



# Baseline, Monitoring and Mid-term Evaluation Strengthening Civil Society

Final Report Third Party Monitoring & Data Quality  
Assessment - Occupied Palestinian Territories

Client: Ministry of Foreign Affairs Netherlands, Management Board Social Development

Rotterdam, 26 January 2024





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# 1 Executive summary

The Consortium Ecorys, Beyond Group, and AWRAD was selected to conduct the evaluation assignment for the Policy Framework for Strengthening Civil Society (SCS) of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) for Lot 3 (Middle East and North Africa (MENA)) consisting of Lebanon and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). The assignment consists of three main elements: 1) a Baseline Study; 2) a Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) and Data Quality Assessment (DQA); and 3) a Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE). This report presents the findings of the TPM and DQA. It is written at a time in which the context of the OPT is being violently disrupted by the escalation of the conflict due to the war in Gaza and increasing violence in the West bank. The first phase of TPM and DQA took place between March 2023 and September 2023 and was based on a desk review of partnership documentation, interviews with selected partners and more external stakeholders and focus groups/ interviews with rightsholders. The second phase took place between November 2023 and February 2024 and therefore, after the 7<sup>th</sup> of October, with a number of limitations due to the conflict escalation that are described in greater detail in section 1.3.6; it was based on desk review and interview with partnerships MEL staff. The specific purpose of the TPM and DQA is: **To objectively assess the quality of the monitoring and evaluation systems of the SCS partnerships (including downward accountability and unintended effects) to improve monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) of Strengthening Civil Society programs.** The main findings responding to the research questions (RQ) are presented below.

## RQ1 Organisation of monitoring systems

M&E systems are still in development, but the processes at most organisations are now in place, with tools developed and staff trained. There is a clear division of roles and responsibilities within partnerships, although staff turnover affects consistency to some extent. MFA indicators have been mapped onto partnership indicators and partners are increasingly aware of the linkages. There are partnership guidelines for operationalising the MFA indicators, some of which are differently understood across projects but may serve the purpose within individual projects. Organisations find that gathering information on the indicators is feasible, while administering the data in the IATI system is experienced as a larger challenge. Data verification processes are mostly manual, almost all partnerships have multiple persons checking the same data but there are no external verifications. After 7 October, some new challenges might come from the restriction of movements within the West Bank (and all the more in Gaza) to the possibility for staff to verify some of the information reported by local groups. Most partners conduct some kind of outcome harvesting to monitor for unintended effects on learning. This, however, does not feed into the IATI publishing as the IATI publishing is perceived as accountability-focused. Lessons learned at the implementation level can get lost in the translation to higher-level indicators reporting. Finally, it has to be noted that the organisation of the systems for monitoring results is highly linked to the organisational set-up of the partnership, with in-country consolidation only included for partnerships with a country programme. For two partnerships, only global results are reported.

## RQ2 Results and actual situation

The indicators that were checked for TPM concerned outputs and immediate outcomes. With the TPM spot checks, we were able to verify some of the reported results from the perspectives of project participants, rightsholders or other external stakeholders. TPM on higher-level indicators did not take place because of the security developments in the OPT. We found that most results reported are a comprehensive reflection of activities and their results at the output level. The most

common examples that could be verified are participation in training, having received grants and self-reported strengthened capacities. More problematic is the outcome level reporting, as figures provided by partners on attendance of events and courses are often used to measure indicators of strengthened capacities of individuals and organisations. There are variable definitions of what an advocacy initiative is. Rightsholders could rarely elaborate on the quality of activities undertaken, changes in lobby and advocacy compared to before the SCS implementation period, or the type of capacities strengthened.

### **RQ3 Results and links to implemented activities**

Measurement of contribution to reported results is often limited to immediate results. Long-term results which might potentially raise contribution/attribution issues are starting to be captured through some enhanced forms of outcome harvesting that also ask for substantiation of contributions. Self-explanatory linkages are presented between activities, outputs and outcomes, as hypothesized in the results frameworks of the partnerships, but without discussing the underlying assumptions. The narrative reports often complement information about linkages between activities and outputs/outcomes, by providing examples of success stories or other change narratives. However, these illustrative examples do not say much about the overall effectiveness of interventions and the project contributions. Four out of ten mid-term reviews have included some kind of contribution analysis although the detail at the level of OPT is not always available.

### **RQ4 Downward accountability**

It is not common for organisations to share MEL reports or extracts/summaries thereof with the people they engage with/reach with the partnership or to organise feedback meetings or data validation/interpretation meetings with target groups. Although many organisations have indicated in the interviews that they aim to improve downward accountability and adopt principles of « feminist MEL », it seems that most do not know how to do this and what is expected of them by the MFA or the rest of the partnership. Another reason that downward accountability is limited, is that organisations do not want to burden other organisations and target groups more than necessary, as the organisations often deal with multiple MEL systems (their own and donors') and corresponding time investment and requirements.

