

**Projects Evaluation under Regional Programme for Arab States
AfTIAS
Evaluation Report**

October 2017

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Acronyms

AEID	Arab Economic Integration Department, Economic Sector, League of Arab States
AfTIAS	Aid for Trade Initiative for Arab State
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BPPS	Bureau for Programme and Policy Studies (UNDP)
CO	Country Office (UNDP)
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DRF	Development Results Framework
EQs	Evaluation Questions
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
HQ	Headquarters
HRBA	Human Rights-based Approach
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IO	International Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LAS	League of Arab States
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NSW	National Single Window – a platform of trade facilitation
NTM	Non-Tariff Measures
PSCAR	Promoting Social Cohesion in the Arab Region
RBAS	Regional Bureau for Arab States
RKC	Revised Kyoto Convention on simplification and harmonization of customs procedures
ROAR	Results-Oriented Annual Reporting
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
ToT	Training of Trainers
TSI	Trade Support Institutions
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UN	United Nations
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDG	United Nations Development Group

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
UNEG	United Nations Review Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNOHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNPFD	United Nations Partnership Framework for Development
WTO	World Trade Organization
WTO TFA	World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement

Executive Summary

The Aid for Trade Initiative for the Arab States (AfTIAS) Programme started in 2013 with the aim of deepening Arab Economic Integration through the enhancement of trade development in the Arab region, through gradual modernization of trade and economic policy-making. The evaluation focuses mainly on works and activities being carried out by UNDP in 2014-2016 with the understanding that management tasks of AfTIAS were effectively transferred from UNDP to ITFC (please see the decisions by the Project Board at its 3rd meeting in December 2014).

Relevance. The initiative is fully aligned with the priorities and outcomes set out in the Regional Programme for Arab States and necessity of specific interventions on the ground, in the Member States. It also reflects needs and priorities of the region, expressed by relevant stakeholders in concreted and participative ways and leading to the decision of implementing the Aid for Trade agenda in the region. The design of the project is comprehensive and embraces all main identified issues, from support to key regional institutions such as the League of Arab States, to more tangible actions as the assistance provided to modernisation of border posts. Relevance of the initiative is further strengthened by the continuous consultations being held with policy makers of beneficiary countries and their active engagement in the design of the activity as well as during the effective implementation. Interventions by UNDP in the reform of trade policy respond to the requirements of implementation of resolutions by Arab Leaders, such as the instruction of design of a trade facilitation instrument for Arab countries, as well as finalization of negotiations of the Arab Agreement on liberalization of Trade in Services (adopted in July 2016 at the Arab Summit).

Efficiency. The project optimised the use of available resources, both financial and human. Occasional delays have occurred for example in the approval of planned activities by the Project Board, and in the delivery of relevant documentation by beneficiaries. Management strong orientation to efficiency and effectiveness has surely contributed to the project's achievements. Moreover, the balanced combination of quality expertise in the specialist domains and the appropriate management of project activities by UNDP contributed to achievement of maximum efficiency of use of allocated resources. That also helped to enhance effectiveness of operational interventions with strong partnership by beneficiaries. The project team delivered concrete support resulting in the conclusion of negotiations on liberalization of Trade in Services (November 2016), and activation of trade facilitation measures in target countries.

Effectiveness. The project has achieved most of the set objectives. It has strongly contributed to the discourse on intraregional trade as major vehicle of development and integration in the area. It has favoured concerted actions. Through its component of border posts enhancement, it has put in place successful pilots in two areas (Egypt-Jordan, Egypt-Sudan and in future Jordan-KSA); these are improving time and costs of border procedures, and at the same time have made necessary the introduction of new legislation and regulatory aspects. More attention might be put on inclusiveness aspects, such as the involvement of women and youth on one hand, and of the business and private sector on the other hand. This should expand the reflection to different perspectives, and should stimulate innovative and inclusive approach in the discourse on intraregional trade.

Sustainability. Works on border posts produced sustainable outcomes and have proven the efficiency and effectiveness of modernisation as these responded to needs of beneficiary countries. It is hoped also that this result will be rightly comprehended by relevant stakeholders, especially at state level. Works of making trade facilitation a pillar of Arab economic integration, initiated by UNDP, are effective and sustainable to Egypt and Jordan, evidenced by adoption of important decisions by the Governments as well as these shape new policy direction of tightening economic cooperation. In this respect, Arab Leaders issued a specific resolution of development of a regional instrument on trade facilitation at their 2016 Summit. Specifically, initiatives of National Single Window are adopted as national prioritized projects of the two countries. Work done on institutional strengthening of the AEID of the LAS has been very fruitful with mechanisms in place, trainings to staff provided, and working protocols were introduced and formalized. Knowledge resources developed by the project might be better disseminated; training has been notably conducted in the form of Training of Trainers, but it is not clear whether material is still used. The establishment of a discussion and sharing platform with inclusion of civil society and private sector contributions might be useful in further disseminating the good practices and raising awareness of the need for enhanced trade for economic and social development of the Arab region. Finally, sustainability should be further strengthened during the project design, planning and reporting; and a reflection on exit strategies should be conducted to analyse which durable outcomes it is wanted or possible to achieve after project completion.

1. Background and Context

The UNDP Regional Programme for Arab States (2014-2017) was endorsed by the UNDP Executive Board during the First Regular Session of the Executive Board at the end of January 2014.

The Programme covers 4 out of 7 development outcome areas of the UNDP Strategic Plan, namely:

- **Inclusive growth:** Growth is inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded (SP Outcome 1)
- **Inclusive governance:** Citizens’ expectations for voice, effective development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance (SP Outcome 2)
- **Gender:** Faster progress is achieved in reducing gender inequality and promoting women’s empowerment (SP Outcome 4)
- **Social cohesion and resilience:** Early recovery and rapid return to sustainable development pathways are achieved in post-conflict and post-disaster settings (SP Outcome 6).

This evaluation covers the Aid for Trade Initiative for the Arab States (AftIAS) Programme, implemented under the UNDP Regional Programme for Arab States.

The AftIAS project respond to the Programme’s outcomes as follows:

Project	Outcomes	Projects’ outputs
<p>Aid for Trade Initiative for Arab State (AftIAS)</p>	<p>1. Inclusive growth: Growth is inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded)</p>	<p>- Output 1: Arab connectivity and linkages through promotion of crossing borders operations and integrated management systems strengthened.</p> <p>- Output 2: Capacity of Economic Sector of the LAS in trade policy reform enhanced and monitoring of implementation progress of GAFTA/PAFTA enhanced in support of implementation of measures under decisions by the 2015 Arab Economic and Social Development Summit.</p> <p>- Output 3: Skills and abilities of key national partners to mainstream gender equality priorities into cross border trade policies in the AMU sub region strengthened.</p>

In line with the Evaluation Plan, UNDP required independent consultancy services to undertake an evaluation of the implementation of the project. The evaluation was conducted to assess UNDP-RBAS contributions towards the progress made on achievements of the project as a tool to explain results.

2. Analysis of the subject of the evaluation

2.1. Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation – as per ToRs – is to assess how the project impacted the progress towards the achievement of the[se] objectives. Moreover, the contribution of the project in enabling a coherent development engagement, and to identify the factors that have affected its implementation will be assessed.

The specific objectives – following the ToRs - are to:

1. Assess progress towards attaining the project's objectives;
2. Assess progress towards the achievement of the project's outcome;
3. Review the clarity of roles and responsibilities of the various agencies and stakeholders and the level of coordination between relevant actors in the project implementation;
4. Assess the likelihood of continuation of the project outcome and benefits;
5. Describe key factors that will require attention in order to improve prospects for sustainability of the project results;
6. Analyse the relevance of the project strategy and approaches;
7. Assess the potential for sustainability of the results and the feasibility of ongoing efforts and commitment to help advance the focus areas of the project;
8. Document key lessons learned, good practices, success stories and challenges to inform future work of various stakeholders in addressing the focus area of the project; and
9. Document and analyse possible weaknesses in order to improve next steps of project interventions in the focus areas.

2.2. Scope

As indicated in the ToRs, the overall results of the project will be evaluated since its start across the entire duration, which is from 1st of April 2014 till 31st of March of 2017.

3. Methodology

3.1. Evaluation approach

The guiding principle in conducting the evaluation exercise has been the use of participatory approaches, where relevant stakeholders are involved in the identification of main issues to be evaluated, which will constitute the evaluation *foci*. Most questions were focused on: latest developments, main achievements and challenges, perspectives for impact and sustainability. This approach is of particular importance for the present evaluation, since the objective of the exercise is to provide relevant inputs to the next programming phase and a shared consensus on lessons learnt, recommendations and ways forward is a key factor of success.

3.2. Data collection

Data were collected through:

- Review of relevant documentation/Desk review, which was timely and accurately provided by the RBAS Office. The documents reviewed include:
 - Programme and project documents and reports
 - AWPAs and relevant reports
 - Annual ROARs
 - Financial data
 - UN Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results
 - UNEG Standards and Norms for Evaluation in the UN System.
- Regional Conference: The evaluator was offered the opportunity to participate at the UNDP Regional Conference on ‘Development Challenges and Priorities in a Changing Arab Region’, held in Amman on 22-23 May 2017. This permitted the consultant to hold several interviews with main partners and stakeholders of the project in the whole region.
- Field mission to Beirut: the mission was held from 20 to 21 June in Beirut. The consultant could complete interviews with stakeholders – essentially the RBAS Office staff and the project team – and finalized the Inception Report with set of Evaluation Questions (EQs), reviewed by the RBAS and the project staff to ascertain that questions are relevant.

3.3. Evaluation questions

To design the evaluation questions, the consultant used the tasks detailed in the ToRs and developed a first list of EQs, which were revised by the RBAS and by the project team. The translation from tasks to EQs is presented under Annex 4.

3.4. Evaluation matrix

On the basis of the EQs, the consultant has elaborated a detailed Evaluation Matrix, including questions, relevant sub-indicators, and method for collecting data. The matrix used for this exercise is to be found under Annex 3.

3.5. Ethical considerations

The UN ethical standards in evaluations are based on the UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct¹. The UNEG guidelines note the importance of ethical conduct for the following reasons:

1. *Responsible use of power*: All those engaged in evaluation processes are responsible for upholding the proper conduct of the evaluation.
2. *Ensuring credibility*: With a fair, impartial and complete assessment, stakeholders are more likely to have faith in the results of an evaluation and to take note of the recommendations.

¹ UNEG, ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation’, June 2008. Available at <http://www.uneval.org/search/index.jsp?q=ethical+guidelines>.

3. *Responsible use of resources*: Ethical conduct in evaluation increases the chances of acceptance by the parties to the evaluation and therefore the likelihood that the investment in the evaluation will result in improved outcomes.

The evaluator has carefully followed the above mentioned Guidelines.

3.6. Limitations

There have been no substantial limitations. More time might have been spent on contacting and interviewing final beneficiaries of the project, in order to assess the impact of actions and the changes produced in terms of mind-sets and attitudes.

4. Findings

This Chapter is structured in accordance with the OECD DAC requirements for evaluations. In Section 4.1, we discuss the project design and its relevance to national, regional and UNDP programme priorities and strategies. Section 4.2 discusses the project’s efficiency, including the conversion of resources (financial and human) into results. Section 4.3 follows with a discussion of effectiveness, in particular the contribution of the results achieved to achieving the objectives (outcomes). Section 4.4 discusses the project’s sustainability over time.

4.1. Quick facts on AfTIAS

The project was launched at the end of 2013, after more than 2 years of preparation. The first Project Board meeting took place in Jeddah In 6-7 November 2013.

Partner Countries

LDCs	Sudan, Mauritania, Yemen, Djibouti, Comoros and Somalia
Middle Income Countries	Agadir Agreement Countries (4) : Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco and Jordan
	Other Middle Income Countries (5) : Libya, Lebanon, Algeria, Palestine and Iraq.
Higher income countries	Gulf Cooperation Council (6) : Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Emirate Arab United (EAU), Oman, Kuwait and Qatar

Donor contributions to AfTIAS ²

Donor	Amount (US\$ Million)
Saudi Arabia	3.0
Kuwait	2.0

² This amount regards the whole programme. Following the AfTIAS Board decision on management arrangements, contributions to UNDP are to be found in the following tables.

Kingdom of Sweden	1.5
Egypt	0.5
Islamic Development Bank	1.0
ITFC	1.0
UNDP	1.0
Total	10.0

Donor Contributions to the UNDP component

Donor	Amount (USD millions)
Kuwait	1.0
Islamic Development Bank	1.0
Sida	1.3
UNDP	1.0
Total	4.3

4.2. Relevance

Definition: The extent to which the activities are suited to the priorities and policies of the region at the time of formulation

DO THE PROJECT STRUCTURES AND OBJECTIVES ADDRESS KEY ISSUES, THEIR UNDERLYING CAUSES, AND CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED IN THE REGION?

4.2.1. Problem Analysis

The rationale for the formulation of AfTIAS is described in the ProDoc, which contains an accurate analysis of the economic and social situation of Arab states, and of the new challenges emerging from the global economic crisis after 2008. Regional trade is considered as a *key economic driver in the region due to the inherited factor endowment, i.e. a region which is exceptionally rich in oil and gas but also heavily dependent on these commodities for growth*. The document points out that the countries in the region face a number of major challenges, hindering their capacity to reap the benefits of trade and to achieve desirable regional integration: *regional trade is not able to play the expected catalyst role for inclusive growth and development. Declining oil prices also impacted the trade structure in the region and the share of non-oil Arab trade is only 1% of total world trade. Intra-Arab exports amount to only 5.2% of total Arab exports, the weakest intra-regional trade in the world*. Other trends include *limited development and sophistication of the private sector and especially small and medium enterprises (SMEs), weak institutional capacities to drive trade reforms, inadequate trade-related infrastructure (including transportation and energy), trade facilitation, and supply-side constraints*. The analysis contains a detailed description of main gaps in

competitiveness, availability of infrastructures, efficiency of border clearance and potential of trade sectors per country.

Other significant challenges described in the ProDoc are the high unemployment rate of the region – in particular of women and youth – and the mismatch between existing and needed skills in a rapidly changing global context privileging new sectors, such as those related to digital economy, green and low carbon technologies.

