consensus among GFPS that the 20 per cent is added on rather than a part of their work time. Although there were a number of gender awareness and gender mainstreaming training, as well workshops in specialized areas, gender analysis, the key function and main capacity building foundation for gender

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72 Violent Society Causes Child Abuse, V. J. Fontana, V. Moolman, 1994

73 UN System Gender Focal Point Study, OSAGI, Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues
mainstreaming, has not yet been provided. There is a further consensus among GFPs that weaknesses in the GFP mechanism include the frequent turnover in GFPs, managers do not see gender mainstreaming as a priority, and that the GFPs do not have sufficient expertise or influence to carry out their GMS responsibilities.

The GFPs emphasized that tools and checklists are needed to help field staff address gender and poverty issues in project planning, monitoring and evaluation. They further indicate that the structural linkage between headquarters and the field is not clearly defined or understood. GFPs at headquarters indicate there is little feedback from the field leaving them unaware of the realities on the ground. The weak communication between headquarters and the field is exacerbated by frequent turnover of GFPs and the lack of GFPs in some field departments. This situation further results in lack of follow up on field plans. Nevertheless, the potential for a stronger GFP system is now recognized by GFPs and in some cases by their supervisors in some of the fields.

Reports reflect a number of GFP meetings are conducted to share experiences on a regular basis to enable capacity building of the focal points. The January, 2013 meeting provided GFPs an opportunity for an open discussion on the implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy. In March, 2013, a workshop included colleagues from the Department of Legal Affairs, Protection, Security and Safety Unit and the Ethics office to discuss legal, protection and security issues related to GBV. A gender network has been established to advocate for gender mainstreaming throughout the agency, however, some report that they lack dedicated time for gender initiatives.

Most of the indicators outlined for creating structure have been addressed. The GMS, the GFP system and TORs have been endorsed by management and have been introduced to all fields, although the GFP system did not get up and running across all fields until 2010 and the degree of implementation varied widely. Sector specific GMS and field action plans have been developed although the quality of the plans is weak. Gender awareness training has been widespread throughout the agency, however the plan to train high percentages of staff in GMS was considered unrealistic and not cost effective.

An Accountability Framework to support GMS Implementation is addressed in the strategy, outlining the responsibilities of senior management, department and field directors, programme and planning and the gender focal points. Current performance plans include one statement indicating accountability for compliance with Gender Mainstreaming but there are no incentives for compliance or sanctions for non-compliance. The research indicates that incentives were responsible for the success of GMS in 20 out of 26 country evaluations, adding, when the competencies are required of senior managers and measured in their performance plans, a clear signal is sent to subordinates.74

Key Findings, Creating a Structure for Change

Although the structure has created a foundation for gender mainstreaming, there is a still a lot of work to be done to strengthen the structural mechanisms for gender mainstreaming. The strength of the GMS implementation varies across fields with the strongest implementation, particularly in GBV, in the West Bank and Gaza field offices. The strength of the GFPS also varies across fields. The GFP taskforce is considered weak despite a number of workshops bringing members together.

There is a strong consensus among senior staff that the gender office needs to be positioned at the highest level of the agency in order to embed and institutionalize gender equality and gender

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74 Evaluation Insights, Mainstreaming Gender Equality, African Development Bank, No.3, November 2011
mainstreaming in the conservative and cultural environment of UNRWA. Senior staff emphasized that the Gender Unit needs to sit at the right hand of the Commissioner General with the CG’s explicit and frequent leadership direction and support.

This view is supported by the recommendations of the UNDP Headquarters Evaluation Office indicating the importance of establishing a “Gender Development Office at the highest level...at least until gender mainstreaming has demonstrated results and is fully internalized in the organization.”75 The report further indicates that GFPs, to be effective, “need to be empowered beyond advocacy to having a structural role in in programme design, planning and implementation.”

Further, there is a strong recommendation for the overall UN system that gender should be a programme with its own budget rather than one of cross-cutting drivers. When gender is not a separate practice area with a separate budget, it is difficult to identify dedicated funding to gender mainstreaming. According to a UNDP Resident Representative, “the day they decided to demote gender from a programme to a driver was the beginning of the end.”76

Currently, accountability for GMS depends more on belief and personal interest in the importance of gender equality. To ensure full compliance, the Accountability Framework with sanctions and incentives for GMS compliance needs to be formalized into Agency’s policy and incorporated into the performance management system. Further, accountability of supervisors responsibilities for allocating 20 per cent of GFPs’ time to gender mainstreaming needs to be in the performance plan. Placing accountability in a formal and transparent way is an important mechanism to ensure system-wide gender mainstreaming and a critical component in strengthening the structural support of the GMS.

Managers should have gender mainstreaming targets in their terms of reference and performance plans and “systems of accountability must have bite.”77 The Accountability Framework could also include a requirement that the Senior Gender Adviser at headquarters be a second signatory on the lead GFPs Performance Plans and that Gender Officers at field offices be the second signatory on the field GFPs Performance Plans. The literature suggests that outstanding work through prizes and wide recognition be a component of the incentive system.