### **RQ5 Follow-up of recommendations phase 1**

Due to the current context of the OPT being violently disrupted by the escalation of the conflict in Gaza and increasing violence in the West Bank, follow-up of recommendations of phase 1 is limited. Some partnerships we have been able to talk to, do report MEL-developments related to continuous improvements of indicator definitions, data collection tools and capacitation of partner organisations. Others, however, are restricted in their follow-up of recommendations by limited resources. While there are some reflections on phase 1 meetings and reports having contributed to strengthening MEL systems, most developments seem to be a result of ongoing partnership learning structures in place.

### **General conclusions**

Generally speaking (with a few outliers), the partnerships seem to take M&E seriously and are willing to commit time and effort to provide reliable and valid information. There is of course room for improvement in certain aspects, such as digitalisation, or a better understanding of differences between outputs and outcomes. These are normal challenges, especially in programmes focused on capacity building, human rights, behavioural changes and other “intangibles”. One could also point to the need for greater downward accountability towards 3<sup>rd</sup> tier partners and constituencies. Lead partners could also better use the M&E capacities of in-country partners and involve them in



M&E to a greater extent, not in terms of burden but in terms of including their perspectives and contextual knowledge in global reporting (some partnerships do not have any country by country reporting at the moment).

Several improvements are thus possible, however, they also cost time and money and one should also look at the overall efficiency of the system. On the one hand, there is a centralised reporting system built around a common ToC and results framework that is necessarily broadly defined to suit different contexts. Adaptation is allowed and encouraged, but it takes time and effort on behalf of the partnership leads, as well as the other international and in-country partners. Reporting back on the indicators is also time-consuming, especially if more qualitative explanations are needed (like it is the case of IATI publishing). On the other hand, many partnerships/ partners have their own internal M&E systems, as well as learning practices, that are not necessarily connected to specific donors. Alternative approaches such as outcome harvesting or “feminist approaches” are adopted, in some cases – while in other cases learning is more informal and strictly linked to implementation. At the moment it seems that reporting along the lines established by the SCS framework is useful for accountability purposes. It is not clear if it is really useful for the organisations’ learning and also for the MFA, as the selection of indicators is left free and some of the partnerships indicate they on purpose selected the most ‘easy’ indicators for reporting.

### **Recommendations**

The assignment resulted in specific internal partnership reports including recommendations for the partnership leads and the in-country partner organisations. Recommendations to the MFA include : provide clearer guidance to partnerships on the importance of operationalising concepts such as “strengthened capacities” or “advocacy initiatives”; set realistic expectations concerning the ongoing monitoring of outcomes that require long-term change processes and sophisticated measurement tools, often more suitable for an independent evaluation; discuss with partnerships how to balance M&E efforts and continuous learning with efficient time and resource management; clarify the importance of the qualitative element in the use of basket and other indicators; have conflict sensitivity as a point of attention if an MTR will be conducted in the upcoming months at the policy framework level.



## List of abbreviations

AWDF	African Women's Development Fund
CSF	Civic Space Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DQA	Data Quality Assessment
FGD	Focus group discussion
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
IDF	Israel Defence Forces
LFS	Leading from the South
M&E	Monitoring & evaluation
ME(A)L	Monitoring, evaluation, (accountability) and learning
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MTE/R	Mid-Term Evaluation (here performed by Ecorys)
MTR	Mid-Term Review (here performed by partnerships)
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
OPT	Occupied Palestinian Territories
PLC	Palestinian Legislative Council
PoV	Power of Voices
PoW	Power of Women
SCS	Strengthening Civil Society
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
SRoL	Security & Rule of Law
ToC	Theory of Change
TPM	Third-Party Monitoring
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
WPS	Women Peace and Security
WRGE	Women's rights and gender equality
WRO	Women's rights organisation
YW4A	Young Women for Awareness, Agency, Advocacy, and Accountability



## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Background and objectives DQA & TPM

The Consortium Ecorys, Beyond Group, and AWRAD was selected to conduct the evaluation assignment for the Policy Framework for Strengthening Civil Society (SCS) of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) for Lot 3 (Middle East and North Africa (MENA)) consisting of Lebanon and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). The assignment consists of three main elements: 1) a Baseline Study; 2) a Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) and Data Quality Assessment (DQA); and 3) a Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE).

This report presents the findings of the TPM and DQA. It is written at a time in which the context of the OPT is being violently disrupted by the escalation of the conflict due to the war in Gaza and increasing violence in the West bank. The first phase of TPM and DQA focused on the 2022 annual reports of the partnerships (published in May 2023) and took place between March 2023 and September 2023. The second phase focused on the Mid-Term Reviews (MTR) of the partnerships (published in November 2023) and included elaboration on whether the recommendations/lessons learned formulated during the first phase were taken into account. This phase took place between November 2023 and February 2024 and therefore, after the 7<sup>th</sup> of October, with a number of limitations due to the conflict escalation that are described in greater detail in section 1.3.6.