The analysis concludes that *new inclusive growth models need to be encouraged through smart strategies that enable Arab states to benefit more broadly from reciprocal interaction.*

4.2.2. Intervention Logic

The intervention logic of the project is coherently based on the above situation analysis. In order to achieve the expected objectives deriving from the analysis, it was decided to focus the intervention on the implementation of the Aid for Trade (AfT) agenda, which was one of the most important development-related outcomes of the fifth WTO Conference that was held in Hong Kong in 2005³.

A consultative process for establishing a regional AfT governance and review mechanism in the Arab states had been initiated in 2011 upon request of the Arab Group at the WTO to the Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), which is part of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group. A participatory and inclusive process, encompassing consultations with key stakeholders, involved in trade-related issues in the Arab states, followed. A Steering Committee was established to promote the rolling out of the initiative. The Committee is chaired by ITFC and includes LAS, ITC, UNCTAD, UNDP, and UNIDO, with open ended participation from other international and regional organizations and donors. The two concerned UN Economic Commissions, the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and UN Economic Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA) were informed of the process. The UNECE also contributed on a consultative basis during the design phase while UNESCWA participated in the early stage.

The project design was subsequently initiated, where outcomes and results of AfT implemented by the UNDP in other geographical areas were carefully examined during the project preparation, in order to tailor the initiative on regional needs.

³ The WTO-led Aid for Trade initiative encourages developing country governments and donors to recognize the role that trade can play in development. In particular, the initiative seeks to mobilize resources to address the trade-related constraints identified by developing and least-developed countries. A large part of AfT is focused on strengthening the international competitiveness of SMEs, including the creation of an enabling business environment for enterprises, or building economic infrastructure. The Aid for Trade six categories are as follows:

1. Trade policy and regulations, including training of trade officials, analysis of proposals and positions and their impact, support for national stakeholders to articulate commercial interest and identify trade-offs, dispute issues, institutional and technical support to facilitate implementation of trade agreements and to adapt to and comply with rules and standards;
2. Trade development, including investment promotion, analysis and institutional support for trade in services, business support services and institutions, public-private sector networking, e-commerce, trade finance, trade promotion, market analysis and development;
3. Economic infrastructure, including investments in infrastructure - roads, ports, telecommunications, energy networks – needed to link products to global markets;
4. Productive capacity, including strengthening economic sectors, from improved laboratories to better supply chains – to increase competitiveness in export markets;
5. Trade-related adjustment, including helping developing countries with any transitions costs from liberalization – preference erosion, loss of fiscal revenue, or declining terms of trade;
6. Other trade needs.

An important consideration was that, although in 2010 Arab countries attracted as much as USD 5.9 billion in AfT commitments (13 percent share of AfT commitments in a region that accounted for around 5 per cent of the world population), the Arab region lacked both a strategy and a platform to plan and manage AfT. To tackle this aspect, the project included a component of strengthening the capacities of three key regional players - the League of Arab States (LAS), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) - to implement regional integration processes and revitalize the Pan- Arab Free Trade Area (PAFTA) towards establishment of the Arab Customs Union under the mandate of Arab Leaders.

Apart from strengthening institutional arrangements under the result-oriented approach, the other components of AfTIAS focused on the more technical area of trade facilitation through modernization of cross-border operations on one hand, and on STED⁴ initiatives to support economic growth and job creation on the other hand. Important efforts were invested into the design and activation of measures of trade facilitation such as Single Window as these promise substantial gains for Arab countries, particularly the LDCs.

With regard to the RBAS Regional Programme, the project responds to Outcome 1. Growth and development is inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded (Strategic plan outcome 1): *In contributing to the efforts of regional institutions and countries to expand economic opportunities, the regional programme will support analysis, policies and interventions that facilitate employment and business opportunities in productive sectors, with an emphasis on engagement in trade, particularly intra-regionally. These will include: promoting the access of small and medium-size enterprises and matching skills of youth to regional trade opportunities in productive sectors in order to generate jobs and income; and establishing value chains and supporting export readiness that link smaller enterprises to the opportunities in the region, especially in poorer countries.*

As a conclusion, it can be stated that the project well responded to the needs of the region, and was developed through an accurate and participatory consultative process which took in consideration both lessons learnt and present challenges. The project contributed substantially to the modernization of trade policies in deepening Arab economic integration and introduced transformational changes. It resulted in design and implementation of new regulations to facilitate trade and transport, adoption of enabling trade platforms such as National Single Window, and conclusions of regional negotiations in trade in services, among others. At the same time, it was in line with UNDP and WTO guidelines and priorities, both regionally and at global level.

WAS THE DESIGN OF THE PROJECT ADEQUATE TO EXPECTED OBJECTIVES, AND FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO ADAPT TO POTENTIAL CHANGES?

The design of AfTIAS follows the regular templates of UNDP programming. As in most UNDP programmes, sustainability elements are neither planned nor included in the project design. More attention should be

⁴ *Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification* is an initiative promoted by ILO, aiming at providing sector level technical assistance on identifying the skills development strategies required for future success in international trade. (see <http://www.ilo.org/skills/projects/sted/lang--en/index.htm>)

paid to this key aspect of project planning, to ensure that appropriate actions are in place to ensure durability of results after completion of the activities.

The project is implemented through adoption and execution of annual Work Plans.

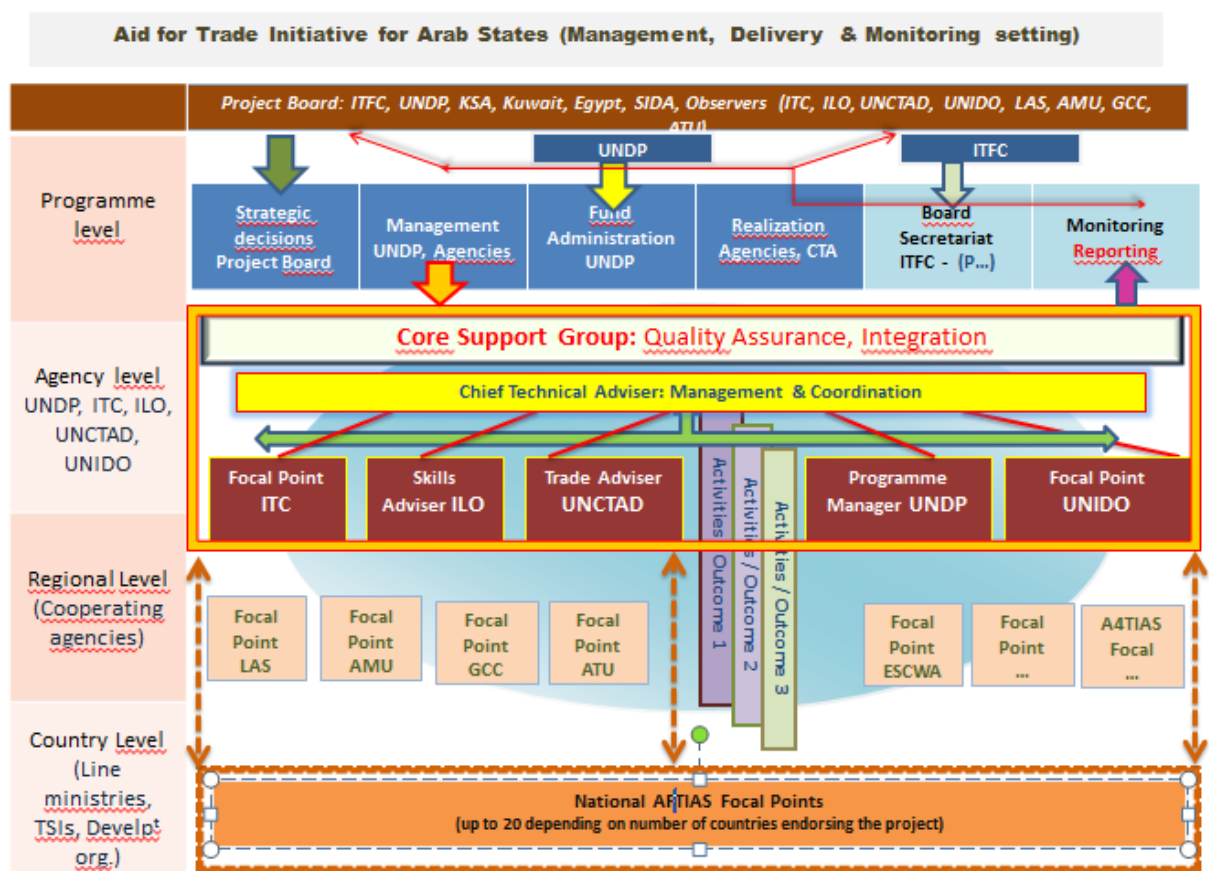
4.3. Efficiency

Definition: Measurement of the outputs in relation to the inputs.

WAS MANAGEMENT ADEQUATE TO THE PLANNING AND EXECUTION REQUIREMENTS? (MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS, WORK PLANNING, FINANCE, VALUE FOR MONEY, TIMING AND DELAYS, PROJECT-LEVEL MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS, COORDINATION, STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT, REPORTING, COMMUNICATIONS)

4.3.1. Management

The following table recapitulates the management arrangements of AftIAS.



(Source: ESCWA UNESCWA Expert Meeting, Hammamet, 12-13 December 2013).

These arrangements were modified in 2014, when ITFC replaced UNDP in AftIAS coordination.

Management arrangements were adequate and well responded to the needs for robust coordination and supervision. The CTA participated in project delivery on specific issues in his domain expertise, within the technical team of UNDP. In addition to these, in 2014 UNDP proposed the standardization of operational

procedures and drafted specific management mechanisms in order to improve coordination, supervision and monitoring without getting into micromanagement.

A strength of AfTIAS was surely the inclusion of focal points both at regional and country level and the technical team of UNDP facilitated the connections of the national with the regional activities. These focal points are crucial for effective and efficient implementation of the activities, and have represented a powerful leverage when external factors posed challenges. The CTA and project team have optimised, at maximum, utilisation of resources and arrangements, and have partnered with national focal points of participating countries in planning activities and its delivery as well as for problem solving⁵.

4.3.2. Finances

The following table describes expenditures of AfTIAS as of 31 May 2017⁶.

RM 2014-2017	Utilisation				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
5,167,663	1,603,613	1,466,492	713,968	292,338	4,076,411

At that date, expenditures amounted at 78.8% of the whole project (compared to available resources). Data from AWP's show a project's delivery rate of 96%.

Financial allocations per year are as follows (in USD):

YEAR Source of Funding	2014	2015	2016	2017	Totals
Estimated annualized budget	1,965,953		452,250	444,967	4,419,780
Regular/ TRAC	250,000	250,000	202,250	270,000	972,250
Other	SIDA: 139,902 Kuwait/ITFC: 1,576,051	SIDA: 710,945 ITFC: 420,698	SIDA: 250,000	SIDA bridging project: 174,967+ 326,188	3,447,530
Total	1,965,953	1,381,643	452,250	444,967	4,419,780

External funding amounted at approximately 78% of the entire amount. SIDA has contributed for USD 1,602,002, amounting at 36% of the entire projected budget.

Yearly expenditures are correctly detailed per year following the AWP's. Administrative costs in 2014 amounted at 5% approximately of the yearly budget. The heading 'Project Management and Operations support' is not very clear as it includes both salaries of CTA and other voices such as Communication & Audiovisual Equipment, Local Consultants and travel.

⁵ See progress reports.

⁶ Source: RBAS.

At the 4th meeting of the project board (November 30 -December 1st 2015), UNDP presented the proposal of request for additional resources in function of the procurement of ICT equipment for Sudan and Arab countries participant to operations of the trade/transport corridor. It was based on clearly identified the number of equipment and work purposes in accordance with UN standards and procedures, and duly supported by formal communications from national authorities to the CTA.

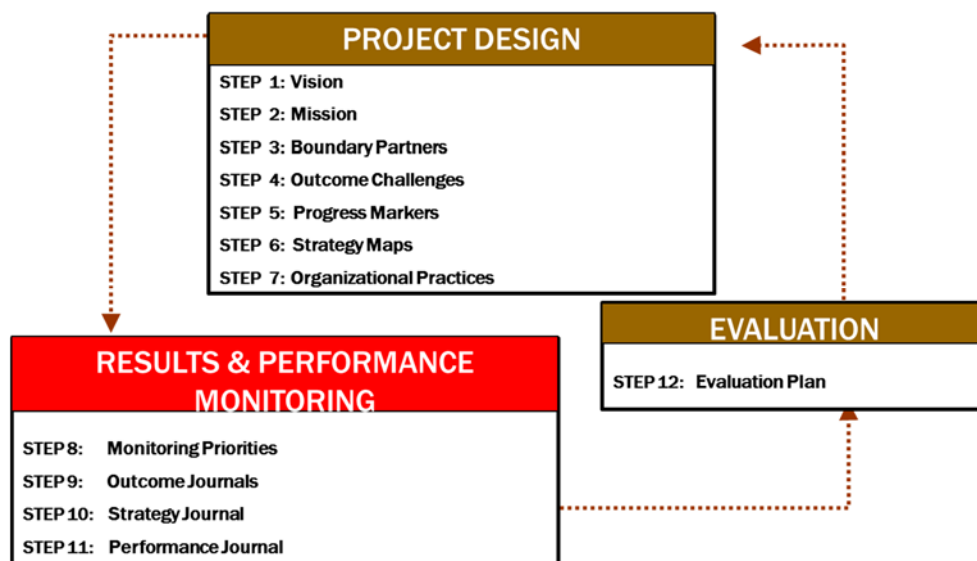
In terms of available resources, the 2016 Progress Report observes *that 2016 implementation might be subject to more challenges, particularly in mobilization of financial responses to procure ICT equipment (in a very limited amount as discussed with the countries) for countries that participate to operations in the trade/transport corridors. From empirical experiences, reform of the soft infrastructure (i.e. policies, regulations, trainings) should be supported by upgrade of certain physical trade-related infrastructure, starting with equipment of information processing. It is particularly true for Arab LDCs; for that, more attention should be directed to support these countries to narrow development gap.*

4.3.3. Reporting

Report execution was timely and regular, as foreseen in the ProDoc. Reports are comprehensive and detailed, and include main challenges, modalities of resolution of problems and recommendations. They are mainly focused on activities, while it would be advisable to highlight results, to allow deeper understanding of achievements and challenges and to continue being aligned with project objectives.

