

**Draft Minutes of Final Project Review:**

**“Enhancing women's meaningful political participation”/ Atlas ID 76479**

**Date: 22 of May 2012, 10.00am - 11.15am, Bratislava - teleconference**

**1. Attendance:**

**Koh Miyaoi, UNDP BRC, Gender Practice Leader /Executive of project 76479**

**Louise Sperl, UNDP BRC, Gender Specialist /Coordinator of project 76479**

**Barbora Galvankova, UNDP BRC, Gender Associate/support for project 76479)**

**Eliza Mandieva, UNDP BRC, Intern with the gender team**

**Nurgul Asylbekova, UNDP Kyrgyzstan, Gender Coordinator/focal point for project 76479**

**Klelija Balta, UNDP BiH, Gender Adviser/focal point for project 76479**

**Seher Alacaci, UNDP Turkey, Democratic Governance Programme Associate/focal team for project 76479**

**Gozde Ata, UNDP Turkey, Project Assistant/ focal team for project 76479**

**Marina Ten, UNDP BRC, Programme Monitoring Analyst/Project assurance**

**Mariko Saito, representative of the UNDP JWID/Senior supplier**

**The meeting was chaired by Louise Sperl**

**1. Introduction - Project overview**

The main objective of the Project was to capacitate parliamentarians, civil servants at decision making levels and CSO to increase women meaningful participation in politics. The project outputs have been achieved through the following two components:

*1. Implementation of country pilots (Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Kyrgyzstan, Turkey – activity 1) that focused on development of capacities of parliamentarians and civil servants through various activities such as trainings as well as development of reference materials that can help enhance women's meaningful political participation.*

*2. Facilitation of a regional communication and network of policy makers and advocates to exchange knowledge and enhance collective learning in partnership with the iKNOW Politics network (International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics – activity 2a) and the Regional Forum on Equal Participation in Decision-Making (November 2011; activity 2b).*

**2. Key project results and achievements**

**a) Feedback from the country pilots (activity 1)**

- **Bosnia and Herzegovina (Klelija Balta)**

Collaboration and knowledge exchange at the regional level was one of the key elements of project success. The implementation timing – i.e., right after elections and the design of new parliaments – constituted another key element for the project success and allowed an excellent use of the relatively small amount of resources available. The training for newly elected parliamentarians, organized jointly with the gender equality commission in Parliament, helped achieve a shift in minds and working patterns of the parliamentarians.

The results from this eye opening workshop continue to influence the work of parliamentarians in their daily work up to now. Examples for follow up actions include also discussions for the introduction of an open list system which would be more conducive for the promotion of women candidates. The workshop also contributed to creating an environment in the Parliament where gender is being mainstreamed more rigorously into parliamentary procedures. Thanks to the project, women parliamentarians are now working on revising laws that are currently being reviewed in order to make them gender sensitive. Furthermore, the project improved the working skills of parliamentarians. For example, they write now reviews and comments to different line ministries from a gender perspective. Finally, it was highlighted that continuous donor support will be required to further build on the excellent work achieved so far.

**Lesson learned/Comments:**

Resources: Guidelines for the harmonization of laws in line with national and international gender legislation is available online on the website of the BiH gender equality commission at Parliament. Knowledge exchange has helped to leverage project achievements by providing innovative ideas for implementation of project activities.

- **Kyrgyzstan (Nurgul Asylbekova)**

The knowledge exchange at the regional level helped to enhance the Country Pilot's results. The timing of project implementation constituted also a key element of its success and helped to multiply the project impact:

The training of new Parliamentarians right after the election was noted to be a very good practice in terms of creating an enabling environment in Parliament for the promotion of gender equality and for gender mainstreaming activities. It had a great influence on the development of the gender equality agenda within the Kyrgyz parliament. Key project results include mainstreaming of gender into the constitutional reform process as well as the incorporation of a gender dimension into the Parliament's rules of procedures. The project also strengthened the capacity of the Association of Women's Legal Initiative (AWLI) which in turn was able to provide timely technical and advisory support to the Parliament in law making processes. This resulted in the introduction of a mandatory gender analysis of laws proposed to the Parliament. Other highlights include the introduction of gender quotas for local elections.