The specific purpose of the TPM and DQA is: [To objectively assess the quality of the monitoring and evaluation systems of the SCS partnerships \(including downward accountability and unintended effects\) to improve monitoring, evaluation and learning \(MEL\) of Strengthening Civil Society programs](#)<sup>1</sup>. This includes TPM spot checks, i.e. check whether results at output and outcome level reported by the partnerships reflect the actual situation. This is done through assessing progress on SCS and thematic indicators. It emphasizes highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the partnerships' MEL systems to encourage learning and knowledge sharing. This is expected to result in improved MEL of the partnership programmes supporting the accuracy of available data for the MTE.

The following research questions were formulated for the TPM & DQA:

1. How have the different partnerships organised their systems for monitoring results?  
Are there any systems in place to safeguard against biased results reporting? If so, how does it function? Are there any systems in place to monitor unintended effects (positive and negative)? If so, how does it function?
2. To what extent do the (intended and unintended) results at the output and outcome level reported by the partnership programmes reflect the actual situation? Are there any interesting (intended or unintended) results that have not been captured in the monitoring reports?
3. Can the reported results, especially those at the outcome level, convincingly be linked to the implemented activities? If so, how? If not, why not?
4. To what extent is downward accountability part of the monitoring systems of strategic partnerships? How is downward accountability organised and who is involved?
5. To what extent have recommendations for adoption of monitoring and evaluation systems as formulated in the DQA reports been implemented and led to improved MEL systems?<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The focus of the TPM and DQA have been slightly adapted as TPM shortly after the baseline measurements will probably not show much change, the revised DQA and TPM exercise will focus more on assessing and learning from MEL systems and less on assessing progress on the SCS and thematic indicators as has been done in the Baseline Study and will be done with the MTE.

The TPM and DQA contribute to the overall evaluation of the SCS policy framework. The objectives of this overall evaluation assignment (i.e. the baseline, TPM & DQA and MTE) are:

- To provide transparency and accountability about the allocation of ODA funds;
- To formulate lessons for future Strengthening Civil Society & thematic policy-making, funding mechanisms and policy implementation; and
- To evaluate the quality of policy implementation by the partnerships and MFA's role in the partnerships and formulate lessons learned.

## 2.2 Country context OPT

The following sections recall some elements of the political, institutional and legal context that applied before October 7 and already affected how L&A capacities can be strengthened in the OPT and provide a brief reminder of the current situation.

### 2.2.1 Civil society amid constraints

The Palestinian civil society is complex and multi-layered: (i) the first level includes grassroots groups and community-based organisations; (ii) the second level is composed of civil society organisations (CSOs) and other intermediary organisations (e.g. no-profit resource centres, charities); (iii) the third level comprises aggregations of CSOs focusing on a certain sector, geographical area or campaign; and (iv) the fourth level consists of general larger aggregations of CSOs, such as the national civil society platforms. Gender, human rights and agricultural and rural development are the three policy areas where civil society is most active.

Global, regional, inter-Israeli-Palestinian, as well as country-specific factors play a role in the envisioning and implementation of CSO work, especially as it relates to civic participation, lobbying and advocacy:

- The Israeli occupation and Israeli policies against the Palestinian Civil Society including labelling a group of CSOs as terrorist organisations<sup>2</sup> as well as smear and hate campaigns<sup>3</sup> by the NGO Monitor;
- Internal political challenges including the absence of an effective legislative body, the domination of the executive authority over the other authorities, the weak performance and low popularity of the political parties; and the increasingly reduced legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority which is not seen as having realised the promises of a Palestinian statehood after the Oslo accords; in the absence of an effective Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), CSOs that are promoting democracy, human rights, policy change and good governance find themselves in coercive position to fill the gap;
- The division between Gaza and the West Bank and the control of the Hamas de-facto government and its interference in the CSOs' work in Gaza until the recent military intervention of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) after 7 October 2023. A difficult dynamic between CSOs and Hamas was noticed before 7 October while now the complete disruption of the social life in the Strip and the uncertainty of the future of Gaza and Gazans pose enormous and new issues and raise the level of L&A that would be relevant to the international level.

<sup>2</sup> On 21 October 2021, Israel's Defense Minister Benny Gantz issued a decision to designate 6 Palestinian human rights groups as "terrorist organizations" under Israel's domestic 2016 Counter-Terrorism Law. <https://www.adalah.org/en/content/view/10508>.

<sup>3</sup> The work of the Palestinian NGO Monitor, founded in 2002 and based in Jerusalem, analyzes and reports on the output of the international NGO community from a pro-Israel perspective. It publishes a regular report on Palestinian NGOs which accuses them of links with terror organizations, anti-Israeli bias and highlighting Israeli violations while ignoring Palestinian 'terror'. The organization is funded by wealthy private pro-Israel foundations mainly in the US diaspora. The organization's influence is strongly felt by diplomats and government funders in the OPT.