4.3.4. Monitoring of activities under the responsibility of UNDP

The management seemingly paid due attention to the M&E component. The following scheme for monitoring was initially envisaged for the whole project (including non-UNDP components)⁷:



On paper, monitoring of results should have taken place at different levels:

⁷ UNESCWA Expert Meeting, Hammamet, 12-13 December 2013.

- regular monitoring functions assigned to project managers at the output level (ILO, ITC, UNDP, UNCTAD, UNIDO);
- outcome monitoring at higher result level, with each beneficiary being responsible for their individual and shared roles;
- data integration & overall feed-back to the Project Board, assigned to ITFC which should also have set up a monitoring unit.

The above arrangements have however not been exercised, as they formed part of the Direct Implementation by UNDP. Up to December 31st, UNDP closely monitored the delivery of activities as approved in the first Work Plan by the Project Board (starting by the end of February 2014). The CTA collaborated with ITC, ILO and UNCTAD in the supervision of the implementation. At the 3rd meeting of the Project Board (December 2014), new mechanisms of management were proposed by ITFC. Since January 2015, ITFC manages the implementation of AfTIAS while UNDP re-focused on the delivery of specific results.

From the UNDP side, the CTA and project team directly undertake monitoring activities, to assess and secure the quality of works completed and identify the need for potential adjustments required for the optimisation of the AWP implementation, in line with UNDP regulations and procedures.

As specified in the progress reports, UNDP exercised the monitoring function on the basis of what specified by provisions of the inter-agency agreements, work plans as prepared and communicated to UNDP by three UN Agencies up to the end of December 2014. The CTA maintained close collaboration with the technical teams of UN Agencies to execute tasks requested by the 2014 Work Plan. Regular updates were presented to the Chair of the Board as well as specific briefings to the Chair (either in writing or through communication) as per his request.

From 2014, the UNDP component of AfTIAS annually elaborates expected results and needed activities; they are presented in the annual AWPs and commented in the yearly progress reports.

Finally, close monitoring is reportedly exercised by the CTA through regular consultations with the senior management of beneficiary agencies and regional organizations.

4.4. Effectiveness

Definition: The extent to which the outcome activities attain project objectives.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT FOR WHICH THE PROJECT IS RECOGNIZED IN THE REGION?

In overall terms, the AfTIAS has represented an exceptional opportunity for the Arab region to strengthen the discourse on regional intra-trade and on challenges and solutions, as well as to increase their participation in the world trade in pursuance of the decisions of the Arab Economic Summit's decisions. The feature of AfTIAS as a rather unique partnership, composed of the League of Arab States (LAS) Member Countries, five UN Agencies and several donors, has surely contributed to its credibility and high appreciation in the region. By 2016, UNDP has demonstrated clear leadership in the implementation of Aid for Trade for countries with specific results in reform of trade policy and activation of trade facilitation measures.

At national level, significant progress has been achieved with the support to Egypt and Jordan in the design and establishment of their National Single Window. Various policies and operational procedures of the Government were adopted with technical advice from the UNDP technical team.

Within AftIAS, specific actions were undertaken by UNDP and by beneficiaries to sustain continuous development. The project introduced a series of reforms, such as the proposal of mechanisms of cost recovery for operations of National Single Windows, the introduction of changes into national regulations, and the provision of specialist knowledge to core technical teams of beneficiaries. This aims at equipping beneficiaries with local capability and capacity of implementing new measures. UNDP also designed three bankable projects (for being financed by institutional financial institutions) aimed at mobilization of resources to fund development of infrastructure for Arab connectivity, i.e. buildings and control equipment, to be deployed at border posts.

UNDP has effectively partnered with LAS, Egypt, Jordan, and Sudan and to certain extent, with Saudi Arabia for the 2014-2017 implementation in various areas. High level of participation and engagement and continuous request for support by countries and regional organizations are concrete evidence of increasing confidence and trust from stakeholders of the delivery capacity of the technical team.

Besides the support provided to increase awareness of the importance of trade for the improvement of economic and social indicators, the initiative has achieved tangible results in the opening or enhancement of regional trade corridors. These concrete improvements are supporting economic growth and jobs creation.

An important aspect relates to dissemination of international standards and good practices dealt with freer movement of goods, commodities and means of transport across borders among Arab countries as well as those related to narrowing gaps of skills as well as establishing the skill development strategy for Egypt. Documented evidence and analysis in simplification and harmonization of procedures and formalities of cross border management proves to be effective to assist the modernization of policies and to align the policy making of concerned countries.

HOW HAS THE PROJECT ACHIEVED EXPECTED OUTCOMES?

In synthesis, the main achievements of AftIAS are the following:

1. Through works by the project and supported by quality analysis of aspects of Arab economic cooperation by the technical team, Arab Leaders issued specific resolutions on matters of trade liberalization and development of foundations for the Arab Customs Union as well as fostering dialogues in trade policy coordination. These are the areas that UNDP has been working with the League of Arab States in supporting their policy discussions aimed at deepened integration.
2. With works completed and resulted achieved by AftIAS, UNDP has positioned as a capable, qualified and trusted partner to Arab economic integration, and to efforts of target Arab countries in improving its competitiveness and economic diversification.

3. Assistance by AfTIAS contributes the innovative approach of collective responsibility and dialogue in trade policy making (at the level of technical committees under LAS) in deepening Arab economic integration and strengthening Arab connectivity.
4. Assistance by UNDP contributed to successful conclusion of the Arab Agreement on the liberalization of trade in services (February 2017) and nine Arab countries participated to it.⁸ The Agreement is being ratified by concerned countries for its effective entry into force.
5. AfTIAS/UNDP strengthened institutional arrangements and management procedures of the Arab Economic Integration Department, Economic Sector of LAS. As a result, the Department was awarded the Certification of ISO (December 2016).
6. The proposal by UNDP in strengthening the monitoring system through establishment of a structured report on the progress of GAFTA implementation was positively endorsed by Ministers at the ECOSOC meeting in September 2015. Egypt, the Palestine have started using this format, prepared by UNDP jointly with the countries for their reporting.
7. UNDP assisted countries such as Egypt and Jordan in their prioritized programs of modernization of logistics services for enhanced competitiveness such as the strategic planning of Egypt National Single Window. The same work is being currently conducted in Jordan.
8. The project also assisted the Country Offices of Algeria, Bahrain, Iraq and UAE in works related to trade, customs reform and modernization and e-Commerce.

4.4.1. Results

Results are analysed following the ProDoc outlines as well as per Annual Work Plans that comprises indicators, baselines, targets and actual achievements. The Factsheets – documents requested by ITFC as the Chair of the Project Board, as an example, splits the UNDP contribution into five ‘projects’, as the following table shows; this format was requested by ITFC. Activities related to Arab connectivity have been split into two projects, and projects 4a and 4b have been merged⁹. To a certain extent, this format only has as objective, monitoring the use of financial resources.

The following table recapitulates expected outputs per year (ProDoc). However, as specified under the Efficiency chapter, from January 2015 the ProDoc is considered as a reference while detail activities and interventions are defined in the Annual Work Plan, following the standard template of UNDP (as based on the guidance of the Project Board). The Project Board decided to use the Work Plans as the guidance of identification of activities and its implementation. Outputs, results and activities are reviewed every year jointly with beneficiaries, on the basis of the assignments which were pre-approved by the Project Board in December 2014 and afterwards at its periodic meetings.

⁸ Jordan has expressed interest to join the Agreement in becoming the 10th Member in July 2017.

⁹ This is explained by budget optimisation reasons. The Project Board approved activities of UNDP of 2014-2015 with specified budget. UNDP defined specific work plans which are approved for immediate implementation. UNDP does not develop any sub-project document. Instead, the focus is on the effective implementation and execution. The overall impression is however that sometimes issues of operational management can produce some confusion at overall outcomes level if not properly integrated in the general results framework.

In addition to that, it must be added that UNDP designs and implements activities on the Requirements by beneficiaries and stakeholders, identified in the assessment of specific needs. These were subsequently incorporated into the interventions to secure the effectiveness and relevance to the Outcomes and Outputs.

Project name	Sector	Description	Overall Results	Expected results	Expected impact
<p>1. Enhance Performance of Border Control Management at Selected Border Posts of Arab States</p>	<p>Arab connectivity and trade facilitation</p>	<p>Design and adoption of modernized procedures of management of cross border operations and introduction of integrated platform of information processing for trade facilitation such as the National Single Window. Improvement of Arab connectivity is seen as one of major foundations in the promotion of Arab economic integration.</p>	<p>Egypt and Sudan adopted the Action Plan and technical models of the joint pilot aimed at simplification of procedures and reduction of trade costs along the trade/transport corridor linking Sudan, Egypt, Jordan and potentially Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. To assist the implementation, the Steering Committee of border management at Qustol of Egypt was activated with Terms of Reference, Work Program and coordination mechanisms. Intensive consultations with Egypt and Sudan were held with regard to introduction of new policies of facilitation of movement of goods.</p> <p>Consultations were completed with Jordan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on activities of the said trade/transport corridor.</p> <p>Awareness on Trade Facilitation and Arab connectivity was enhanced. UNDP also conducted assessment of needs of trade-related infrastructure for the development of three draft bankable projects of Egypt, Jordan and Sudan.</p> <p>Around than 200 officials of Egypt and Sudan benefitted of activities of capacity building in trade facilitation, customs modernization and strategic planning for development of a National Single Window. Conducted need assessments in targeted countries.</p>	<p>Joint Customs control procedures are developed and piloted at two pairs of border posts (Egypt-Sudan) and (Jordan-Saudi Arabia).</p>	<p>Introduction and adoption of international practices have effectively assisted the countries in upgrading their operational practices and procedures to the global standards aimed at reduction of costs and integration of border controls for facilitation of legitimate trade.</p> <p>Introduction of trade facilitating measures into trade and trade-related policies (Customs and border control agencies) is essential for enhanced competitiveness of target Arab countries, particularly in making Arab exports more competitive in the first stage.</p> <p>A new model of governance of programmes of regional economic integration is required to secure timely implementation with strong ownership and commitments of Arab countries.</p>

<p>2. Strengthen capacity of the League of Arab States to Promote Trade Integration</p>	<p>Arab economic integration/ Trade Policy Reform</p>	<p>UNDP assisted the Economic Sector of LAS in strengthening institutional arrangements, introduction of result-based work plans and design of Operational Procedures for the AEID. Numerous policy papers on trade policy reform towards closer regional economic cooperation and requirements of Arab Customs Union (ACU) were prepared and endorsed by the senior management, including the Outlines of establishment of ACU. Several activities of capacity building were carried out for officials of LAS and representatives/trade negotiators of Arab countries</p>	<p>Design and establishment of adequate institutional arrangements within the Economic Sector in the pursuit of better efficiency and professional services. Proposals of restructuring and a Draft Manual of Operational Procedures were prepared and adopted in principle by the Arab Economic Integration Department (AEID) of LAS. Outlines of establishment of Arab Customs Union were also endorsed with focus on having proper institutions to undertake preparatory work and design of the ACU. Trainings on trade facilitation, trade in services, economic cooperation, for more than 80 officials of the LAS and Arab countries, were delivered to support trade policy reform.</p>	<p>Policy recommendations in realization of GAFTA and suggestions aimed at deepening Arab Economic Integration</p>	<p>Introduction of effective implementation of commitments in economic integration has been identified as the key approach. UNDP promotes the collective responsibility and continuous consultations among trade policy makers and negotiators of Arab countries in function of the Arab economic cooperation. Sharing of good experiences and operational practices also forms part of the new</p>
<p>3. Strengthened Arab connectivity and linkage through the promotion of crossing borders operations</p>	<p>Arab connectivity and trade facilitation</p>	<p>The project targets more facilitation of goods transiting through Arab countries in the defined trade/transport corridors. This involves modernization of operational procedures and introduction of international best practices along major outlines and provisions of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. Efforts of simplification and standardization contribute to reduce costs of transportation and of doing business as effective means for better competitiveness. Connectivity constitutes one of the major foundations for Arab</p>	<p>Activities of the project target delivery of concrete results in modernizing trade and trade-related practices for trade and transport facilitation. It progresses in technical matters (design and adoption of technical models of cross border operations) and in setting adequate institutions for the implementation of such regional initiatives. The project also contributed to introduction of good practices dealt with logistics services and facilitated consultations between the Government and the private sector in trade and transport facilitation. One of essential instruments for better control of shipments relates to</p>	<p>1. Arab connectivity and linkages through the promotion of crossing borders operations and integrated management systems strengthened. 2. Adoption of simplified procedures in line with international standards and good practices. Activation of key provisions of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement such as support to the strategic planning of National Single Windows.</p>	<p>1. Reduction of costs of transportation and of logistics for operations undertaken along the trade/transport corridor that connects Sudan, Egypt, Jordan towards Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). It forms part of the strategy of achieving logistics competitiveness in the region. 2. Promotion of application of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement for the modernization of supply chain, particularly with use of ICT and information processing techniques. 3. Contribution of technical analysis and recommendations to</p>