5.2 Building the Capacity of Staff

The MTS 2010-2015 outlines UNRWA’s new results framework but little attention is given to gender mainstreaming. While staff indicate gender issues have been integrated into programmes, there is a lack of evidence of systematic needs assessments using the gender lens of gender analysis. The Beijing Platform of Action recognizes gender analysis as the entry point of gender mainstreaming and an integral component of all analyses. Further, gender analysis is a competency needed by all U.N. staff, not the sole responsibility of gender experts.78

Capacity building for gender mainstreaming across the agency has focused primarily on gender awareness training. As indicated above the plan to train a high percentage of staff in gender awareness.

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76 Ibid
77 Ibid Evaluation Insights,
78 Gender Mainstreaming Overview, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, UN New York, 2002
was recognized early in the implementation as unrealistic and unnecessary. This was a positive decision as research shows that heavy investments in extensive gender awareness training results in negative attitudes towards gender issues. However, gender awareness training has been provided to senior managers and to some degree, mid-level managers.

There are indications from a number of staff that gender awareness training has been sufficient and that future training should be specific to implementation methods, tools and checklists relevant to the job. Once knowledge products such as tools and checklists are provided, training, incentives and accountability mechanisms need to be built in during implementation of the products. If there are no sanctions or rewards for the use of tools, their acceptance is largely dependent on individual interest. Secondly, it is important that the operational relevance of tools and guidelines be user friendly and adaptable to the context.  

Training on specific interventions to build capacities and disseminate lessons learned across fields has been done on a number of thematic areas. The most well established capacity building intervention is the one developed for the GBV project that provides two learning workshops organized by year and through regularly organized video-conferencing workshops. For example, 36 UNRWA staff participated in a workshop on the development of effective referral systems to respond to Violence against Women. As a result of the workshop, UNRWA developed a “Community of Practice” document on “building referral systems for victims of violence.”

Other capacity building interventions have included: a workshop on including men in pre-conception planning in 2010; training on Gender in Emergency Responses in July, 2013; a training manual on GBV for frontline staff, and a manual on Gender Analysis developed in a participatory approach. Further, despite serious financial constraints, the annual gender taskforce meeting brought together around 50 GFPs from all fields and programmes to discuss gender priorities, the UNSWAP and the GMS evaluation.

A joint workshops, conducted in 2013, was provided for GFPs, staff from Legal Affairs, Protection, Security and Safety and Ethics to discuss specific issues relevant to GBV. Continuing cross-departmental workshops of this nature would provide an on-going forum to discuss ways to integrate needs assessments and to discussion of other gender mainstreaming issues of common interest.

Two major capacity building interventions are in the pipeline for the next MTS period that are expected to significantly address gender mainstreaming and gender balance within the agency. A senior consultant is in the process of developing and proceeding with gender analysis of all programmes and all fields that will feed the next MTS and define the new Gender Action Plans. A Leadership Strengthening initiative is under development to address gender balance at senior level for local area staff. The

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initiative will identify a pool of candidates for mentoring and capacity building. The GFO is piloting a succession planning and mentoring process for key senior posts as part of this initiative.

In theory, Agency policy emphasizes equal access to services to all beneficiaries. The Agency has a long record of equal access to primary school education although access to TVET highly favors males. Cultural attitudes regarding women’s roles continue to be a barrier to non-traditional employment training. However, under the new Family Health Team Approach, access to health services favors females due to clinics early day operational hours.

**Key Findings, Capacity Building:**

Despite the number of trainings and instruction manuals, GFPs feel that they do not know how to translate the TORs into day to day practice. The research further indicates that GFP training needs “to be made more specific or tailored to operational activities clearly demonstrating its relevance to the work that people do. There needs to be follow up in terms of ‘trying out’ the new skills.” Staff working with GBV in three of the fields indicated that they needed training in handling the more serious cases of violence and rape.

One of the more effective capacity building interventions used globally that could be adopted in the next phase is the cross fertilization of ideas through short term, inter-agency exchange of staff. The practice allows professionals to spend short periods of time in other locations to share their learnings from one context and to work with staff in another context on how to apply it. Staff from both locations benefit from sharing best practices and the cross-fertilization of ideas, as well as benefitting from opportunities to develop new skills and approaches. This practice is known to stimulate creative thinking and innovative practices.

Further, cross-department workshops provide opportunities to understand gender mainstreaming issues from a broader intra-agency perspective.

**5.3 Effective Communication and Outreach**

Communication of GMS activities and successes have been the sole responsibility of the Gender Unit. A monthly gender bulletin has received considerable attention in highlighting the accomplishments of the gender mainstreaming strategy. The bulletin presents an update on gender activities across the various field offices for the Agency wide gender network and its external partners. Further, this media provide GFPs an opportunity to highlight key points in the bulletin during meetings with their departments, and to draw on the points for further discussion and strengthening of interventions.