## 2.2.2 *Rule of law, human rights, women's rights and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)*

Stagnation of the peace process, the state-building process, and national reconciliation efforts have all hindered efforts to strengthen the rule of law, and while technocratic solutions have made positive inroads towards improving institutional capacities, strengthening services and advancing access to justice and security, many of the fundamental preconditions for sustainable rule of law development have yet to be realised. There are key external and internal factors that affect sustainable development in the rule of law and the realisation of human rights in the OPT. The key external factor is the ongoing occupation by Israel, whereas the key internal factors are the deep national division since 2006, a dysfunctional legislative environment, fractured legal jurisdictions, weak institutional capacities, corruption, discriminatory social norms, and a lack of clarity around institutional roles and mandates.

The legal status in the OPT is at once complicated and unique because several authorities have ruled over the OPT throughout history. Various legal systems have prevailed in the OPT. The partition of the OPT has also led to the emergence of complex and varying legal systems in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Jerusalem<sup>4</sup>.

After Hamas' won the legislative elections in 2007; and the subsequent clashes between Hamas and Fatah in the Gaza Strip; Hamas took over the Strip and President Mahmoud Abbas declared a state of emergency. The Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) was dissolved by a ruling from the Supreme Constitutional Court. PLC's inactivity and weak formal oversight have seriously undermined control and accountability. In addition to the ordinary law-making process, oversight and accountability are in fact key tasks entrusted to the PLC.

Major efforts have taken place to reconcile the factions ever since, but these efforts failed to lead to new presidential and legislative elections or the resumption of the PLC's work. Until the recent Israeli invasion following 7 October, Hamas members of the Legislative Council in the Gaza Strip convened meetings independently and passed laws, while the President resorted to issuing decrees on behalf of the Legislative Council<sup>5</sup>.

According to ICHR's 2020 annual report; the human rights track was marked by decline and deterioration as a result of the ongoing Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory and the entrenched political divide between legal and legislative frameworks not being developed to remove obstacles to strengthening human rights and public freedoms or contribute to supporting the set of rights laid out by Palestinian Amended Basic Law of 2003. ICHR emphasised that the absence of the legislative power, namely the PLC, combined with the persisting internal Palestinian political divide, further undermined public institutions, weakened citizens' trust in these institutions, and warded off a real and serious intention to hold elections.<sup>6</sup>

Women and girls are disproportionately impacted by the discriminatory practices of the occupation, such as house demolitions, prevention of family unification, freedom of movement and others. Gender myths and stereotypes, on the other hand, have structurally influenced women's access to rights, power, resources and knowledge, and resulted in the development of discriminatory

<sup>4</sup> Birzeit University. The Legal Status in Palestine.

<sup>5</sup> Al-Haq. 2015. Palestine's crippled legislative authority. <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2015/06/palestine-gaza-legislative-council-totalitarian-regime-law43.html>.

<sup>6</sup> ICHR. 2021. The status of Human Rights in Palestine. [https://cdn1.ichr.ps/cached\\_uploads/download/2021/10/20/executive-summary-of-the-twenty-sixth-annual-report-of-ichr-2020-1634716818.pdf](https://cdn1.ichr.ps/cached_uploads/download/2021/10/20/executive-summary-of-the-twenty-sixth-annual-report-of-ichr-2020-1634716818.pdf).

legislations, policies and practices, that undermine women's experience, voices and rights, and reinforce males' domination and supremacy over women.

Economic rights also present some challenges. Communities involved in commodity value chains are often impacted by environmental degradation and at constant risk of land, water and other resources being taken over. The Palestinian Authority has very limited control over resources (especially access to land) or its borders (concerning trade). This seriously impedes its capacity to develop enabling policies to support sustainable interventions and places additional constraints on both civil society and private sector actors who work in this field. The lack of adequate legal and policy framework for the agricultural sector as well as a lack of adequate budget for the Ministry of Agriculture of the Palestinian Authority have been subject to severe criticism, by Oxfam in particular. Furthermore, the Palestinian Authority's over-emphasis on export crops would have resulted in a chronic lack of investment in local production, with a strong impact on the agricultural sector<sup>7</sup>.

In relation to SRHR, improvement in several indicators was achieved during recent years with several indicators that led to positioning the OPT as one of the highest in the region<sup>89</sup>.

However, the conservative social norms and traditions and the perception of SRHR as a sensitive/taboo issue make young people's SRHR difficult to address in the OPT. According to a study conducted by the Palestinian Medical Relief Society and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Palestine in 2019 and a follow-up study by Sharek Youth Forum and UNFPA in 2020; 73.3% of a group of 300 girls and women surveyed indicated embarrassment as the main reason why they do not discuss SRH issues with others. 42% said they did not know where to start, and 20.3% reported not having adequate information about what to ask<sup>10</sup>.