		<p>economic integration as it enables partnerships and collaboration across economies in the region. To achieve this, collective efforts at both national and regional level are required</p> <p>The AFTIAS UNDP team partnered with related authorities and stakeholders in target Arab countries to expedite adoption of automated information processing towards higher competitiveness and more cost efficiency in logistics.</p> <p>In 2016, the project continued to deliver assistance to support countries to achieve their priorities. The assistance entailed a combination of provision of technical advice, formulation of proposals for modernization and introduction of new policies, and delivering activities for capacity development for public officials, technicians and experts from the private sector.</p> <p>This component of the project entails work of developing an operational model based on international standards and requirements for adopting more streamlined applications into the management of border management. The end result of the work would be to better link several Arab States along major</p>	<p>exchange of data and information among agencies in charge of border management. Egypt and Jordan signed a declaration of cooperation for data exchange with the pilot at Aqaba and Nuweibae ports. More efforts towards information exchange at the regional level are taking place in close partnership with Agadir Customs. Technical tests of data exchange are successfully being carried out with support from the project</p>		<p>programs of economic/export diversification being considered by target Arab countries.</p> <p>Promotion of a National Single Window as a platform of trade enhancement and facilitation.</p>
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		trade/transport corridors in the region with better service quality. The work has started with the trade/transport corridor that connects Sudan with Egypt, Jordan, and later the KSA			
<p>4a. Enhanced capacity of the League of Arab States in support of implementation of measures under decisions by the 2015 Arab Economic and Social Development Summit</p> <p>4b. Design structured development-oriented program of Arab Economic integration toward Arab Customs Union¹⁰</p>	<p>1. Arab economic integration – Trade Policy Reform, including undertaking preparatory works for establishment of Arab Customs Union.</p> <p>2. Institutional building in support of Economic Sector of the League of Arab States (Arab Economic Integration Department).</p>	<p>The project continued assistance to improve operations and support provided by officials of regional organizations to Member States for deepening Arab economic cooperation. The work entails provision of support to reorganize work teams, upgrade the technical capability of officials, and bring about changes in work attitudes. The project also targets introduction of good practices and reforms into the trade policy making in the region, as well as promotion of policy coherence and higher level of accountability. UNDP through AftIAS supports Arab countries in raising more awareness to be achieved through trade policy reform in key areas of value added such as trade in services, competition, and others. This is supported by promoting regional dialogue and public goods among countries. The support is centred on League of Arab States, particularly</p>	<p>This component on strengthening regional institutions recorded significant progress. With clear definition of responsibilities and daily support from on-the-ground experts, the Economic Sector, particularly its Arab Economic Integration Department, has gone through a restructuring with positive outcomes. Technical contribution of LAS officials in the meetings of technical committees has improved; a new structure of work teams has come into operation since early 2016.</p> <p>The sector has developed the Annual Work Plans to guide works in the department (Annual Work Plans of 2015 and 2016). The work plans are being implemented with good progress, demonstrating a commitment by the officials to better perform their functions and to support Member States.</p> <p>One important task that the relevant LAS department had to engage with has been the design of the roadmap for the Arab Customs Union. The department,</p>	<p>1. Enhancement of capacity of Economic Sector of the LAS in trade policy reform and monitoring of implementation progress of GAFTA enhanced in support of implementation of measures under decisions by the 2015 Arab Economic and Social Development Summit.</p> <p>2. Undertaking preparatory works for establishment of the Arab Customs Union.</p>	<p>1. Structural enhancement of the trade policy framework of deepened economic integration at regional level.</p> <p>2. Promotion of strategy dialogues and consultations among trade policy makers for Arab economic integration.</p> <p>3. Enhanced capabilities of the coordinator of programs of economic integration – the AEID, Economic Sector of the LAS in technical, managerial and strategic planning areas.</p> <p>4. Acceleration of preparatory works for the design of Arab Customs Union.</p> <p>5. Contribution of technical analysis and recommendations to programs of economic/export diversification being considered by target Arab countries.</p>

¹⁰ These two activities were merged based on the request by the project board and the total budget was revised down to allocate more resources on project activities related to cross-border operations.

		through its Economic Sector (AEID).	<p>with the technical assistance by the UNDP team, presented the overall concept note on the architecture of the ACU to the LAS technical committees that initiated a consultation process. The presented approach has been positively considered by the committees.</p> <p>Similarly, “The Guidelines on Competition” are being finalized, reflecting joint efforts of Egypt and Tunisia and the LAS team with the support of UNDP team. The guidelines introduce key components of an integrated economic community. These are just the latest examples of a continuous work to support LAS institutional capacity and the process of engagement with the Member States through its technical committees.</p> <p>As a new addition in 2016, substantial efforts were also exerted to support the Government of Iraq in improving the collection of national revenues from customs. A technical proposal was presented to the Prime Minister with a set of measures to modernize the system.</p>		
5. Promotion of Equal Opportunity and Woman Entrepreneurship in Support of Cross Border	Mainstreaming gender equality priorities	In order to enhance the role of women in the policy making process related to trade and to empower them in taking advantage of initiatives of Arab economic integration, UNDP plans to carry out a number of awareness raising activities in	The project completed a number of desk research to identify a suitable approach to promote gender equality, particularly in entrepreneurship in local economies, particularly those related to cross border operations	Strengthened skills and abilities of key national partners to mainstream gender equality priorities into cross border trade policies in the AMU sub region.	Enhanced awareness on woman entrepreneurship and woman participation to the policy making process for Arab economic integration.

<p><i>Trade in the Arab Region</i></p>		<p>promotion of equal opportunities and their entrepreneurship in collaboration with General Secretariat of Arab Maghreb Union as well as target Arab countries.</p> <p>Women play significant role in public sector. Promotion of their participation in the related decision making processes, particularly in public institutions in charge of collection of fiscal revenue will generate substantial benefits for modernization and reform that supports regional trade</p>			
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4.4.2. RESULT 1

Table based on ProDoc

RESULT 1	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Actual
Capacity gaps and priorities for technical assistance in relation to trade and productive capacity development are diagnosed at the national, sub-regional and regional levels. Action oriented road maps are formulated to develop trade related aspirations expressed in the outcome documents of Arab Economic and Social Summit. Interventions with the highest impact on youth and women are prioritized	1.1 Number and quality of actionable interventions prepared for investment, resource mobilization and implementation	existing projects	High quality (experts' evaluation) prioritized bankable projects finalized in 22 countries	Achieved in completion of three bankable projects for Egypt, Jordan and Sudan by UNDP
	1.2 Volume of AfT, other official flows and intra-regional and foreign direct investment commitments (timeframe: 3 years after project closure)	2009 commitments as reported by OECD, UNCTAD (FDI)	15% increase in the region	Achieved. Some international donors continue commitments to fund Aid For Trade as Sida
	1.3 Number and quality of AfT road maps prepared and validated	existing country literature	High quality (experts' evaluation) action oriented road maps finalized in all requesting countries	2 road maps completed
	1.4 Number of countries that improve mainstreaming trade in national development strategies	number of countries which explicitly mention trade development as part of their national development plan, PRSP or similar documents	At least 6 countries improve trade mainstreaming or make trade more visible in national development strategies (expert review)	Trade has gained more visibility and importance for development in various countries. New strategies of GCC countries also identify trade as part of their agenda

a. Table based on AWP

Project Output	Year	Output Indicators	Target
Project Output 2 (85191): Enhanced performance of border control management at selected border posts of Egypt and Sudan, Jordan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (by UNDP) (changed into Output 1 in 2015)	2014	Joint customs control procedures are developed and successfully piloted	Developed coordinated control of two pairs of border crossing posts (Egypt/Sudan and Jordan/Saudi Arabia)

Output 1: Arab connectivity and linkages through promotion of crossing borders operations and integrated management systems strengthened. Arab connectivity and linkages through promotion of crossing borders operations and integrated management systems strengthened.	2015	1.1 Percentage of completion of the endorsed technical assistance plan of designated posts or ports of entry 1.2 Performance in terms of timeliness, reliability, cost reduction, increase of trade and movement of goods, services, means of transport and people	1.1 60% completion of the endorsed technical assistance plan by end of the year; 100% completion by end of the project 1.2 Performance in the selected designated posts or ports of entry increase notably by end of the year by 30% against baseline by the end of the project
	2016	1.1 Percentage of completion of the endorsed technical assistance plan of designated posts or ports of entry 1.2 Performance in terms of timeliness, reliability, cost reduction, increase of trade and movement of goods, services, means of transport and people	1.1 60% completion of the endorsed technical assistance plan by end of the year; 100% completion by end of the project 1.2 Performance in the selected designated posts or ports of entry increase notably by end of the year by 30% against baseline by the end of the project

Border Posts

Relevant results have been achieved under this section, starting from 2014 when UNDP developed three bankable projects of modernization of infrastructure at border posts for Egypt, Sudan and Jordan in collaboration with national authorities. Detail assessment of needs and research on strategic directions of Arab economic integration was carried out. Formulation of bankable projects involved research and desk review, discussions and series of consultations with national authorities, particularly with those in charge of operations at the border post. Consultations were also conducted with Saudi Arabia on the joint operations with Jordan. Steering Committees (SC) in charge of cross border operations of Egypt and Sudan were activated with Terms of Reference, Work Plans and management mechanisms. The SC of Egypt was responsible for establishment and operations of the border post at Qustol, supported in full by the project. It enters into operation since July 2015.

This component was also successful at many levels, firstly in achieving coordination for example on cross border operations of Egypt and Sudan, where a Steering Committee was established, with active participation of high level representatives of all Ministries and Agencies in charge of border management. Joint consultations of Egypt and Sudan were also carried out, and resulted in the adoption of Egypt - Sudan Action Plan, mechanisms of consultation and technical models of the joint pilot action. The inter-regional cooperation continued on the identification of the trade/transport corridor linking Sudan, Egypt, Jordan and potentially Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). Joint work coordinated by AFTIAS was conducted on the review of key provisions that regulate management and administration of cross border operations by land.

The efforts of AFTIAS have produced the development of a Technical Model of cross border operations, which has been adopted by Egypt and Sudan and accepted by Jordan. National Action plans have been

defined and adopted by Egypt and Sudan, along with Joint Action Plans specifying interventions, preparatory works, trainings and related matters.

The interventions have been accompanied by adequate technical assistance, including endorsement of technical models of management of land and sea border operations; issuing of administrative decrees; trainings of officials; delivery of ICT equipment to the Governments (Egypt, Sudan and Jordan).

Also, Egypt requested additional support in several areas of modernization of border management such as risk management.

National Single Windows

Work on National Single Windows (NSW) has been conducted in Jordan and Egypt starting in 2015. It was essentially comprised of technical assistance in the strategic planning to develop NSW, including related concept notes, Action Plans, identification of services or functions on the basis of inputs received from Ministries of Agriculture, Trade and Industry, Customs Departments and regulatory agencies.

Jordan also planned to set up a number of working groups for Jordan NSW, and UNDP advised the Government on the governance model to secure that this important project is inclusive and effective. Following the UNDP proposal, the Jordan Government decided to adopt a comprehensive reform of operational procedures, including restructuring of processes and work flows. These were adopted by the lead agency - Jordan Customs Department and approved by the Government.

These institutional arrangements were developed while considering other existent working bodies; in this regard, a clear distinction with regard to the functional mandates, responsibilities and authorities was also made.

With the support by UNDP, projects of NSW of Egypt and Jordan have been identified as national prioritized activities for trade facilitation and enhanced competitiveness. Two substantive Roadmaps of NSW of Egypt and Jordan were finalized in Quarter III 2015 and 2017. UNDP also advised two national governments in the adoption of the governance models to secure successful and sustainable implementation. More than three hundreds officials of governments and the private sector of Egypt and Jordan were trained on strategic planning of the design of NSW, business process re-engineering, data harmonization and adoption of Information and Communication Technology towards digital economy.

Also, recommendations of the draft Roadmap of Egypt National Single Window (Egypt NSW) and suggestions related to its model of governance mechanisms were positively considered and adopted by trade and trade-related policy makers within EgiTrade (the working committee in charge of Egypt NSW). Jordan, with support by UNDP, accelerates the establishment of Jordan National Single Window. The Prime Minister appointed the Minister of Finance to be the Leader of the project and activates the Steering Committee and Executive Group to drive the process forward.

This output benefited from the South-South exchange of experience on the design and establishment of a National Single Window, through a technical visit to Indonesia by senior managers of Jordanian authorities in charge of the design of the next generation of Jordan NSW. Indonesian authorities shared with the mission

specific information and knowledge of strategic planning, technical design, preparation of the legal framework and inter-agency coordination.

Other

The above activities were complemented with various consultations on different topics. With KSA and Jordan, talks were conducted on measures of trade facilitation and trade policy reform. In Jordan, with support by the project team, Jordan initiated the design of a regional platform of exchange of data and information, and requested support from AfTIAS in strengthening institutional arrangements of the national committee on trade and transport facilitation.

Finally, work on road maps was initiated in early 2015 with an UNCTAD Advisory and technical mission to Khartoum (Ministry of Trade), where the Road map on the update of MFTR and other related accession documents were agreed. Also, a note on WTO accession process of Comoros in the context of the review of the Diagnostic Trade Information Study (DTIS), including a road map and detailed work programme for the next steps of the accession process was prepared and delivered to the Ministry of Trade.

As a result of comprehensive dialogue and consultations processes, in 2015, AfTIAS supported Algeria with a policy intervention on mainstreaming international trade for economic growth, which was presented to the national conference. In Saudi Arabia, consistent support was provided to the design of the Outlines of Export Development Strategy and economic diversification. A detail concept note was presented to the Export Development Agency and its recommendations were adopted by the Agency. Support was also extended to Algeria in looking into technical options in mainstreaming trade for development as well as diversification of economic activities. Also in 2015, the project assisted the CO of Bahrain in re-adjusting the scope and intervention of a trade-related project with the aim of supporting the private sector. Activities continued in 2016, when considerable work was carried out on mainstreaming trade facilitation, operationalization of regional works in completion, and reinvigoration of negotiations of liberalization of trade in services.