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80 Moser, Caroline and Annalese Moser, Gender Mainstreaming since Beijing: a review of success and limitations in international organizations, in Mainstreaming Gender in Development edited by Finella Porter and Caroline Sweetman, Oxfam, 2005.

The January bulletin showcases the graduation of 1,421 students during the winter from the Young Women’s Leadership Programme (YWLP) in Gaza. The programme was designed to provide beneficiaries an array of organizational, management, decision making and communication skills. As a result, 400 women had the opportunity to participate in work placements in a variety of professions such as research, law, teaching and engineering.

The February bulletin announces the Agency’s continuing work on advocacy and awareness raising to end Gender Based Violence. In November, 2013, UNRWA launched its 16 day Violence against Women campaign with 2,150 key figures, community leaders and youth participating in performance and conflict resolution activities on gender based violence. Additionally, UNRWA’s reaches out and coordinates with UN agencies working on gender equality and gender based violence through its contributions to the UNCT gender taskforce, to the activities of the UN Women Arab States Regional Office and to the Inter-agency Network on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment.82

### Key Findings, Effective Communication

The gender bulletins contribute to agency wide advocacy and awareness, communications between the programmes and the fields on reforms initiated and lessons learned from gender interventions. The bulletins are rich in providing current information on the Agency’s work and should be continued during the next period.

Although the Gender Unit has initiated several methods to communicate the work of the GMS, its outreach potential is limited due to the Agency’s lack of a formal internal communications structure. The External Relations and Communications Division indicates that the Agency’s intranet is considerably outdated and difficult to navigate. Rehabilitation, expanding and updating the intranet would be a useful mechanism for the field offices to share success stories and lessons learnt. There is a wealth of information of UNRWA’s work available on the internet that can be accessed under different subjects. Adding a link to UNRWA’s website for publications and reports would provide a strong mechanism to showcase the GMS activities as well as the extensive work of the Agency for donors and interested general public.

One low cost option for improving internal communications of gender mainstreaming is including GMS on the agenda of senior management meetings at headquarters and field offices. This could be done on a quarterly basis outlining evidence-based achievements, constraints to be addressed and follow-up actions to be taken to support gender mainstreaming.

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82 Implementing UNRWA Gender Mainstreaming Strategy Report, September 2013
5.4 Mainstreaming Gender Analysis and Planning

A Senior Gender Advisor was in place as of 2009 fulfilling one of the indicators for the Planning lever. Implementation of the three remaining indicators, however, has been weak. The Department of Planning has strengthened the Agency-wide planning system. A Results Based Management (RBM) System, was introduced over the last two years to support the planning process. The system generates a Common Monitoring Framework that shows indicators, baseline and targets by field offices.

Gender disaggregated data for output indicators is incorporated throughout the CMF as evidence of gender mainstreaming in the Agency planning. However, more discreet data is needed in some areas. For example, Strategic Objective 9.1d indicates the number of refugees provided loans but it does not disaggregate the data further to indicate the number of refugee women served. SO 9.1.1 does not disaggregate the data to show the number of women youth served. Strategic Objective 10.1 indicates the numbers male and female TVET graduates who are employed or continuing their studies, however the numbers of TVET male and female TVET employed in a field relevant to their studies would be useful data for TVET planning. Strategic Objective 11 does not include indicators relating to shelters for female single heads of households. The discreet data also is not included in the narrative of the 2014-15 Headquarters Implementation Plan or in the current Field Implementation Plans.

Indicators:

- Meeting minutes reflect gender equality goals are mainstreamed in the Working Group on Resource Allocation as well as in the preparation of the budgets, FIPs and MTS
- Senior Gender Advisor in Place by 2008
- Field assessments, appeals and agency wide prioritization reflect gender equality goals by 2009
- Gender equality goals are reflected through concrete financed activities,

Because gender analysis, prioritization and planning are the major elements of gender mainstreaming, capacity needs to be built into the system for effective analysis at all stages of policy development and programme planning and implementation process.

Merging the GAPs with the FIPs would indicate that the achievement of GAP objectives is the shared responsibility of all departments. While the third biannual Gender Action Plan for 2012-13 are getting closer to the Field Implementation Plans, the integration of the two plans is not currently possible because the FIPs do not include all the gender interventions covered by the GBV project.

Programme plans need gender specific interventions and indicators and to be signed by GFPS against GMS checklists. Some of the indicators throughout the FIPs are vague. Clearer indicators are needed using SMART criteria. Many of the targets used are activity related and do not lend themselves to measure results. For example, the numbers of training conducted, or the numbers of beneficiaries accessing services do not measure what happened after the training or services.