### 2.2.3 Escalation of conflict

During 2022 and 2023, increased settler violence together with more frequent raids by the IDF in the West Bank have exacerbated the security conditions, and after the 7 October attack, the Israeli response has annihilated the physical infrastructure and social life in Gaza but has also impacted the economic and social life in the West Bank through movement restrictions limiting the circulation of Palestinians between cities and their work commuting to Israel, and through continuous raids especially in the Northern West Bank cities of Nablus and Tulkarem. The economy of the West Bank is heavily suffering and the Israeli refusal to clear revenues of the Palestinian authorities prevents the regular payment of salaries to civil servants with consequences on public service delivery. The consequences for the human rights of the Palestinians, including the right to life, expression and association, have been severe and are currently characterising the context of the implementation of the SCS partnerships.

The deterioration of the situation due to the war has seriously impacted CSOs, both because many of them are now focusing on providing humanitarian assistance to the Gaza population; and because the loss or disability of many activists has affected capacity, while movement restrictions between cities pose a serious challenge to the implementation of activities.

<sup>7</sup> Oxfam Novib, Program Proposal: Fair for all, Improving Value Chains at Scale.

<sup>8</sup> <https://palestine.unfpa.org/en/node/22582>.

<sup>9</sup> Indicators included: Coverage with antenatal care (99.5%), Delivery with the assistance of qualified health professional (99.4%), Caesarian section rate (27.7%), Contraception prevalence rate (53.4%), Coverage with post-natal care (92%), Unmet need for family planning (10%), Practice of breast feeding (97.6%), Practice of exclusive breast feeding (36.4%).

<sup>10</sup> Sharek Youth Forum & UNFPA. 2020. Social Norms and Sexual and Reproductive Health Among Youth in Palestine. [https://palestine.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/social\\_norms\\_and\\_sexual\\_and\\_reproductive\\_health\\_among\\_youth\\_in\\_palestine.pdf](https://palestine.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/social_norms_and_sexual_and_reproductive_health_among_youth_in_palestine.pdf).



## 2.3 Methodology and approach

Our approach for the TPM & DQA included a mix of methods to achieve the desired objectives of the assignment. This aimed to enhance the level of rigour while at the same time applying a systematic approach to limit the time demanded from the partners. Three principles have guided the approach:

- **Independent review and validation:** The approach included qualitative data collection and analysis methods (see section below) ensuring engagement with both internal stakeholders and where possible external stakeholders;
- **Focus on learning:** The TPM and DQA are aimed at mutual learning; both within and between the partnerships and the MFA, and for the improvement of MEL in general. The learning perspective is key in this study in contrast to accountability to which DQA and TPM are often linked;
- **Participatory approach:** We have involved SCS partners at all important stages of the TPM and DQA process aiming to build trust and consequently enhance future internalisation of the learnings by the partners.

Below, we describe our approach to DQA and TPM and the frameworks used. Next, we explain the different data collection and analysis steps we have taken in this study. The research matrix of research questions and corresponding approaches and methods can be found in Annex 2.

### 2.3.1 Data Quality Assessment

We understand DQA as an indicator-based review of data *validity, reliability, timeliness, precision and integrity* (see table below). The DQA had a key focus on the quality of the MEL systems of the partners, therewith comprising multiple indicators: SCS level and relevant thematic indicators (where applicable) with a focus on output and outcome indicators and required disaggregation. The table below shows the key questions for the different quality aspects guiding the systematic assessment of the selected indicators and overall MEL system, and Annex 4 shows the template used for scoring the different quality aspects for each indicator.

Quality criteria	Key question
Validity	Correctness of information: Does the data clearly and adequately represent the intended result?
Reliability	Consistent information: Are the indicator definition and data collection and analysis processes clear, and are these consistently applied over time?
Precision	Quality of tools: Are the data sufficiently precise to present a fair picture of performance and enable management decision-making?
Integrity	Verification: Do the data collection, analysis and reporting processes have clear mechanisms in place to reduce manipulation or errors in transcription?
Timeliness	Up-to-date information available when needed: Are the data sufficiently timely and current (up-to-date) to influence management decision-making?

### 2.3.2 Third Party Monitoring

TPM focused on spot checks of the performance of the SCS partnerships for selected indicators. TPM is used to answer particularly research questions 2 and 3, collecting evidence on whether the reported results correspond to activities undertaken and whether the results can be validated by external sources. Key questions for TPM focus on the validation of reported results per selected

indicator/ intervention and the specific contribution of the activities/ outputs as well as possibly other factors. In Annex 4, the reporting template for the TPM checks is provided.