It was also underlined how important the Regional Forum in Istanbul was for knowledge exchange (e.g. it allowed consultations amongst various practitioners from CIS countries that have greatly helped to fine-tune a manual on gender equality for public servants, produced also under this pilot initiative.) An important success factor for the project in Kyrgyzstan was the participation of newly elected parliamentarians in project activities. Furthermore, the project profited from an enabling environment which is characterized by the change from presidential to Parliamentary democracy as well as the strong women networks in the country.

**Lesson learned /Comments:**

The project provided an important opportunity to help increase global visibility of Kyrgyzstan's achievements in the area of gender equality. The partnership with the AWLI allowed rapid responses to emerging gender issues in the Parliament.

- **Turkey (Seher Alacaci):**

The project built on a previous, joint UNDP-UN Women initiative to create a user friendly tool for parliamentarians that will help mainstream gender into law making processes. Due to the previously expressed interest in the creation of such a tool, the workshop implemented under this pilot was key for vetting and upgrading the toolkit – based on recommendations from legislative experts and Parliamentarians. It also helped to raise awareness among Parliamentarians about the necessity to address gender equality issues as part of the Parliament's work. The toolkit is considered to be the first comprehensive gender mainstreaming tool for Turkey and as such the first document of its kind. The workshop also created the opportunity to address specific gender issues within Turkish decision making bodies that will be taken up also in future through UNDP programming (for example, on mainstreaming gender in media).

**Lesson learned /Comments:**

National ownership is essential to ensure full buy in of all relevant national stakeholders. Sufficient time for partnership building and consultations is therefore essential.

**b) Feedback from the regional team (activity 2)**

The scope of the Regional Forum was considerably expanded from the initial thinking at the time of the project formulation due to the high interest the event attracted within and beyond the region. The event, entitled as the "Regional Forum on Equal Participation in Decision-Making," brought together over 80 representatives from five institutions (i.e., Parliament, political parties, Public Administration, Electoral Management Bodies and civil society) from 26 different countries as well as other international actors (OSCE, NDI). By taking this approach, the Regional Forum distinguished itself from the popular practice of focusing on the role of a single institution such as Parliament or political parties when addressing women's participation in decision making. The multi-stakeholder approach chosen departed from a better understanding of actors who need to be involved if the multiple and complex challenges related to women's meaningful participation in decision-making are to be adequately addressed. Inputs from the Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS) underlined, for example, the role Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) can play in areas such as voter education or the implementation of quota legislation during elections. Experiences provided through the Gender Equality in Public Administration (GEPA) project pointed to the close interaction required between between public administration and political actors in order to effectively enhance women's equal participation in public decision-making. During the Regional Forum, the participants discussed policies and practices that can efficiently facilitate facilitating equal participation in decision-making.

As a follow up of the Regional Forum, best practices and lesson learned were shared via iKNOW Politics network where practitioners from the region shared their experiences and recommendation to improve equality in decision-making bodies and further discussed the role of women's caccuses and alliances in achieving sustainable development. All the resources produced and accumulated through the project activities were widely disseminated via various online platforms.

**Comments/lessons learned:**


The added value of the project was identified as follows:-

- Built upon/allowed an exchange of experiences within countries from the region.
- Has proven to be extremely cost effective
- Provided seed funds through a regional project for an area where it is otherwise difficult for COs to raise funds.
- Helped improve the capacities of women's parliamentarians and boost their self-confidence in order for them to take the issue to the next level.
- Allowed to identify new areas and strategies of interventions for the improvement of gender equality in the target countries.

Participants of the meeting agreed that the project has been successfully implemented in line with the project document. The project was implemented on time and has successfully achieved its outputs.

**Recommendation from Mariko Saito to improve the project report:**

1. Highlight good timing of the project implementation as well as its innovative approach – knowledge sharing helped raise the impact.
2. Follow up project activities should be highlighted in country pilots' reporting in the interest of emphasizing the project sustainability.
3. Add cost effectiveness and value added of networking in line with above outlined comments.

  
25/05/2012