4.4.3. RESULT 2

a. Table based on ProDoc

RESULT 2	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Actual
Capacities of the League of Arab States (LAS), Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) to implement regional integration processes and the Pan Arab Free Trade Area (PAFTA) are enhanced, as well as coordination and	2.1 Capacities of secretariats of LAS, GCC and AMU to support regional integration processes and the PAFTA are enhanced			Achieved with LAS 1. Procedures are defined and implemented 2. Job Descriptions of staffs were prepared and applied 3. Systematic monitoring of performance of staff

collaboration amongst them and with national policymakers/stakeholders in member countries				4. Planning capacity improved with Work Plans of 2015 and 2016, 2017 5. The work teams were restructured
	2.2 Consultative mechanisms amongst secretariats of LAS, GCC and AMU and national stakeholders in member countries in place			Achieved The most important connection of cooperation in trade and economic integration is between LAS and Agadir Technical Unit. A MOU was signed and staffs of two organizations exchange regular visits
	2.3 PAFTA monitoring and evaluation mechanism in place		M&E system in place	Achieved
	2.4 Progress of member countries towards the implementation of PAFTA			Achieved
	2.5 support to Members that are acceding to the WTO			Achieved

b. Table based on AWP

Project Output	Year	Output Indicators	Target
Project Output 4 (85192): Capacity of the League of Arab States to promote trade integration strengthened (by UNDP) (changed into Output 2 from 2015)	2014	Policy recommendations in promoting realization of GAFTA and suggestions aimed at deepening Arab economic integration	1. By 2014, LAS co-organized the first Arab Trade Forum 2. Strengthened the technical and managerial capability of the LAS
Output 2: Enhancement of capacity of Economic Sector of the LAS in trade policy reform and monitoring of implementation progress of GAFTA	2015	2.1 Percentage of completion of the capacity development plan for the Economic Integration Department of LAS	2.1 60% of the capacity development plan for the Economic Integration Department of LAS is completed by the end of the year; 100% completion by the end of the project life 2.2 The draft policy outlines/roadmaps for establishing the Arab Customs Union is

enhanced in support of implementation of measures under decisions by the 2015 Arab Economic and Social Development Summit		2.2 Degree to which the road maps for establishing the Arab Customs Union is endorsed	submitted to LAS for review by end of the year; The draft road maps are adopted by the end of the project
	2016	2.1 Percentage of completion of the capacity development plan for the Economic Integration Department of LAS 2.2 Degree to which the road maps for establishing the Arab Customs Union is endorsed	2.1 60% of the capacity development plan for the Economic Integration Department of LAS is completed by the end of the year; 100% completion by the end of the project life 2.2 The draft policy outlines/roadmaps for establishing the Arab Customs Union is submitted to LAS for review by end of the year; The draft road maps are adopted by the end of the project

Substantial progress has been achieved under this Result Area, which is related to the strengthening of institutional structures governing PAFTA. More importantly, AftIAS support contributes to formulation of proposals and instruments towards Arab economic integration. The project achieved important results in strengthening existent institutions at regional level (Arab Economic Integration Department AEID, Economic Sector of the LAS) and at national level (Egypt, Sudan, Jordan), particularly in the policy design and improvement of management of cross border operations. As an example, the Steering Committee of Egypt for border operations is composed of high level representatives of all agencies who participate to the administration of operations at border posts, and serves as a policy dialogue and consultation forum between various national authorities.

Taking into consideration the pivotal role of the AEID, the Department was restructured as part of the implementation of the Manual of Procedures, included detailed job descriptions and distribution of responsibilities of officials and the senior management. According to observations by Member States in 2015 and 2016, collected during exchange of views between the project team and representatives of the countries, the performance of staff of the Economic Sector has progressively improved. A number of staff started technical analysis beyond serving as the Secretariat. Various technical trainings were also delivered by the technical team in building the technical capacity and delivery capability.

In 2014, the work focused on awareness, training and preparation of Policy Outlines for the Arab Customs Union (ACU) and a Manual of Procedures for the LAS. Also, a set of policy papers on trade policy reform towards more regional economic integration have been prepared and endorsed with clear directions of implementation. Focus on design and establishment of adequate institutional arrangements in the pursuit of better efficiency and professional services. In 2015 - probably as an effect of project work - the Arab leaders reiterated the determination of establishment of the Arab Customs Union, and mandated activation of national teams in charge of its technical works and negotiations. The Manual of Procedures is adopted at

the official document for the AEID of LAS and implemented; the re-organization of staff was also undertaken to optimize the expertise of officials.

Progress increased in 2016, particularly in strengthening capacity of support of the LAS AEID and assisting target countries with modernization of practices of administration and logistics services. The Manual of Procedures was fully implemented, and thanks to the better organization of works and strategic planning the Department achieved the certification of compliance to ISO standards in November 2016, becoming the first Department of LAS being awarded with this recognition.

The establishment of coordination mechanisms among concerned institutions was perhaps an overambitious task. In terms of interagency coordination, as the 2015 Progress Report states, the implementation has encountered several challenges with regard to how to improve the coordination among concerned governmental entities as the project brings in new requirements, and demands more policy coherence and partnership in policy making. In addition to that, changes in the governmental structure, readjustment of statutory functions of entities, or change of officials working with the project team, and lack of telecommunication and trade-related infrastructure in border areas are perceived as difficulties that the implementation team has to cope with.

Output 2.3

The most relevant result in upgrading the monitoring of progress of Arab economic integration was the 2015 agreement of Arab countries on the proposal of using the standard format of annual progress report at the ECOSOC 69 on the supervision and monitoring of GAFTA/PAFTA implementation, where the project supported the improvement of quality of measuring indicators of Arab economic integration. Three countries have started use of this template in reporting the progress after 2015. In 2016, to support more timely policy decisions to progress the regional agenda of economic integration, proposals were made for monitoring of the progress of implementation of PAFTA decisions at the national level, and a draft template of Unified National Report was developed, which was adopted by Arab countries as per resolutions by ECOSOC. All Member States of PAFTA started using this template to report achievements and challenges in 2017. This is another significant achievement.

UNDP is also working with the LAS on enhancement and further structuring of supervision mechanisms.

In moving toward the ACU, detailed directions were established by the Leaders in finalization of negotiations of the draft Agreement on liberalization in trade in services, finalization of outstanding matters for upgrading GAFTA/PAFTA implementation, such as identification of services sectors that are of key interest to Arab countries and completion of remaining issues related to rules of origin. The technical team of UNDP supported the AEID of LAS with concrete technical suggestions, and conducted specialized and customized trainings to staff. For the ACU establishment, the project provided technical expertise to two regional workshops on how to progress from GAFTA/PAFTA to the ACU in May and December 2015, and coordinated with the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) to organize one regional seminar in June 2015. Technical analysis of the structure of the ACU was also conducted to support works by the LAS for decisions on new policies.

Since 2014, UNDP assisted Arab countries in their negotiations of the Arab Agreement in trade in services with various technical advices, proposals and suggested solutions. These efforts led to the conclusions of negotiations in November 2016 and finally adopted in February 2017. Finalization of this Agreement, the so called “Beirut Round”, constitutes a major milestone in deepening Arab economic integration.

The project (UNCTAD) started already in 2014 with provision of technical support to a number of countries in the negotiation of its WTO membership. AftIAS interventions by UNDP were guided by the project target of achieving inclusive growth, more competitiveness and new business, job opportunities through mainstreaming trade for development. Along this line, support was also extended to assist Comoros and Sudan (two LDCs) in the negotiation process of WTO membership through provision of technical advice, conduct of capacity building activities, and review of draft policy instruments for submission to related WTO working groups. In the Comoros a WTO Memorandum was finalised on foreign trade regimes of Comoros; in Sudan a detailed work plan was adopted with concrete recommendations on the reactivation of Sudan's WTO accession process including the review and update of the Memorandum on foreign trade regimes of Sudan by UNCTAD.

Progress continued in 2015, when AftIAS/UNDP contributed to progressive adoption of international good practices under the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement by target Arab countries (WTO TF Agreement) and related instruments. One of important measures consists of development of National Single Windows as a platform of inter-agency collaboration and cross-sector coordination, for real time processing of information and completion of procedures on the basis of provisions of Article 10:4 of the WTO TF Agreement. In the first stage, UNDP assisted Egypt in the strategic planning of establishment of Egypt National Single Window (ENSW) and trained various Egyptian policy makers and technical experts so they can acquire needed knowledge and skills.

Also, the project contributed substantial inputs to the global report by UNDP on Aid for Trade for the 6th WTO Global review (11-13 July 2017) and collaborated in the dissemination of information on the implementation to the WTO Aid for Trade Working Group. Two cases study were prepared by UNDP in collaboration with Egypt for submission to WTO/OECD and were uploaded by the focal point of Egypt at the WTO. Assistance was provided to Member States in the preparation of the guidelines for the negotiation. A significant achievement consists of the support contributed to the conclusion of the Beirut Round of negotiations in trade in services by Member States, after 12 years. Nine members presented their offers while others expressed strong commitments to participate to the regional programme.

4.4.4. RESULT 3

Table based on AWP

Project Output	Year	Output Indicators	Target
Output 3: Strengthened skills and abilities of key national partners to mainstream gender equality priorities into	2015	3.1 Degree to which national partners acquire new skills and methods to better integrate gender	3.1 High level of satisfaction of national partners for acquiring new skills and approach towards gender mainstreaming in cross-border trade policies and strategies

cross border trade policies in the AMU sub region		equality in cross-border trade strategies	
	2016	3.1 Degree to which national partners acquire new skills and methods to better integrate gender equality in cross-border trade strategies	3.1 High level of satisfaction of national partners for acquiring new skills and approach towards gender mainstreaming in cross-border trade policies and strategies

Various activities have been implemented – mainly in 2015 and 2016 – to contribute to this important element. AFTIAS shows awareness of the important potential of women in the Arab region in policy making process and conduct of economic activities. Consultations were held with AMU Secretariat General officials, aimed at activation of interventions that serve to strengthen skills and abilities of key national partners to mainstream gender equality priorities into cross border trade policies in the AMU sub-region. AMU Member States reportedly expressed strong interest to gender mainstreaming actions in the area of trade facilitation. Activities mainly focused on desk research and consultations aimed at identification of relevant interventions. Desk research was conducted on women’s entrepreneurship in the Maghreb region, taking account of their roles in informal trade and operations of SMEs, the latter generating jobs and playing essential role for household stability and welfare of local communities. Consultations with AMU aimed at identifying areas of potential cooperation, with focus on more empowerment of women and promotion of entrepreneurship; also, the project team collaborated with the AMU Secretariat General in the design of the Terms of Reference of the expert in women’ entrepreneurship. It was expected that conduct of this activity would assist design and delivery of services in response to needs of women in either their participation to regional economic activities or initiating businesses.

In late January 2017, a Workshop of the Roles of Women in the public administration in trade facilitation and revenue collection was held in collaboration with the Ministry of Trade of Egypt. More than 70 participants attended it, to discuss how to promote further the role of women in design of public policy and in economic life.

Some initial results were achieved in progressing in raising awareness of the potential of women in economic life, and by the end of 2016, women policy makers and those in the private sector participated very actively to discuss new policies and future orientations in Competition and Trade and Facilitation. In the last two seminars, more than 60 percent of beneficiaries of new knowledge are women.

Overall, it does not seem that substantial results were achieved by AFTIAS in GEWE yet. For example, the foreseen preparation of a strategic plan for woman entrepreneurship and gender equality, or the recruitment of an expert in charge of gender equality and of women’s empowerment, particular on cross border operations, have not been realised. Reasons are linked to the generally still scarce interest of beneficiary organizations and entities in the region in gender empowerment-guided public policies and different levels of priority. At the national level, gender equality is a portfolio of different ministries from

economic ministries. Since design of activities is in fact jointly elaborated by the project team and policy makers of LAS and Member States, because of different levels of priority, development of the above mentioned strategic plan has been postponed. Countries wanted to focus on fewer priority areas, mainly on trade and transport facilitation.

The team reportedly is still making efforts and is committed to involve women in the discourse on a more inclusive development. As an example of that, at the end of January 2017 UNDP/AfTIAS organized a Workshop on the role and leadership of Women in Trade Facilitation and Revenue Collection with the Government of Egypt. It discussed the importance of active engagement of women in promoting economic growth.

4.4.5. Recent Developments

In 2017, SIDA contributions are allowing AfTIAS to scale up the work carried out so far and expand its portfolio of activities, including provision of some support to the implementation of the Trade and Service agreement. AfTIAS, jointly with the Arab Development Portal team, will also implement a project to further explore the linkages between Trade and the SDGs, with the objective to develop trade-related indicators for the Arab Region.

WHAT ARE THE UNEXPECTED OUTCOMES OR CONSEQUENCES OF THE INTERVENTION? WHAT ARE THEIR IMPLICATIONS?

One of the key effects of AfTIAS is that the initiative has acted as a catalyst for attracting other initiatives and development partners.

AfTIAS is also actively contributing in identifying emerging needs and providing new resources with the aim of helping Arab member countries to achieve their full trade development potential.

Another effect is that AfTIAS has contributed to create a discourse in the region on free trade, and has stimulated regional partners to join up and develop common strategies or actions. As an example, in the context of support to NTM, four countries (Algeria, Mauritania, Tunisia and Yemen) sent official letters to the WTO Standards and Trade Facilitation Mechanism (STDF) requesting the implementation of the project *Enhanced trade of agricultural products through a streamlined SPS conformity assessment system within the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA)* related to conformity assessment infrastructure.¹¹

WHICH WERE THE MAIN WEAKNESSES OF THE PROJECT?

Challenges encountered in the project implementation are of different nature and range from turnover of counterpart officers to a lack of confidence towards regional initiatives and programmes of coordination. In addition to that, differences in policy priority and frequent changes of targets in governmental agencies, particularly following appointment of senior officers and policy decisions at the highest level of the administration, were also a significant challenge during the implementation.

Main challenges encountered in the implementation seem to be:

¹¹ Although this outcome is recorded in 2014 report by ITC, there isn't any update since 2014 until present.

Low coordination of relevant regional agencies: although one of the tasks of AfTIAS was to increase cooperation and coordination of regional and national agencies on trade related issues, the project implied that some coordination would already exist; for example, on border management the introduction of new procedures and operational practices demanded adequate coordination among agencies in charge. This was not obvious, and difficulties were recorded in how to improve coordination among concerned governmental entities, as the project brought in new requirements and demanded more policy coherence and partnership in policy making. Gaps still exist at both cross sector level and among countries. This continues to be one of areas that require continuous attention and partnership, and in certain cases it proved to be not an easy task.

Institutional instability: changes in the governmental structure, readjustment of statutory functions of entities, change of officials working with the project team have also hindered the implementation of the initiative. This might be the case of LAS, which after excellent results achieved in 2016 witnessed a change of management; this led to the need for re-starting capacity building activities and sensitising new management, with consequent significant amount of time spent.

Political instability: the political and security situation in the region is still to be considered unstable. Conflicts affecting target countries such as Palestine and Yemen have brought about the need for multiple adjustments and modifications of planned activities.

Absorption capacity. As the 2015 progress report comments, *activities of UNDP to support Arab economic integration bring in a new approach consisting of promotion of policy dialogues, coherence and shared accountability by policy makers in trade and economic collaboration. Gradually, it is getting more and more acceptance by them; however, there is still some divergence of opinions. Resistance to reform activities and changes is another challenge, although not unusual. It relates to administrative process and officials who are responsible for the implementation. Some time, it takes place due to lack of knowledge and information, or a diverse interpretation of a decision. Secondly, since the implementation constitutes the main focus of activities by UNDP, it requires modernization and upgrade of policies and regulations. In a number of circumstances, the countries have not provided the technical team with requested information for technical design; as consequence, the delivery suffered delay, and unfortunately it has cost implication to the project. Sometimes, the decision making in countries takes longer time than expected due to administrative practices and bureaucratic procedures in use.*

Limited capacities of national consultants: limited capabilities of national providers of consultancy services were recorded. Also, limited number of sector experts in some areas impacted on timely completion of the activities.