Further, there is a need to rethink beyond access to services to measurable results. For example, it is important to know how many GBV referrals were successfully resolved. There needs to be methodological tools and checklist for the six-stage RBM gender analysis and planning process:

- Phase I of the cycle links the programme to the strategy;
- Phase II involves the stakeholder and problem analysis;
Phase III formulates the programme design, activity schedule, budget planning and setting up the correspondent M&E system;

Phase IV is the technical and financial appraisal;

Phase V is the implementation phase including activities and analysis of progress and

Phase VI is the evaluation phase, conclusions and recommendations, as well as lessons learnt. Lesson learning positioned in the center as part of each phase of the RBM cycle.\(^{83}\)

Another consideration for the next phase is a more efficient data collection system with integrated needs assessments for cross-cutting issues. The cross cutting issues of poverty, protection, gender, youth and disability are operating in silos when gender mainstreaming is relevant to each thematic area. Staff indicate, however, that limited resources and time constrain their ability to conduct comprehensive needs assessments. This further argues for collaborative efforts among poverty, protection, gender and disability for comprehensive, integrated needs assessments and to reduce duplication of efforts and resources.

Joint assessments using a gender analysis lens where feasible would avoid costly duplication of processes. To this purpose, in Lebanon, discussions have recently begun on the need to better harmonize and coordinate assessments. Several recommendations, emerging from initial discussions that would strengthen the planning systems, include:\(^{84}\)

- Facilitate and harmonize planned and on-going assessments: inform, harmonize and review upcoming/planned assessments, in line with national tools and methodologies to ensure quality and comparability across all assessments.
- Maintain an assessment inventory to map who is doing what. This will avoid duplication and decrease identified assessment fatigue among communities.
- Provide tools to better capture and analyze qualitative data
- Analyze and share data. With sector coordinators, collate and cross-analyze findings from various assessments, and other relevant information.
- Include findings from assessments in key planning processes

Plans over the next phase should include outcome indicators so that monitoring the progress achievement of goals can provide evidenced based comparison of trends and contribute to policy and decision making. For example, in GBV interventions, indicators are needed to (i) measure the scope, prevalence, relationship of perpetrators of survivors and (ii) the Agency’s responses to specific problems.\(^{85}\)

**Key Findings, Gender Analysis and Planning**

*Gender Analysis and Planning* has been the weakest of the four levers during the first GMS implementation phase. According to senior planning and evaluation staff, considerable more work is required to strengthen the system including reviewing the indicators in the GAPs and FIPs. It was noted repeatedly throughout discussions that there are a lot of gender related, ad-hoc activities across sectors but not clearly linked to the GMS.

\(^{84}\) Potential options for new/additional multi-sector assessments, Interagency Needs Assessment, Phase One Report, 27 May 2014  
\(^{85}\) Indicators to measure violence against women, UN Women, Women Watch, 8-10 October, 2007
The FIPs for the period of 2012-2013 reviewed during the evaluation are considerably weak. In the SFO FIP, for example, gender is not included in its five priorities for the period of 2012-2013. The WBFO FIP includes GBV and inclusive financial assistance in the plan, but the data cited throughout is not disaggregated. One of the newly developed FIPs for the period of 2014-2015 examined during the evaluation period, is also weak in its narrative and disaggregated data on gender.

Implicit in the analysis is the need for formalized coordination mechanisms among the Gender Unit, GFPS and Planning to identify areas where disaggregated data is needed and to integrate the planning processes.

6. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Relevance

In examining Relevance, the report addresses the extent that GMS inputs, outputs or outcomes are consistent with international treaties, the Agency’s gender equality policy and the priorities and the needs of intended beneficiaries.

UNRWA’s Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Strategy are aligned with global commitments stated in the UN declarations, resolutions, pronouncements and conventions. The strategy specifically addresses the mandate to make further progress in addressing needs and rights of women in accordance with the Copenhagen Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the United Nations System Wide Policy on Gender Equality and Strategy on Gender Mainstreaming (CEB/2006/HLP-C-XII/CRP.1) and the ECOSOC agreed conclusions on Gender Mainstreaming in the implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action. Current data indicate that the strategy contributes to MDG Goal 1 Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger through emergency cash assistance, MDG 2 Achieving Universal Education through Inclusive education as well as other components of the Education Reform Programme; MDG3, Promotion of Equality and Empowerment of Women through micro-finance and training, and MDG 5 Improving Maternal Health through the GBV project.

The analysis indicates that the GMS has been relevant in providing a context to advocate for gender equality as well as human rights at headquarters and field offices with a Gender Focal Point system using a rights based approach. The conceptual framework of the GMS approach through its attendant mechanisms and four levers is found relevant and appropriate in enabling more effective delivery of UNRWA’s services and programmes. The selection of the GBV detection and referral system as an entry point along is particularly relevant in a region with high rates of violence against women. Further, the GMS is consistent with the goals of the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women, 2011-2019 under the Palestinian National Authority, Jordan’s National Strategy for Family Protection and with the Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Palestine. Additionally, the selection of a few strategic objectives is particularly relevant for the Agency’s conservative and change resistant environment.