### 2.3.3 Sampling

For the DQA, all SCS and LFS Fund partnerships active in OPT were included. The sample included: all Tier 1 partners active in OPT; and at least two 2<sup>nd</sup> and/or 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier partners. **1st Tier partners are the consortium members, 2nd Tier are CSO partners contracted by the 1st Tier partners, 3rd Tier are in-country partners (with 3rd Tier contracts), the constituency of 1st and 2nd Tier partners.** The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier partners were selected to ensure a representative sample; Firstly based on whether organisations were active in other partnerships as well, and secondly covering different 1) types of organisation (theme and activities); 2) geographical locations; and 3) size of organisations (as proxy for (MEL) capacity of the organisation). In terms of geographical location, the areas covered were Ramallah, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Tulkarem (online), and Gaza (online). The sample for phases 1 and 2 of the DQA was the same, but due to contextual circumstances some organisations could not be reached in phase 2 (see challenges and limitations section 1.3).

For the TPM, six partnerships were sampled for a spot check in phase 1. The selection for these in phase 1 was based on the coverage of the different MFA indicators, representation of different locations and progress made by the different partnerships. In phase 2, due to the situation in OPT, no TPM was performed.

### 2.3.4 Data collection and analysis methods

The following activities were undertaken in data collection and data analysis:

- 1. Desk review.** After an initial desk review of partnership documents during the inception phase, an in-depth review of supplementary materials was done. This included:
  - Annual reports 2022 (phase 1), mid-term reviews (phase 2), result frameworks, partnership reporting formats (2<sup>nd</sup> Tier towards first Tier, 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier towards 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier), MEL strategies, reports and any tools, guides and templates (partnership-dependent) made available by the partnerships, and International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) publications about 2021, 2022 and 2023 (if available). For DQA specifically, we looked at raw indicator data as well as underpinning MEL Plans/Policies/Reporting documents provided (encompassing MEL procedures, indicator definitions, data flow diagrams, data collection/storage/analysis approaches etc.).
- 2. Participatory online workshop.** An online and participatory information meeting took place for in-country MEL leads in June 2023, to highlight the purpose of the TPM & DQA and discuss our approach, the process and planning. This facilitated a smooth data collection process;
- 3. Interviews.** For each partnership, we have interviewed several people, including:
  - MEL staff of the partnership lead organisation (online). Where possible, these were interviewed together with researchers involved in the study for Burkina Faso and of the international component, to limit the burden on interviewees;
  - MEL staff and/or programme coordinators of in-country lead organisation and, if applicable, other 1<sup>st</sup> Tier partners;
  - Two or three partners per partnership in OPT (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier);
  - External stakeholders, such as an independent consultant, the Economic Centre and the Family Protection Unit (see section on challenges below for elaboration).

In total, 43 interviews were conducted in phase 1, including 13 interviews with partnership leads and Tier 1 organisations, 22 interviews with in-country organisations (Tier 2 and 3), and four interviews with external stakeholders. In phase 2, 11 interviews were conducted, of which 8 were with partnership leads, 1 with an in-country organisation and 2 with both. An overview of

interviews can be found in Annex 1. All interviews with organisations in OPT took place in person in phase 1, with a few exceptions due to the availability of the interviewees. In phase 2, the interviews were conducted online (see limitations section 1.3);

4. **Focus group discussions (FGDs).** FGDs took place with rightsholders of the partnerships, i.e. external people reached or engaged by the partnerships to verify information received from the partnerships. Four FGDs were conducted in total, all of which were in phase 1;
5. **Partnership reports and individual feedback meetings.** We prepared partnership-specific assessments of the strengths and weaknesses of the MEL system and data quality of the sampled indicators including recommendations, following the DQA template. This assessment was shared with the in-country lead and discussed during individual online meetings in phase 1. The meetings served to validate the findings for each partnership and discuss the recommendations given by the research team. In phase 2, updated partnership reports were shared with in-country organisations and international leads and they were given the opportunity to provide written comments. This procedure was chosen because the number of interviews in phase 2 was limited and thus limited updates were made to the reports. For three partnerships, a different approach was taken due to the nature of the partnerships. This concerns:
  - Power Up and Count Me In: both partnerships have no partners present in OPT at the moment, only grantees. For Count Me In, we could not interview grantees due to security reasons; for Power Up we talked to a partner which is based in Lebanon, and their 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier partners in OPT were not responsive (see challenges below). The international interviews were merged with the findings for Lebanon;
  - Fair, Green and Global: this partnership does not have a country programme. The only partner present in OPT works in the global network. The findings from interviews with the partnership MEL coordinator and the in-country organisation were used to feed the findings but were not scored separately as they do not concern OPT data. The in-country organisation was only engaged during 2022 and the annual report reporting did not concern the partner in OPT.
6. **Learning workshop.** An online workshop was organised in August 2023 to share cross-cutting lessons and good practices from phase 1 with all partnerships in OPT. Ten participants from five different partnerships participated. The overall findings and recommendations were discussed and two partners presented a good practice, followed by a discussion on three key dilemmas (i.e. ensuring internal and external learning; measuring capacity strengthening; and balancing effectiveness and efficiency). The workshop supported the preparation of the consolidated report;
7. **Data analysis and triangulation.** The data collected through the different methods was combined and compared across the DQA / TPM reporting template. For TPM, a qualitative assessment was conducted of the output and outcome statements of the partnerships. For DQA, a qualitative review was conducted for each indicator looking at the five quality aspects. In addition, a scoring of Red, Amber and Green was given to show strong and weaker elements in an easy to comprehend system. Furthermore, documents and information received were compared to other sources for triangulation, and the composition of the team also provided diverse international and national expertise-driven views on the information, data and analysis. The interpretation of information collected looked at the extent to which results are accurate and can be linked to the indicators and at the comparability of results reported between different partners. In interpreting the data, we emphasised demonstrating whether the partner's MEL systems are well suited to inform strategic partnerships as far as the appropriateness of the indicators and how the overall data collection mechanisms have been set up;
8. **Reporting and reference group feedback.** The findings of phase 1 were consolidated into a report submitted 15 September 2023. This was discussed with the reference group and their