Logistical issues: lack of connectivity, communications and infrastructures are frequently observed in the target countries and – as the 2016 progress report conforms – are the subject of many discussions the project team had with regional policy makers. Questions mainly related to the provision of key physical infrastructure to the countries, such as telecommunication infrastructure or roads. In some cases, lack of telecommunication and trade-related infrastructure in border areas have slowed down project activities; as

an example, at Qustol, Egypt and Askeit, Sudan, where policy makers of the two countries requested UNDP to assist with development of physical infrastructure.

Degree of commitment of stakeholders: it is the evaluator’s opinion that some of the results were affected by low interest in specific issues, such as gender empowerment, where initial activities have slowed down after 2015 and were not perceived as a priority by regional partners. Also, due to inefficiencies in corporate culture of state agencies it has been sometimes difficult to receive timely responses from the national focal points on either planned activities or implementation issues.

Insufficient involvement of the private sector. Reports state that a survey of observations by the private sector on how trade and transport facilitation works in the region was conducted jointly with LAS in Egypt, Jordan, KSA and Sudan. The survey *points to several areas that require policy interventions such as the needs of modernization of regulations, addressing low productivity of certain ports and non-competitive logistics services. Moreover, findings of the survey point to the need of enhancement of the regulatory framework to effect more facilitation in trade and transport, and the necessity of adoption of electronic processing/paperless of information for clearance, simplification of customs procedures aimed at more expeditious release of shipments¹².* The interaction with the private sector seems limited to these contributions; this important actor for trade development is only indirectly involved, and is not addressed in the project. More efforts should be put in emphasising the role of this category and advocating the necessity of legislation, policy and regulation changes. This would hugely increase the impact of the project on economic growth, jobs creation and overall wealth of citizens of the region.

Management challenges: the reports highlight some delays in the approval of planned activities by the Project Board, decreasing the implementation schedule and causing restraints to design long-term plans in leveraging on the expertise and experiences of four UN Agencies. In addition, lack of inputs provided by some countries to the proposed activities further restrained the capacity of concerned UN Agencies in the customization of their programs to expressed needs of the countries.

From a more internal perspective, the intense focus of the project team on efficiency and effectiveness might imply risks of confrontational reactions in a region which presents specific cultures and consolidated attitudes. This did not reportedly happen to date; the project did not witness nor face any noticeable objection. The main resistances among beneficiaries relate to inertial behavioural patterns. In some cases – for example in LAS and Jordan - the approach used by the team seems to function very well, and is leading to changes in performances. An encouraging sign seems to be that, wherever the technical team intervenes, the result-oriented approach chosen by the project team fits well with the challenge of transformational reform and with needs expressed by beneficiaries.

Actions undertaken

Several challenges of those listed above were at least partly addressed by the project team, which has extensively cooperated with executing agencies to timely complete and present the expected outputs.

¹² Progress report 2015.

With regard to difficulty of lack of capabilities of implementation in service providers, different UN Agencies have adopted various modalities to achieve both timely recruitment of experts and candidates who have potential of effective contribution in this process. Networking and leveraging on contacts of projects being carried out in Arab countries helped to facilitate completion of the job as described.

On matters of coordination, the project team was able to strengthen the collaboration with national focal points and beneficiary regional organizations focal points. To address decision-making challenges related to diversity of views, a number of measures were identified to support “informed” decision making with updates on new development and detailed explanations for analysis of negotiators and representatives of the countries.

4.5. Sustainability

HOW EFFECTIVE HAVE BEEN PRACTICES AND TOOLS USED IN THE PROJECT? (BEST PRACTICES, INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING, PARTNERSHIPS)

In general terms, capacity support and technical advice to trade policy reform, provided by the project, contributed to accelerate policy reforms for economic integration and promotion of trade policies for increased trade among Arab countries. More importantly, project activities enabled national authorities in charge of border management and those responsible for national trade and trade-related regulations, on international trade and logistics, to share experiences and good practices, within the South-South cooperation framework.

If properly taken into consideration, the knowledge and networks built through the project at regional level would greatly help reduce the cost of trading and address the binding constraint to growth in the Arab region.

Management style. This was perhaps one of the main success factors of AfTIAS, which has had a very strong and effective leadership, thanks to which the initiative has achieved broad results. The regional culture, the complexity of the issue and its implications on many sectors and areas, the diversity and number of the participating countries and a certain culture, which can to some extent be defined ‘Mediterranean’, might have represented considerable risks. However, the determination, patience, resilience and leadership of the CTA and staff have hugely helped in overcoming potential obstacles. A case is the capacity building provided to the LAS, where a patient work strategy was put in place, based on tireless nurturing and to some extent ‘control’ over the performances of the LAS staff. However, as highlighted above, some reflections on how this proactive style impacts on regional cultures and mind-sets might be useful, to verify potential challenges and devise if needed remedial actions. The UNDP and team are aware of these potential challenges and are cooperating to minimize possible risks.

Ownership: making use of the UNDP principle of national ownership in development assistance, the project exerted all effort to encourage participation of national focal points and relevant authorities of concerned countries into the strategic planning and programming of activities, on the basis of identified priorities and needs of socio-economic development plans of countries. Besides that, the introduction and adoption of

international practices have effectively assisted the countries in upgrading their practices and procedures to the global standards – a key for Arab economic community in the era of globalization.

‘Ecumenical’ approach. The involvement of as many as possible countries and typologies of stakeholders in each project activity – such as training or workshops – have substantially contributed to the enhancement of platforms of dialogue, both among countries and between Governments and the private sector, on trade and trade-related issues (including transport, infrastructures, software tools). Work methods encouraged active participation on, for instance, design of technical proposals of modernization, promotion of democratic exchange of views and debates on competitiveness and obstacles in trading goods or services.

Quality of expertise: due to the involvement of specialised UN agencies, the project highly benefited from learning of application of international standards and good practices. The UNDP team has demonstrated technical capacity and delivery capability of difficult tasks under tight deadlines in trade and economic matters. In terms of domain expertise, works completed by the technical team are of adequate quality as to support reforming of trade and trade-related policies.

Networking: one of the essential elements was the close collaboration and consultations of the project team with national focal points in concerned countries, which contributed to the promotion of policy dialogues among concerned authorities. The project was designed to implement activities in line with national plans. This was also reflected in the training courses, which were customized to national needs and requests.

HAVE COMPLEMENTARITIES, COLLABORATION AND / OR SYNERGIES FOSTERED BY THE PROJECT CONTRIBUTED TO GREATER SUSTAINABILITY OF RESULTS?

In terms of enhanced cooperation among regional partners, the project has clearly contributed to the development of a joint discourse on regional trade and in some cases has created partnerships which were not existing in earlier times, such as between countries sharing common borders.

At national level, the establishment of National Single Windows is indirectly representing a platform of inter-agency collaboration and cross-sector coordination, for real time processing of information and completion of procedures. Moreover, Jordan is initiating design of a regional platform of exchange of data and information. It is hoped that in the long term this collaboration would expand on broader themes, involving not only operational but also policy issues.

HAVE EFFORTS PRODUCED DURABLE RESULTS IN THE NATIONAL CAPACITIES IN GOVERNMENT AND CIVIL SOCIETY?

Building institutions and capability of officers and staffs who design and carry out measures related to economic integration, international trade and border management play a key role in introduction of modernized techniques, international best practices and international standards. The project achieved important results in strengthening existent institutions at regional level (Arab Economic Integration Department, Economic Sector of the LAS) and at national level (Egypt, Sudan, Jordan), particularly in the policy design and improvement of management of cross border operations.

Knowledge sharing and exchange of views with policy-makers of Arab countries has played a positive role in initiating debates and consultations by the public sector, specifically policy makers in charge of trade and

economic reform as well as of tightening economic relationships among countries. AfTIAS has effectively contributed to foster the Arab economic integration through concrete interventions dealing with how to specify measures towards removal of non-tariff barriers, connections through trade/transit corridors, design of activities aimed at creation of decent jobs and promotion of trade reform within the framework of negotiations of WTO membership in certain Arab countries.

The regional dimension of project activities and the input of high level expertise enabled national authorities in charge of border management and those responsible for national trade and trade-related regulations, on international trade and logistics, to share experiences and good practices.

Project activities have generated important impacts in strategic planning of Arab economic integration, completion of negotiations in trade in services – a key component of Arab competitiveness, and modernization of public policies towards more competitive logistics services through rationalization of costs and better regional connectivity.

On institutional strengthening, activities have been conducted for instance with Jordan authorities in strengthening institutional arrangements of the national committee on trade and transport facilitation. On AEID/LAS, the important results achieved in 2016 - when the Department received the certification of compliance to ISO standards, thus becoming the first Department of LAS being awarded with this recognition – are hindered by its recent reshuffling.

On cross borders, notable improvements are recorded and are validated by data. Achieved results seem to be durable. Reductions in costs and transaction times at border posts have been already described in the above chapter, in addition to that, in theory, as one of the reports states, *agro products of Egypt, of Jordan, of KSA or of Sudan could be made available to consumers in destination markets in the region within 24 hours, thanks to simplified and efficient practices of border management, once adopted and activated.*, and it is hoped that the technical models will be used to develop and enhance other posts in the region.

During 2016, UNDP continued promotion of evidence-based analysis and design in modernization of border management practices. A survey of the level of performance of clearance of shipments at Aqaba Container Terminal was conducted jointly with the Jordan Customs. It provided concrete evidence to substantiate proposal of reform in Jordan.

Much is obviously left to the commitment and willingness of those countries to further continue on this path. However, more emphasis should be put on the private sector, as a key stakeholder in the regional trade discourse and as a potential primary interlocutor to further identify gaps and devise innovative solutions.

HAVE ANY OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT BEEN TRANSLATED INTO BUDGETED STATE PROGRAMMES/POLICIES?

The continuous dialogue with regional and national authorities and the analytical approach utilised to identify gaps and needs have greatly favoured the reflection on trade issues, and in many cases have boosted the development of new legislation.

For example, after the analysis on management of cross border operations, Egypt issued two administrative decrees which enact transit operations for goods coming from Sudan to Egypt in the Egyptian territories,

towards destination markets whether they are in Egypt or overseas. This regulation effectively brings about more facilitation to the movement of Sudanese goods and might contribute to reduction of trade and transportation costs as pointed out by officials of the Sudanese Government. The second regulation stipulated establishment of Qustol Clearance Post; that is expectedly to create more convenience to traders and passengers of the two countries. Any administrative decision could be taken by officials stationed at Qustol instead of referring the issues to Aswan Customs Department (located at 400 Km away from Qustol) as it used to be prior to October 2015.

During 2015 – 2016, Jordan has also adopted new laws on Foods and Drugs control, standards and metrology among others with a view of updating the legal framework to enhanced trade perspectives.

The project team contributed a series of technical advices on overhauling procedures, proposals of new provisions to the Customs Law and regulations for Paperless Customs. New policies are considered by the Government and several agencies. In detail, the most notable achievement consists of the decision taken by five key agencies in the supply chain to modernize and change the procedures. Finally, UNDP supports national programmes, which prove to be effective to the efforts by agencies.

ARE KNOWLEDGE MATERIALS PRODUCED IN THE PROJECT BEING STILL USED OR DISSEMINATED?

Training. Progress reports highlight that most of training conducted was designed in response to specific identified needs by the country, and aligned to planned activities. The project provided Training of Trainers (ToT) and operative staffs to sustain introduction of new practices and adoption of new management techniques.

Finally, more might be done to establish or encourage a regional platform where knowledge of and discussion on regional trade issues might be enhanced, with contributions of regional, state and civil society stakeholders. This can be established at the Website of Economic Sector of LAS.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Main findings

The table below provides a concise recapitulation of the answers to evaluation questions.

Criteria	Low				High
Relevance					
Effectiveness					
Efficiency					
Sustainability					

5.2. Lessons Learned

1. AfTIAS has greatly facilitated and enhanced the dialogue at regional level about trade and integration issues, and has contributed to better awareness on trade as a major engine of promotion of Arab economic integration.
2. The project has put in place concrete measures and interventions aimed at tangible results, such as the cross border interventions, thus stimulating beneficiary countries to reflect on and adopt new regulations and legislation.
3. Good management of time, human and financial resources has allowed for optimisation of these and contributed to optimise results.
4. Planned results have been mostly achieved. Beneficiaries confirm that the results are of good quality. Strong interest and commitment of the management at operational level in the beneficiary institutions likely contributed to effective project delivery.
5. More attention is to be paid to the involvement of the civil society, *in primis* business and private sector, to deepen up the reflections on gaps and stimulate innovative and concerted solutions. In the new project, involvement of the private sector and promotion of transparency are key pillars. Promotion of dialogue, consultations with end users and trading community form a considerable part of the strategy for boosting Regulatory Transparency – one of foundations of Good Governance in economic and trade matters.

5.3. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions and recommendations are provided for each of the evaluation criteria utilised in this exercise.

Criterion	Conclusions	Recommendations	To whom?
Relevance	The programme is highly relevant to UNDP, regional and national policies and strategies	No recommendation needed	
Effectiveness	The project achieved considerable results especially in expanding knowledge and dialogue about trade as key element for regional integration	No recommendation needed	

Criterion	Conclusions	Recommendations	To whom?
	Stronger engagement of women and youth into regional economic integration is needed	Devise activities aimed at more empowerment of women in taking part in the economic life while giving due consideration to operational circumstances of Arab economic integration	UNDP
Efficiency	The project in general maximised the use of available resources. Particularly, efficiency of UNDP activities helps to achieve specific results to support national efforts of Member Countries	No recommendation needed	
Sustainability	Knowledge resources developed within the programme might be further consolidated	Continue expanding the RP knowledge platform for a more shareable knowledge and evidence	UNDP

Annex 1. ToRs

Regional Programme for Arab States Terms of reference for Individual Contractor RPAS Projects Evaluation

A. Project Title

Regional Programme for Arab States

B. Project Description

UNDP Regional Programme for Arab States (2014-2017) was endorsed by the UNDP Executive Board during the First Regular Session of the Executive Board at the end of January 2014. It represents 4 out of 7 development outcome areas of the UNDP Strategic Plan, namely:

- **Inclusive growth:** Growth is inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded (SP Outcome 1)
- **Inclusive governance:** Citizen expectations for voice, effective development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance (SP Outcome 2)
- **Gender:** Faster progress is achieved in reducing gender inequality and promoting women's empowerment (SP Outcome 4)
- **Social cohesion and resilience:** Early recovery and rapid return to sustainable development pathways are achieved in post-conflict and post-disaster settings (SP Outcome 6)

Project 1. Aid for Trade Initiative for Arab State (AfTIAS)

AfTIAS contributes to outcome 1 of the Regional Programme for the Arab States:

- Growth is inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded (SP Outcome 1).