The GMS strategic approach under the four levers outlines a framework for a change management intervention. Evidence through discussions and observation indicate that the levers Creating a Structure for Change and Building Capacities through the addition of a Senior Gender Adviser and Gender Focal Point System has effectively established the foundation for initiating change. Building Capacities through
wide-spread gender awareness has increased understanding and elevated the priorities of gender issues of staff in UNRWA, WPCs and CBOs.

The GMS has been most relevant in pushing the agency beyond the conservative boundaries of “business as usual” towards a more focused and coherent approach in addressing the specific needs of Palestine Refugee men, women, boys, girls, disabled and the elderly. Additionally, it has raised awareness of gender equality at various levels throughout the agency providing a platform to embed and institutional GMS during the next phase under an elevated and strengthened GMS structure. During the next phase, the GMS should continue to build on achievements to date and continue to challenge institutional barriers to gender equality.

6.2 Effectiveness

In assessing Effectiveness, the evaluation examines the extent to which the initiative’s intended results (outputs or outcomes) have been achieved or the extent to which progress toward outputs or outcomes has been achieved. Effectiveness is assessed by observed changes in outputs, linking changes to the initiative and determining the value of the change.

The analysis indicates that the strategy has contributed significantly to gender awareness, mainly through the GBV project throughout the Agency, providing the underpinnings for a stronger approach in the next phase. The implementation of a few strategic objectives during the first phase, gender based violence and involvement of men in family health, addressing drop-out rates of boys and girls, and women’s empowerment was particularly effective in introducing a new gender strategy and approach in the conservative organizational culture of UNRWA.

As a new initiative, ownership of the GMS strategy across UNRWA’s fields of operation is still in its nascent stage. However, discussions, reports and observation reflect that the strategy has had a significant reach with different levels of ownership and implementation in the fields.

There is recognition of the GMS’ contributions in raising awareness of gender issues as well as increased support for the intervention logic of GBV interventions across fields. Senior headquarters staff point to the need for a more strategic and integrated gender-sensitive programme approach across departments during the next phase to embed and institutionalize GMS. A summary of the most frequent responses regarding the effectiveness of the GMS are para-phrased as:

- We need leadership at the top for the next phase
- There is still a lack of clarity on GFPs’ roles
- GMS is more on the map than implemented
- GMS implementation has been uneven across fields
- Frequent comments on weak commitment
- There is a need to articulate how services are affecting boys and girls
- GMS is not an integral part of day to day performance
- UNRWA doesn’t give enough weight to GMS
- There is no rationale for GMS to be isolated in RSS
- GMS needs to be at the top of the agency
- GMS needs to be central to the agency with high visibility and support from the CG
- GMS should be embedded in everything we do, not just 20% of our time
- We need to change the working culture
- We have good data and good reporting, but weak analysis
The most frequent comment regarding the structural arrangements pointed to the isolated placement of the Gender Unit within the RSS department. The concern about the location of the unit surfaced repeatedly throughout the evaluation, and particularly at senior management level. As one manager commented “it is not about one department but about all that we do. Gender needs to be central to the agency with high visibility and support from the Commissioner General and it needs the CG’s commitment and leadership.”

GFPS responsibilities are broadly outlined in Annex V of the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy indicating that 20 per cent of a department’s Gender Focal Point will be allocated to responsibility for gender mainstreaming. There is a consensus among GFPS that the 20 per cent of time is an add-on rather than a part of their work time. Further comments related to the weaknesses of the GFP system is the frequent turn-over of GFPS and that managers do not see gender mainstreaming as a priority.

Gender Focal Points emphasized the need for tools and checklists to guide their involvement in gender and poverty needs assessments and planning that also be used a follow-up mechanism for monitoring progress. Discussions reflect that the structural linkage between headquarters and the fields is not clearly defined or understood. GFPS at headquarters indicate there is little feedback from the field leaving them unaware of the realities on the ground.

There are no sanctions or incentives in performance plans for compliance with the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy. As a result, the GMS lacks the formal institutional authority to ensure an even, system-wide implementation process. Compliance depends more on a covenant among willing staff than on a UNRWA Gender Accountability Framework. Incorporating compliance with the GMS in staff performance plans with incentives and sanctions is a critical component of an effective strategy.

There are a number of constraints in demonstrating the effectiveness of the GMS and its approach on programme delivery. First, many of the gender-related activities are ad hoc and part of what the agency is already doing, rather than directly linked to the GMS. Further, there is a lack of sufficient and clear evidence-based reporting of results. Output indicators, such as numbers of beneficiaries accessing services or numbers of training sessions, rather than the impact of services and training, are used to measure results.

In Syria where there has been a strong commitment by staff, the capacities to address GMS have been severely constrained, particularly in the areas continually under siege. In Lebanon, there was not initial acceptance of the GMS and according to many staff participating in the evaluation, gender is not a priority and the GMS has not been fully put into practice.

In the JFO, the GMS is often identified as the GBV project. Although staff appear committed to the GBV interventions, they have significant concerns with the Jordanian law that mandates reporting of GBV cases. This requirement has forced them on occasion to testify in court despite their supposed immunity as UNRWA staff. Testifying in court against PRs is culturally unacceptable within their communities and increases their vulnerability to backlash. They feel that top management has not adequately protected their right to immunity.