feedback was subsequently combined with findings from phase 2 in this final report, submitted in January 2024.

### 2.3.5 *Safeguarding and do-no-harm*

We have followed ‘do no harm’ principles throughout the implementation of the assignment, to ensure that no negative consequences would arise as a result of participation in the study. The SCS partnerships are working on topics that are sensitive politically and culturally, such as SRHR, GBV or conflict issues, and societal freedoms around these issues are constrained. The following measures were taken, relating to both safeguarding and data protection:

- We provided explanations and reassurance about the purpose and nature of involvement in the research to participants;
- Participants were able to choose whether to answer or not questions in case they did not feel safe or comfortable answering and could end an interview at any time;
- Furthermore, we ensured strict confidentiality protocols at all stages of the assignment including during online and face-to-face interviews;
- Personal data was only collected and stored if needed for the assignment, and data was collected, analysed and stored securely on Ecorys’ servers;
- The above information will be deleted after the completion of the assignments in compliance with the MFA contractual provisions;
- No sensitive data has been or will be shared by us with government bodies/ agencies or other institutions.

In addition, after the 7<sup>th</sup> of October, our approach to consulting in-country partners was to contact the partnership leads and ask them to tactfully verify with their in-country partners their availability for an online interview taking into account that many organisations have changed priority during the war. Only those organisations that responded positively (two country offices of international NGOs and one national NGO) were approached and interviewed. In the meantime, the team asked and managed to interview (again) most partnership leads MEL staff.

### 2.3.6 *Challenges, limitations and bias*

#### **Challenges and limitations**

The DQA/TPM assignment encountered challenges already in phase 1 but of course, in phase 2, the challenges and limitations were overshadowed by the attack of Hamas on 7 October 2023 and subsequent Israeli response. Gaza has since then been under attack and both the implementation of the partnerships’ planned activities as well as any continuation of any DQA TPM activities in the Strip have become impossible. Only two of the partnership in-country leads agreed to have a second round of interviews for DQA and no TPM could take place. The conversation continued with the partnership leads mostly, which brought to some limited updates including the more high-level indicators that are the subject of phase 2, but of course, no triangulation was possible. It was nonetheless an opportunity to get the international lead partners’ views on issues raised during phase 1 on the MEL systems. The following paragraph highlights the challenges identified in pre-7 October.

Most challenges were related to reaching the right people for information. Firstly, despite that partnerships had been informed about the DQA and TPM assignment - and overall SCS evaluation - it appeared time-consuming to reach and arrange interviews with all partners. Organisations were mostly willing to participate, but were limited by their busy schedule, also in light of the partnership’s data collection period over the summer for their own MTR round (due in November 2023) and other

ongoing MEL activities such as outcome harvesting meetings. The team sensed a fatigue among organisations in this regard. Some partners were hesitant to burden 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier partners or rightsholders, as the MEL requirements for the MTR and other ongoing processes are time-consuming to all parties involved. Also, the communication within partnerships did not always seem sufficient to allow for a smooth arrangement of the visits. We faced specific challenges with a couple of partnerships that demanded a more direct communication channel with them regarding the DQA as they felt the global/local communication channels caused confusion. Accordingly, we had unexpected delays in scheduling the fieldwork with the organizations involved in these partnerships. Additionally, reaching 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier partners - as well as in cases 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier partners - was time-consuming with slow responses. In particular, the partners of one partnership were non-responsive which has led to the inability to include this partner in the interviews.

Furthermore, the staff turnover is continuously high in the SCS partnerships. (MEL-)staff were often relatively new, and in some instances, the MEL position was vacant with other staff covering the MEL tasks temporarily. In addition, some of the partnerships made changes to their in-country (lead) partners. In these cases, the interviewees were not fully informed about the assignment or on details of the MEL systems or partnerships. Similarly, for the DQA, it was at times challenging to collect relevant information from rightsholders and other people reached by or involved in the partnerships, as most were not fully engaged in the MEL aspects.