The Regional Programme for the Arab States launched the AfTIAS project in 2014 to work towards deepening Arab Economic Integration, through gradual modernization of trade and economic policy-making. It has two lines of work: trade facilitation through cross-border operations and provision of support to the League of Arab States (LAS) to revitalize the Pan-Arab Free Trade Agreement (PAFTA) and to modernize the Arab Customs Union.

The project has the following specific outputs:

- Output 1: Arab connectivity and linkages through promotion of crossing borders operations and integrated management systems strengthened.
- Output 2: Capacity of Economic Sector of the LAS in trade policy reform enhanced and monitoring of implementation progress of GAFTA enhanced in support of implementation of measures under decisions by the 2015 Arab Economic and Social Development Summit.

- Output 3: Skills and abilities of key national partners to mainstream gender equality priorities into cross border trade policies in the AMU sub region strengthened.

Through the implementation phase, AFTIAS supported Egypt and Jordan in the adoption on National Single Windows, a facility that allows parties involved in trade and transport to lodge standardized information and documents with a single entry point to fulfill all import, export, and transit-related regulatory requirements. The project also assisted the Government of Iraq to improve collection of customs revenues and tackle smuggling of goods. On cross-border operations, the project worked on facilitating trade and transport corridors across the Askeit/Qustol border crossing, between Sudan and Egypt. The two countries adopted a Customs Declaration for exchange of data that facilitates cross-border trade operations and these interventions contributed to reduce transportation costs by 50 percent.

Thanks to the support AFTIAS provided to the Arab Economic Integration Department (AEID) of LAS, the negotiations on the PAFTA started again after 12 years of stalemate and concluded with the Beirut negotiations in February 2017, with an agreement reached on the liberalization of trade in services. AFTIAS also supported AEID to develop the capacity of its staff and increase the efficiency of its work, which resulted in the Department being the only ISO-certified department in LAS. Following consultations with LAS and its Arab Custom Union, a proposal for the modernization of customs-related policies was developed. Thanks to the support of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), AFTIAS in 2017 will scale up the work carried out so far and expand its portfolio of activities, including support to the implementation of the Trade and Service agreement. AFTIAS, jointly with Arab Development Portal team, will also implement a project to further explore the linkages between Trade and the SDGs, with the objective to develop trade-related indicators for the Arab Region.

Project 2. Anti-Corruption and Integrity in the Arab Countries (ACIAC)

ACIAC contributes to outcome 2 of the Regional Programme for the Arab States:

- Citizen expectations for voice, effective development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance (SP Outcome 2).

In response to demand from key stakeholders across the region and the findings of extensive consultations that were held in 2014, the Regional Programme for the Arab States extended the regional project on Anti-Corruption and Integrity in Arab Countries (ACIAC), which was launched in 2011. Having succeeded in producing specialized knowledge and supporting inclusive policy dialogues towards the implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) in more than six Arab countries during its first phase (2011-2014), ACIAC seeks to build on the achievements made and the lessons learned to support deeper governance reforms for sustainable development.

The new phase (2015-2018) is focused on enabling institutions and systems to address corruption through awareness, prevention and enforcement across sectors and stakeholders (SP output 2.2) with the aim of contributing to the attainment of additional progress towards stronger systems of governance that meet citizens' expectations for accountability (SP outcome 2). To reach its goal, ACIAC strives to achieve three key outputs (i) national capacities enhanced to draft, implement and monitor laws that prevent and combat corruption; (ii) specific initiatives supported to design, advocate and integrate measures that strengthen transparency and accountability in key vulnerable sectors; and (iii) participatory platforms fostered to promote, inform and review strategies that link anti-corruption to sustainable development.

A new line of work on youth and integrity is being initiated. Key partners in this project are the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network (ACINET), national anti-corruption bodies and Siemens Integrity Initiative.

Under the first output, it enhanced national capacities in Iraq, Egypt and Tunisia to draft, implement and monitor laws, in compliance with the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) related to asset declarations, conflict of interest management, anti-illicit enrichment and whistle-blower protection. It also collaborated with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to train practitioners from Palestine, Yemen and the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council on reviewing the implementation of the UNCAC in preparation for the second cycle of the Review Mechanism.

Under the second output, ACIAC supported the anchoring of sectoral approaches in national anti-corruption policies and programmes in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. It also made important progress in developing specific tools and specialized training programmes that will help key stakeholders in the region to prevent corruption in the health, customs and justice sectors, while enabling the development of partnerships between Korea and each of Jordan and Tunisia to strengthen transparency and accountability in the construction sector of the first country and the health, customs, police and municipal sectors in the second country.

Under the third output, ACIAC fostered ten participatory regional and country-specific platforms to promote linkages between anti-corruption and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), reaching more than eight hundred persons, including more than two hundred women, in 18 Arab countries, with the biggest outreach achieved in Iraq Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia. This was achieved mostly in the framework of the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network (ACINET), the university youth networks and the new platforms established to promote sectoral work and collective action across region.

In parallel, the ACIAC project enhanced its collaboration with other regional and international organizations and established synergies with related initiatives of the UNDP Regional Hub for the Arab States, while responding to related assistance requests from the UNDP Country Offices in Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates as well as the UN Country Team in Libya.

Project 3. Fostering Inclusive Participation and Effective Contribution of Women in the Public Sphere (Mosharaka)

Mosharaka contributes to Outcome 3 of the Regional Programme for the Arab States: Faster progress is achieved in reducing gender inequality and promoting women's empowerment (SP Outcome 4).

The Regional Programme for the Arab States launched the Mosharaka project in 2014 and is expected to conclude its first phase and start the second one in 2017. The project was developed to respond to the increasing demand for addressing the deficits in the public participation and citizenship rights of women in the Arab Region, especially in transition, fragile and post conflict societies.

It has been formulated through background research and a consultative process with regional stakeholders. Preliminary research for the project has concluded that while the Arab region is witness to a range of gender biases, the region particularly lags behind in terms of women's participation in public life. In effect, and realizing that gender inequality is indivisible, the project proposed to focus on women empowerment and

fostering their participation in the public sphere as a vehicle towards promoting gender equality in both the public and the private sphere.

The project has the following specific outputs that focus on strengthening participation, expanding opportunities and securing women's rights in the region:

- Output 1: Support regional and national actors and institutions to establish measures to advance gender equality, and women's political, social and economic participation (Strategic Plan Output #4.1, #4.3, #4.4) (RBAS Regional Program Output 3.1).
- Output 2: Establish women peace and security frameworks to reinforce social cohesion and promote women's equal access to political and economic opportunities in early recovery and post-crisis settings (Strategic Plan Output #6.4; #4.2 RBAS Output #4.1).

These outputs have been realized through a multi-dimensional integrated approach and project/package of initiatives targeting various sectors and a multiplicity of regional and national stakeholders. These initiatives are primarily focused on knowledge management, capacity development, advocacy, networking, and alliance and coalition building between partners.

The project has been supporting regional and national actors to establish measures to advance gender equality and women's political, social and economic participation. It works through regional NGOs and women activists/advocates networks to advance efforts in constitution making and legislative reform. One of the key focuses is SDGs and gender equality to ensure effective and gender sensitive implementation at the national level. The project also supports NGOs networks to reinforce social cohesion and promote women's role in the implementation of peace and security agenda. Mosharaka also includes a Youth Leadership Programme (YLP) to support young women and men's empowerment. Key partnerships have been forged with UNWOMEN and the Centre of Arab Women for Training & Research (CAWTAR).

During the implementation phase, Mosharaka launched an online platform on legal and human rights and has supported national electoral bodies to integrate gender throughout the electoral cycle. A regional think-tank on SDGs and gender was established with the Arab Women Organization, UNFPA and UNWOMEN. Mosharaka also launched phase II of the YLP which convened a conference in mid-December in Kuwait. In 2017, the project will aim at further strengthening the partnerships with regional networks (Karama, CAWTAR, etc.) to advance gender equality and women's social/economic participation and to enhance women's role in peace and security. Also phase 3 of YLP will be implemented.

In line with the Evaluation Plan, an evaluation will be conducted to assess UNDP-RBAS contributions towards the progress made on achievements of selected projects contributing to the first three outcome areas respectively (described in the table below) as a tool to explain results.

Project title	Regional Programme Outcome	Project Outputs
Project 1. Aid for Trade Initiative for Arab State (AfTIAS)	RP Outcome 1. Growth is inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded.	<p>Output 1: Arab connectivity and linkages through the promotion of crossing borders operations and integrated management systems strengthened;</p> <p>Output 2: Capacity of Economic Sector of the LAS in trade policy reform and monitoring of implementation progress of GAFTA enhanced in support of implementation of measures under decisions by the 2015 Arab Economic and Social Development Summit;</p> <p>Output 3: Skills and abilities of key national partners to mainstream gender equality priorities into cross border trade policies in the AMU sub region strengthened.</p>
Project 2. Anti-Corruption and Integrity in the Arab Countries (ACIAC)	RP Outcome 2. Citizen expectations for voice, effective development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance.	<p>Output 1: Number of countries having developed action-oriented reports identifying UNCAC compliance and capacity gaps, technical assistance needs and related priorities (2011-2014);</p> <p>Output 2: National capacities enhanced to draft, implement and monitor laws that prevent and combat corruption;</p> <p>Output 3: Specific initiatives supported to design, advocate and integrate measures that strengthen transparency and accountability in key vulnerable sectors;</p> <p>Output 4: Participatory platforms fostered to promote, inform and review strategies that link anti-corruption to sustainable development.</p>
Project 3. Fostering Inclusive Participation and Effective Contribution of Women in the Public Sphere (Mosharaka)	RP Outcome 3. Faster progress is achieved in reducing gender inequality and promoting women's empowerment.	<p>Output 1: Regional and national actors and institutions supported to establish measures to advance gender equality, and women's political, social and economic participation;</p> <p>Output 2: Women peace and security frameworks established to reinforce human security and advance women's economic opportunities in early recovery and post-crisis settings.</p>

The evaluation is commissioned by UNDP as an internal requirement. It will be conducted by an independent consultant. It will assess the progress and challenges of the selected projects, taking the linkages to the broader contribution of the projects at the outcome level, with measurement of the output level achievements and gaps and in particular, what changes were achieved as a result of the projects contribution. The purpose of the evaluation is foremost to assess how the projects impacted the progress towards the achievement of these objectives. Moreover, the contribution of the project in enabling a coherent development engagement, and to identify the factors that have affected its implementation will be assessed.

The evaluation will consist of a desk review based research, two missions to meet with the projects teams and key stakeholders, and conduct in-depth interviews with key stakeholders and beneficiaries. It will document results achieved, the challenges faced, and how those challenges were addressed. It is also expected to identify success stories, good practices, challenges, constraints, and lessons learned, and to provide recommendations on substantive and process issues to inform the implementation

process for the upcoming phase of the projects.

C. Scope of work

This assignment will be based on a number of stakeholders' interviews and desk research, supplemented by meetings with key counterparts. The *Evaluator* will be responsible of:

1. Conducting **desk review based research**;
2. Conducting **two field visits** to meet with the project teams and stakeholders in the field; and
3. Providing **3 analytical reports**, each containing an executive summary (mandatory), be analytical in nature (both quantitative and qualitative), be structured around issues and related findings/lessons learned; and include conclusions and recommendations.

To achieve the above, the *Evaluator* will work with the project teams in Amman and Beirut under the supervision of the Regional Programme Coordinator, based on the workplan enclosed as Annex 1.

The overall results of the three key projects contributing to the three respective outcomes should be evaluated since the start of each project's current phase that falls within the present Regional Programme Document's period (2014-2017).

The below is the timeframe

- AfTIAS (1st of April 2014 till 31st of March of 2017);
- ACIAC (1st of October 2015 till 31st of March 2017);
- Mosharaka (1st of April 2014 till 31st of March of 2017).

The specific objectives for each of the three projects are to:

1. Assess progress towards attaining the project's objectives;
2. Assess progress towards the achievement of the project's outcome;
3. Review the clarity of roles and responsibilities of the various agencies and stakeholders and the level of coordination between relevant actors in the project implementation;
4. Assess the likelihood of continuation of the project outcome and benefits;
5. Describe key factors that will require attention in order to improve prospects for sustainability of the project results;
6. Analyze the relevance of the project strategy and approaches;
7. Assess the potential for sustainability of the results and the feasibility of ongoing efforts and commitment to help advance the focus areas of the project;
8. Document key lessons learned, good practices, success stories and challenges to inform future work of various stakeholders in addressing the focus area of the project; and
9. Document and analyse possible weaknesses in order to improve next steps of project interventions in the focus areas.

D. Expected Outputs and Deliverables

Expected Outputs and Deliverables	Target Due Dates	Review and Approvals Required
Output 1: Evaluation inception report structured into three sections for each project (including evaluation workplan and timeframe, and using the Sample Evaluation Matrix-Table A below)	6 working days from contract signature	Regional Programme Coordinator
Output 2: Draft three evaluation reports Draft evaluation findings. Documented records of interviews and observations with stakeholders. Presentation of findings to key stakeholders Draft report delivered to UNDP for consideration and comments.	18 days after the submission of the inception report	Regional Programme Coordinator
Output 3: Three reports of maximum 25 pages each in word document format with tables/graphs where appropriate will be submitted after the completion of the mission, incorporating comments made on the draft	3 days after receiving the comments of UNDP	Regional Programme Coordinator

E. Institutional Arrangement

- The individual is required to exhibit his or her full-time commitment with UNDP-RBAS;
- S/He shall perform tasks under the general guidance and the direct supervision of the Regional Programme Coordinator. The supervision of the Regional Programme Coordinator will include approvals/acceptance of the outputs as identified in the previous section;
- The individual is expected to liaise and collaborate in the course of performing the work with other consultants, suppliers and UN colleagues;
- The individual is required to maintain close communication with the UNDP-RBAS on regular and needed basis at any period throughout the assignment in order to monitor progress. In the event of any delay, S/he will inform UNDP promptly so that decisions and remedial action may be taken accordingly;
- Should UNDP deem it necessary, it reserves the right to commission additional inputs, reviews or revisions, as needed to ensure the quality and relevance of the work.