JFO Staff further indicates that the office has no full time GFPS. According to one JFO senior manager, GMS is not “relevant to planning as GMS sits in RSS, and is focused on bureaucratic processes rather than programs.” Several staff pointed to the lack of analysis and focus on program results to
support assumptions. It is agreed that there is equality in access to programs, although they believe that TVET is geared more to males. For example, courses available to women are mainly in less market oriented, traditional areas such as embroidery, food production, fashion and hair dressing whereas courses available to men are in more highly paid and marketable labor jobs.

Effectiveness of the GMS, progress towards results, is noted in the GMS intervention areas as indicated from discussions, documents and GMS Implementation Reports 2010 through 2014 in the intervention areas. The following table, using GBV as an example, shows the flow of analysis for the findings of the interventions.

### Gender Based Violence and Pre-conception Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GBV Activities</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Short-term Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>survey on VAW</td>
<td>Increased awareness of GBV impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media Campaigns</td>
<td>16 day campaign, Men Saying No</td>
<td>Increases in numbers of survivor detected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings, conferences,</td>
<td>VAW campaign,</td>
<td>Increased self-referrals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seminars</td>
<td>Significant number of workshops,</td>
<td>Involvement of men in pre-conception care, family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Society Advocacy</td>
<td>intra-departmental, GFPs,</td>
<td>planning, and combatting VAW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Training</td>
<td>partners, awareness sessions</td>
<td>Expansion of GBV to camps</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training of CBOs and WPCs on</td>
<td>CBOs, WPCs strengthened to address GBV</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GBV detection</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specialized workshops on GBV</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- The strategic and multi-sectoral GBVs approach with referral systems is now established in varying degrees in all fields. During the last half of 2013, GBV project was expanded to eight camps and one city in the WBFO, and three each in the JFO and LFO.
- The project’s indicators show a significant increase in the numbers of survivors detected and referred in Phase III from Phase II. Another milestone is the range of awareness sessions provided to CBOS and WPCs involving men, women and youth. Despite the conditions in Syria, 500 female and 600 male participants benefitted from awareness raising activities on psycho-social support, stress management and human rights awareness, including recreational activities.
- The GBV project has raised the awareness of the need to address gender in the family and the community. There is significant anecdotal information indicating the FHT approach provides an effective venue to address holistic health care and to build trust among family members for GBV prevention.
- There is an emerging awareness of the benefits of involving men in pre-conception care as an entry point to address GBV and family health. During the last period, 50 men in Gaza participated in family planning and pre-conception care. In Jordan 154 out of 1,744 new cases involved husbands in family planning. Broader expansion and clearer indicators are needed to measure the impact of this intervention in UNRWA. However, the value of involving men in GBV prevention is widely reported in the literature.

### Gender Balance in UNRWA

- Gains in strengthening gender balance at senior levels have been weak for international senior staff woman and senior local area staff women. There are significant numbers of
highly qualified women at mid-management level that provide a pool of candidates for leadership development and mentoring for positions as they open.

- The Agency has established a Gender Scorecard monitoring system to track changes by grade levels and gender keeping the issue of gender balance highly visible in the Agency. Identification of barriers and improvement of recruitment practices for local area staff women are in process. Leadership Development is also in process.

**School Drop-out Rates**

- A comprehensive Education Reform Strategy is being implemented across fields to include student centered learning, support of teachers and principals and empowered schools. Inclusive education interventions are designed to meet the needs of all students to reduce drop-out rates and low achievement.
- A major contribution in addressing student drop out and low achievement has been realized through a gender disaggregated study of factors related to student performance that provides data for the development of coherent interventions.
- A number of awareness sessions have been provided to girls and boys and their parents on the importance of education and the risks of dropping out of school.
- Corporal punishment, banned by UNRWA policy, is still used in some schools. More work is needed including strengthening school parliaments systems and capacity building increased in schools where there is high incidence of reported violence.
- The remedial education interventions, particularly in Gaza, were effective in improving the results of mid-term exams for both boys and girls.

**Women and Leadership**

- Loans to all women continue to represent about 35 per cent of loans although the financial value is considerably lower. The loans provided in 2012-2013 exceeds the biennial target by 12 per cent.
- Young women received 37 per cent of the total loans to youth. Loans to Palestinian Refugee Women comprised 38 per cent of all loans to refugees. Loans to young women increased by 29 per cent and loans to refugee women by 8.8 percent during the 2012-2013 period. There is no follow-up on the success rates of businesses, although the high repayment rates is one indicator of success.
- The emphasis of vocational training continues to be in technical and home based employment skills.
- Discussions, reports and data reflect the effectiveness of emerging market oriented training. The Young Women’s Leadership Programme in Gaza is providing a range of education, vocational training and empowerment activities with private sector employment opportunities.

**6.3 Efficiency**

Efficiency is assessed by the Agency’s appropriate and economic use of resources and time and how resources might be used more efficiently, for example, to measure results rather than outputs.

The introduction of the GMS with a focus on a few key interventions provides the foundation for full implementation and institutionalization of gender mainstreaming in the Agency-wide system. The initial

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86 UNRWA, Outreach to Women, 2013
steps contribute to longer term gains in economic efficiency by promoting gender equality. Gains in economic efficiency by reducing gender inequality are widely recognized in the literature. 87

A recent report indicates that UNRWA is “moving towards a more targeted, needs based approach away from the traditional global rights based approach, where all refugees were entitled to the same services.” The transition to a more targeted approach is necessitated by a stagnant budget that limits the agency’s capacity to provide services for the continually increasing numbers of Palestine refugees. 88 This is the result of the lower donor contributions that have not responded to the increases in numbers of registered refugees. The agency is heavily dependent on volunteer contributions provided by other UN agencies with the exception of the small numbers of international staff funded through the regular UN budget. 89 Consequently, the Agency’s General Fund (GF) supporting UNRWA’s work has begun each year with a projected deficit. 90

The indicators used throughout the interventions are mainly output indicators such as numbers of beneficiaries accessing services rather than outcome indicators or results of services. While measurable output data is an intermediate indication of progress along the path to results, interventions in the next phase should include outcome indicators. The collection of data on the source, scope, prevalence and type of violence against women and youth would contribute to targeting funds for specific interventions and campaigns against VAW, and to monitoring trends and progress in addressing violence against women.

Efficiency in the strategy could be improved by great alignment and reporting of the GAPs with the FIPs. Expanding the GMS during the next phase with a programme budget rather than a one-off project would enable the integration of the plans. While a Comprehensive Monitoring Framework (CMF) and a Results Review Feedback (RRF) have been developed, not all of the interventions in the GAPs are included. The CMF uses a three color coded system to show results under each Goal and Strategic Objective (green within 90 per cent of target; yellow at 70 – 89 per cent of target and red below 69 per cent of target). A separate biannual report on the Implementation of GMS synthesizes the findings submitted by the field offices. For example, the GBV targets are addressed in the latter report, but are not included in the CMF. Further, data on numbers of women involved in preconception planning is included on the CMF, but men’s participation is addressed only in the biannual report. Agency-wide school and field level drop-out rates for boys and girls are included in the 2013 Harmonized Report. Drop rates for the period of July through December 2013 are included in the GMS Phase III report.

The lack of a separate budget for the GMS has been a major constraint to the efficiency of the implementation process. For the most part, the strategy has been implemented through core funds by integrating gender initiatives within the agency’s current work or through project funds. For example, disaggregated data on gender balance is maintained and tracked through the agency’s on-going reporting processes and capacity building on gender through training funds. The Gender Based Violence project funded by the U.S. Government in the amount of $500,000 and by the European Union in the amount of $200,000 has been the major funding source for the current phase.

88 Australian Multi-lateral Assessment, March 2012
89 UNRWA Programme Budget 2012-2013
90 UNRWA Concludes Training Programme on Gender Planning, 25 May 2011
6.4 Sustainability

Sustainability assesses the likelihood that the benefits of interventions will continue after the end of development assistance funds.

The GMS has gained traction mainly through the GBV funded project. The GBV referral system has expanded significantly across all fields providing access to psycho-social and legal services with an awareness of the impact of violence on the family and the community. There is also a general awareness of gender issues at varying levels in different fields. Gender Officers have contributed to leading the process in some fields and particularly, the Gender Officer in the GFO has provided strong leadership and direction through the Gender Initiative.

The strength and capacities of the GFPs vary by field. The GFPs are not gender experts themselves, they lack authority and influence and are not consistently supported by their supervisors. While there are supporters of the GMS throughout the Agency, there remains some resistance or disinterest. In order for GMS to be embedded and institutionalized, it will need to be led by the CG and top management and be incorporated in their directives and communications with staff. GMS will also need to be funded from core funds rather than one-off project funds.

Research indicates that a major obstacle to gender change is an organization’s resistance to redistribute gender power structures as part of the change to ensure that it has leadership and support at the very top of the organization. Research further indicates that “mainstreaming involves more than increasing women’s participation.” Mainstreaming requires placing “gender equality issues at the centre of policy decisions, medium-term plans, programme budgets, and institutional structures and processes.”

Further, the GMS needs to be integrated in the performance planning, monitoring and evaluation system throughout the agency and adequately financed rather than a one-off, short term project. And because any major change process takes at least five years to become institutionalized, top management commitment and direction is needed for the longer term. This is particularly evident where changes are required in social norms. For this reason, sustainability of the promising results in attitude change achieved through the GBV project are unlikely without longer term planning and investment.

Passive resistance, if any to the GMS, is likely to dissipate with continued investment, strengthened Accountability Mechanisms, the increased strength of the GBV referral system and the overall increasing awareness of the benefits of gender mainstreaming.