F. Duration of the Work

The duration of the work is expected to be 27 working days over period of two months from contract signature date.

G. Duty Station

- This is a home-based assignment.
- Part of this assignment may require the individual to travel to different Arab and non-

Arab Countries. In such cases, for unforeseen travel, and after seeking relevant approvals, all related travel and accommodation expenses will be arranged and covered by UNDP in line with applicable rules and regulations.

H. Qualifications of the Individual Contractor

Master's degree in law, social sciences, management or other relevant fields.

II. Work Experience:

- Minimum 7 years of experience in implementation / evaluation of projects/programmes on advancing development related issues; preferably some experience of these in the Arab countries;
- Proven work experience in use of participatory evaluation methods for identifying measurable target indicators and in particular for identifying outcome / impact – positive change of behavior, policy or law made;
- Experience in cooperation with multilateral agencies would be an asset;
- Experience in leading multi-disciplinary teams to deliver quality products in high stress and short deadline situations;
- Previous experience working for the UN is a plus;

III. Language Requirements

- Language proficiency in both written and oral English is required. Knowledge of Arabic and/or French is an asset.

IV. Key Competencies

○ *Corporate*

- Demonstrates integrity and fairness, by modeling the UN/UNDP's values and ethical standards;
- Promotes the vision, mission and strategic goals of UNDP;
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.

○ *Functional*

- Solid experience in facilitation high level meetings;
- Strong background experience including familiarity with UNDP systems, requirements, procedures, and rules & regulations;
- Solid understanding of international standards and experiences in programming on development issues;
- Demonstrated ability to assess complex situations in order to succinctly and clearly distil critical issues;
- Must be a self-starter and can work independently with excellent demonstrated teamwork, coordination and facilitation skills;
- Excellent analytical and report writing skills;
- Strong writing skills including technical reports, general reports, and proposals;
- Flexibility and ability to handle multiple tasks and work under pressure;
- Excellent computer skills especially Word, Excel and Power Point;

○ *Leadership*

- Demonstrated ability to think strategically and to provide credible leadership;
 - Demonstrated intellectual leadership and ability to integrate knowledge with broader strategic overview and corporate vision;
 - Demonstrated flexibility in leadership by performing and/or overseeing the analysis/resolution of complex issues;
 - Strong managerial/leadership experience and decision-making skills with proven track record
 - Ability to conceptualize and convey strategic vision from the spectrum of development experience.
- *Managing Relationships*
- Demonstrated well developed people management and organizational management skills;
 - Excellent negotiating and networking skills with strong partnerships in academia, technical organizations and as a recognized expert in the practice area;
- *Managing Complexity*
- Ability to address global development issues;
 - Substantive knowledge and understanding of development cooperation with the ability to support the practice architecture of UNDP and inter-disciplinary issues;
 - Demonstrated substantive leadership and ability to integrate knowledge with broader strategic, policy and operational objectives;
 - A sound global network of institutional and individual contacts.
- *Knowledge Management and Learning*
- Ability to strongly promote and build knowledge products;
 - Promotes knowledge management in UNDP and a learning environment in the office through leadership and personal example;
 - Seeks and applies knowledge, information and best practices from within and outside of UNDP;
 - Provides constructive coaching and feedback;
 - Demonstrates a strong capacity for innovation and creativity in providing strategic policy advice and direction.
- *Judgment/Decision-Making*
- Mature judgment and initiative;
 - Proven ability to provide strategic direction to the project implementation process;
 - Independent judgment and discretion in advising on handling major policy issues and challenges, uses diplomacy and tact to achieve result.

I. Scope of Price Proposal and Schedule of Payments

All proposals must be expressed in a lump sum amount. This amount must be “all-inclusive”. Please note that the terms “all-inclusive” implies that all costs (professional fees, travel costs, living allowances, communications, consumables, etc.) that could possibly be incurred are already factored into the final amounts submitted in the proposal. Also, please note that the contract price will be Deliverables/Outputs based - not fixed - subject to change in the cost components.

The contractor will be paid an all-inclusive Deliverables/Outputs based lump sum amounts over the assignment period, subject to the submission of Certification of Payment (CoP) duly certified and confirmation of satisfactory performance of achieved work (deliverables/outputs) in line with the schedule of payments table hereunder.

Milestone	Estimated due date	Payment
Milestone 1: Successful delivery of Output 1, 2, & 3 identified in section "D" above	Within 27 working days over period of two months from contract signature date	Up to 100% of total contract amount disbursed in USD and upon confirmation of satisfactory performance

Annex 2. Work plan

Deliverable	Task	Date
PRE-INCEPTION PHASE		
Contacts with UNDP RBAS	Contacts to touch base, clarify scope and purposes of the evaluation, collect the first set of documentation	First half of May 2017
INTERVIEWS PHASE (field)		
Participation at the UNDP Regional Conference in Amman	Interviews with project staff, partners and stakeholders	22-23 May 2017
Field mission in Beirut	Joint consultations with stakeholders, including interviews with key informants, to collect information and views on the three projects	19-22 June 2017
INCEPTION PHASE		
Work on available documentation, and interviews	Synthesize relevant information from documents	22-23 Jun 2017
Work on Inception report:	Prepare the Inception Report comprehensive of desk review, design of the evaluation, the matrix, a detailed work plan	24-26 Jun 2017
Delivery of the IR		26 Jun 2017
SYNTHESIS - REVIEW PHASE		
Draft evaluation reports	Reviewing all data and documents and stakeholders' inputs, prepare a draft evaluation report, each being structured around issues and related findings/lessons learned, and containing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an executive summary (mandatory), - analytical data (both quantitative and qualitative), - conclusions and recommendations 	23 Jun – 19 Jul 2017
Debriefing with UNDP RBAS	to validate and discuss findings, to improve the relevance of findings, conclusions and recommendations and to increase the relevance and ownership of the final document	As decided by UNDP RBAS

Submission of Draft Report		20 Jul 2017
FINAL PHASE		
Work on final report	Finalize final report incorporating comments of stakeholders	Upon receipt of comments
Submission of Final Evaluation report		As ready

	Phases
	Deliverables

Annex 3. Evaluation Matrix

Relevant Criteria	Key Questions	Sub Criteria	Sub Questions	Sources of information	Stakeholders	Methods for Data Analysis
Relevance	<i>The extent to which the Outcome activities are suited to the priorities and policies of the country at the time of formulation</i>	Alignment	1.1. Do the projects' structures and objectives address key issues, their underlying causes, and challenges identified in the region?	Country policies and strategies, references, UN reports, media	UNDP, Government institutions	Desk review, interviews with partners
	Are we doing the right things?	Design	1.2. Was the design of the projects adequate to expected objectives, and flexible enough to adapt to potential changes?	UN reports, programme reports, portfolio analysis	UNDP	Desk review, interviews
Effectiveness	<i>The extent to which the Outcome activities attain its objectives</i>	Credibility	2.1. What are the main contributions to development for which the project is recognized in the region?	Programme reports, Comparison of reports to work plans; evaluation reports; ROAR	UNDP, beneficiaries, contractors	Desk review, interviews
	Are the things we are doing working?	Achievements	2.2 How have the projects achieved expected outcomes?	ROAR, progress reports	UNDP beneficiaries, partners	Desk review, interviews

		Fallout effect	2.3 What are the unexpected outcomes or consequences they yielded? What are their implications?	Project reports, workplans, ROARs, project beneficiaries	As above	Desk review, interviews
		Challenges	2.4 Which were the main weaknesses of the projects?	Project reports, ROARs	UNDP beneficiaries, partners	Desk review, interviews
		Best practices	2.5. How effective have been practices and tools used in the projects? (best practices, institutional strengthening, partnerships)	Evidence from project reports, ROARs	All stakeholders	Desk review, interviews
Efficiency	<i>Measurement of the outputs in relation to the inputs</i> Are we doing things right?	Organisational Efficiency	3.1 Was management adequate to the planning and execution requirements? (management arrangements, work planning, finance, value for money, timing and delays, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, coordination, stakeholder engagement, reporting, communications)	Evidence of fund disbursement being appropriate to maximise utility Evidence of decision making, programme adjustment and learning Evidence of a performance management system having been established and utilised for decision making	UNDP	Desk review, interviews

				Evidence of coordination		
Sustainability	<i>The benefits of the Programme related activities that are likely to continue after the Programme fund has been exhausted</i> Will the changes last?	Institutional sustainability	4.1 Have efforts produced durable results in the national capacities in governments and civil society?	Evidence of improvements in performances and progress in related sectors/areas	Partners UNDP	Desk review Interviews
		Coordination	4.2 Have complementarities, collaboration and / or synergies fostered by the project contributed to greater sustainability of results?	Evidence of results from cooperation at regional level Cooperation between regional projects and COs Reports, ROARs	Partners UNDP CO staff	Interviews Desk review
		Financial and policy sustainability	4.3 Have any outcomes of the projects been translated into budgeted state programmes/policies?	Integration of project outcomes into national planning, budgeting and monitoring systems Financial flows within institutions to maintain outcomes	Project reports, ROARs, national/regional reports	Interviews Desk review
		Knowledge sustainability	4.4 Are knowledge materials produced in the project being still used or disseminated?	Embedding of knowledge material into institutional practices, evidence of use of knowledge material	Project reports, ROARs, beneficiaries	Interviews Desk review

Annex 4. EQs

Criterion	Tasks (as per ToRs)	Related EQ
Relevance	Analyse the relevance of the project strategy and approaches	<p>Do the projects' structures and objectives address key issues, their underlying causes, and challenges identified in the region?</p> <p>Was the design of the projects adequate to expected objectives, and flexible enough to adapt to potential changes?</p>
Efficiency	Review the clarity of roles and responsibilities of the various agencies and stakeholders and the level of coordination between relevant actors in the project implementation	<p>Was management adequate to the planning and execution requirements? (management Arrangements, work planning, finance, value for money, timing and delays, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, coordination, stakeholder engagement, reporting, communications)</p>
Effectiveness	<p>Assess progress towards attaining the project's objectives</p> <p>Assess progress towards the achievement of the project's outcome</p> <p>Document and analyse possible weaknesses in order to improve next steps of project interventions in the focus areas</p> <p>Document key lessons learned, good practices, success stories and challenges to inform future work of various stakeholders in addressing the focus area of the projects</p>	<p>What are the main contributions to development for which the projects are recognized in the region?</p> <p>How have the projects achieved expected outcomes?</p> <p>What are the unexpected outcomes or consequences they yielded? What are their implications?</p> <p>Which were the main weaknesses of the projects?</p> <p>How effective have been practices and tools used in the projects? (best practices, institutional strengthening, partnerships)</p>
Sustainability	<p>Review the clarity of roles and responsibilities of the various agencies and stakeholders and the level of coordination between relevant actors in the project implementation</p> <p>Assess the likelihood of continuation of the project outcome and benefits</p> <p>Describe key factors that will require attention in order to improve prospects for sustainability of the project results</p> <p>Assess the potential for sustainability of the results and the feasibility of ongoing efforts</p>	<p>Have complementarities, collaboration and / or synergies fostered by the project contributed to greater sustainability of results?</p> <p>Have efforts produced durable results in the national capacities in government and civil society?</p> <p>Have any outcomes of the projects been translated into budgeted state programmes/policies?</p> <p>Are knowledge materials produced in the project being still used or disseminated?</p>

	and commitment to help advance the focus areas of the project	
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Annex 5. List of Meetings

1. Meetings held at the Regional Conference on “Development challenges and priorities in a changing Arab region”

Amman, 22-23 May 2017

	Interview	Partner	Contact Person	Contact Information	Address
AfTIAS	completed	Department of Customs of Jordan – Jordan Food & Drugs Administration - Standards and Metrology Organization	Colonel Ahmed Alem, Executive Director	Tel: +202 241 54755 (Ext. 106)	Jordan
AfTIAS	completed	Jordan Standards and Metrology Organization (JSMO)	Hussein Hawajreh, Head of Risk Management Unit	E-mail: Hussein.Hawajreh@JSMO.GOV.JO	Jordan
AfTIAS	completed	Ministry of Foreign Trade, Arab Republic of Egypt	Tamer Mahmoud Abdelaziz, Director of Regional Trade Agreements	E-mail: t.abdelaziz@tas.gov.eg	Egypt

2. Meetings held during the field mission to Beirut UNDP RBAS

20-21 June 2017

Day	Office	Contact Person	Contact Information	Address
20/6	UNDP RBAS Beirut	Maya Abi-Zeid	maya.abi-zeid@undp.org	Beirut
21/6	UNDP RBAS Amman	Yakup Beris	yakup.beris@undp.org	Amman
	UNDP RBAS Beirut	Abu Sabeeb Elsadig	abusabeeb.elsadig@undp.org	Beirut
	UNDP RBAS Beirut	Maya Abi-Zeid	maya.abi-zeid@undp.org	Beirut
	AfTIAS Team	Quang Le	quang.le@undp.org	Amman (from Brussels)

Annex 6. Literature and documentation consulted

Document	Type	Year	No. of Documents
UNDP Strategic Plan (2014-2017)	General/Global	2014-2017	1
UNDP Strategic Plan - Integrated Results and Resources Framework (IRRF)	General/Global	2013	1
Regional Programme Document (2014-2017)	Regional	2014-2017	1
Results Oriented Annual Report (ROAR) 2014-2016	Regional	2014	3
Documents from Regional Consultation, Amman, May 2017	Regional	2017	7
Other RP documents	Regional (3 projects)	2017	13
RBAS Financial Table	3 projects	2017	1
ProDoc	Project Specific	2014	1
Progress Reports (Annual)	Project Specific	2014, 2015, 2016	3
Annual Work Plans	Project Specific	2014, 2015, 2016, 2017	4
SIDA evaluation reports	Project Specific	2013,2014	2