The sustainability of long term benefits from the GMS, however, will depend significantly on four key factors: a) increased leadership support and strength of the GMS structure; b) the ability to re-align core funds for a gender programme c) capacity to develop clear and measurable plans with outcome indicators and monitoring systems and d) strengthened partnerships.

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91 Guidance Note 1, Violence against Women and Girls, DFID, June 12, 2012
7. RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

7.1 Recommendations:

Recommendations are based on the Agency’s limited resources, the GMS implementation stage and the level of staff capacities and the need to demonstrate measurable results. For these reasons, the recommendations focuses on selected key areas, building on the achievements of the first phase.

1. Strengthen the Structure, Mechanisms and Capacities for GMS
   - Elevate the position and visibility of the Gender Unit by placing it in the CG’s Office with the full support of the CG and Executive team, supported by Gender Officers with gender expertise in each field office.

2. Build capacities of Staff through short term exchanges of staff who have been Agents of Change in their departments.
   - Implement short-term exchanges of staff across the fields to share successes and best practices
   - Continue intra-departmental workshops, e.g. GFPs, Planning, Protection, Legal Services, Ethics
   - Conduct workshops in SMART action plans and monitoring and reporting
   - Develop checklists and train GFPs to use the tool to monitor needs assessments and programme plans using checklists

3. Strengthen the GMS Accountability Framework:
   - Include targets, incentives and sanctions in senior managers’ and supervisors performance plans
   - Include the Senior Gender Adviser as second signatory on Lead GFPs performance plans; include Field level Gender Officers as second signatory on FIPs and GAPs
   - Add GMS to quarterly agenda of management meetings to address progress, challenges and needed reforms

4. Implement gender analysis and planning system-wide
   - The use of SMART criteria in revising the Gender Action Plans is strongly suggested to establish a clear results chain. Hiring an external consultant to train staff in this methodology is recommended.
   - Strengthen the monitoring and reporting process linking reports with indicators in biennium plans
   - Strengthen coordination between the Gender Unit, GFPs and Department of Planning for alignment of FIPs and GAPs

5. Build on the achievements of the GBV project:
- Increase target for the inclusion of more men in pre-conception care and family planning
- Expand campaigns involving communities, religious leaders and men in combatting Violence Against Women
- Strengthen the feedback loop from the referral system to WPCs, NGOs or other social assistance serviced

6. Seek funding to expand the remedial education programmes and market oriented employment training interventions initiated in the GFO to all fields.

7. Seek funding to expand on the Education Support Units to address student drop-out and low achievement and the Gender Initiative and Gaza Gateway to increase non-traditional market oriented opportunities for young women.

7.2 Lessons Learned:
The following lessons learned are derived from discussions at headquarters and across fields, and from leading research on the successes and failures in implementing gender mainstreaming.64

I. Gender mainstreaming must be led by top management to move beyond policy rhetoric and to actively commit to the concept, and must put in place organization-wide systems and resources necessary to make gender everyone’s business.

Mainstreaming: Emerging Lessons:
Getting an issue into the mainstream of an organisation requires cultural change. Technical or bureaucratic solutions alone will not work. Action is needed on all fronts.

II. Gender equality and GMS are understood differently across the Agency. Messages from top management need to communicate that gender mainstreaming is what an agency does to effectively deliver services to men, women, boys, girls, the disabled and the elderly.

Some of the changes will take time. For example increasing the number of women in senior posts may take several years. Long-term commitment to achieving and maintaining the change is needed.

III. The Gender Mainstreaming process represents a change in management, planning and allocation of resources requiring clear communication on its goals, priorities and successes to increase buy-in and decrease resistance.

IV. All Gender Officers, GFPs need to have gender expertise and sufficient leverage in the organization to influence gender mainstreaming. (Gender focal points are often marginalized. They tend not to be gender experts themselves; they are often young and in experienced and lack authority and influence.)

V. The GMS as well as poverty, youth and disability mechanisms processes need to be in place to support the GMS and the cross-cutting issues through clear TORs, procedures and practices such as SMART Gender Action Plans (GAPs), gender analysis, tool-kits.

VI. Capacity building should focus on GMS skills specific to the job, including use of tools and checklists in programme design and planning.
VII. Build on successes from GMS interventions that have gained momentum and support and expand on it through a systematic and sustained approach including allocation of allocate sufficient financial resources to show results. (Success based on demonstrable results contributes to learning and serves as a model for replication).

VIII. Involving men in understanding the root causes and impact of GBV and in combatting VAW is critical in eliminating GBV.

IX. Success stories must be widely shared and reported.
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Schedule of the Evaluation

12 April 2014, Consultant’s arrival in Jordan
13 – 29 April, 2014, Amman, Jordan, UNRWA Headquarters and JFO
30 April – 3 May, 2014, Beirut, LBO
17 May, 2014 East Jerusalem, WBFO
18-19 May, 2014, Amman, Jordan, UNRWA Headquarters
19 May, 2014, Consultant’s departure

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