In phase 1, it appeared highly challenging and not feasible to find external stakeholders for each partnership that were specifically able to reflect on the specific MFA indicators for this phase (i.e. knowing about the increased capacities of the organisation while being independent and external). This was primarily because the indicators relevant in this phase are difficult to assess for external stakeholders. Interviews were held with rightsholders who were more external to the project and who were included in focus group discussions. In addition, interviews with the Economic Center of OPT, two external organisations collaborating with one partnership and an external evaluator took place. In this phase, the external verification of the outcomes remained relatively limited.

### **Bias**

Data collection and findings might involve a degree of bias in different ways. This firstly particularly derives from the above limitation of identifying external stakeholders for all TPM spot checks. Reporting is mainly based on interviews with internal stakeholders, who may have reported insights more positively - intended or unintended - in addition to rightsholders in focus group discussions. To mitigate this bias as much as possible interviewees were asked to describe the earlier situation and any changes and provide specific examples as much as possible.

Furthermore, in OPT, Government/CSO relations, as well as internal, regional and international tensions that play out within the country, provide for a highly politicised environment. Already wording and terminology in OPT can (intended or unintended) show a particular position or side. Triangulating points of view and critically assessing sources is therefore key. Throughout the assignment, the team tried to be aware of potential respondent bias which can occur when participants provide inaccurate or socially desirable responses. To minimize response bias, we ensured that data collection instruments were carefully designed to minimize leading questions and anchoring bias and that participants were assured of the confidentiality of their responses.

Next, to mitigate evaluator bias, interviews were always conducted by two evaluators - mostly consisting of an international and national expert and where possible set up gender-wise (mixed gender team preferred) - who together discussed the scores of the DQA and TPM.

Selection bias in sampling may also have been a factor as some interviews with 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier partners were arranged by in-country partner organisations or after conversations with them, which may have influenced the representativeness of the sample. In addition, the non-responsiveness of some 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier partners may have also impacted the representativeness of the sample, leading to underrepresentation of 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier partners. This bias was mitigated where possible by following the sample and keeping the selection random. Selection bias in sampling might have also arisen from the logistics of organising the interview process during the mission. To mitigate the risk of overrepresenting Ramallah-based organisations, we paid attention to including organisations based in East Jerusalem, Gaza or Israel, resorting to online interviewing or ad hoc travel.

Concerning the DQA on higher level indicators that has been conducted in phase 2, the impossibility of interviewing in-country partners except for two cases might have created a possible bias in favour of the views of the partnership leads, whose headquarter level perspective might not necessarily coincide with that of the OPT based organisations (however, the partnership leads perspective also added some clarity to processes there where perceived in-country to a limited extent). The conclusions and recommendations concerning the MEL system remain valid nonetheless, because based on both phase 1 and phase 2.

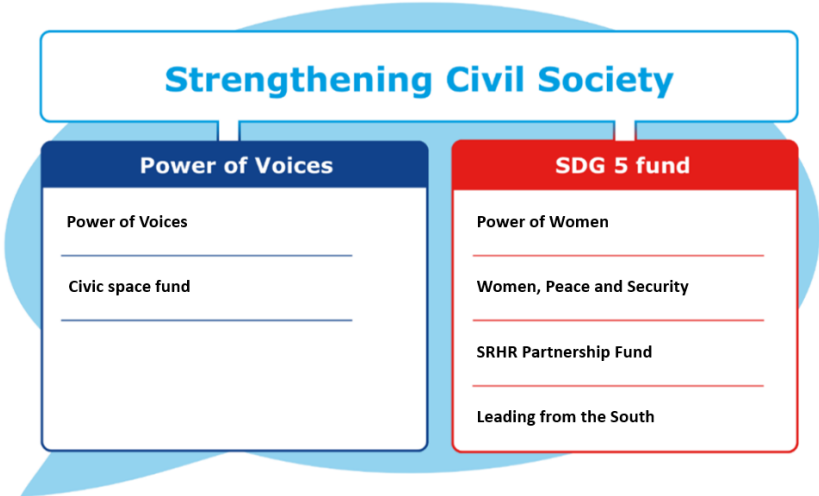
# 3 SCS policy framework, instruments and programmes

## 3.1 SCS policy and grant instruments

The Policy Framework for Strengthening Civil Society pays specific attention to the role of civil society organisations (CSOs) in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Framework intends to contribute to poverty reduction and represent and strengthen people’s voices through lobby and advocacy capacity. Within the broader SDG agenda, the MFA policy focuses on SDG 5 in particular, aiming at promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The MFA identified this as a cross-cutting objective of the Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation policy<sup>11</sup>. Also, the role of youth and young people is considered a priority throughout the framework.

The SCS Policy Framework is divided into two grant instruments (Power of Voices and the SDG 5 Fund), and again into six sub-grant instruments (see Figure 3.1 below). All instruments relate to the aim of strengthening lobbying and advocating for human rights compliance, and thereby achieving the SDGs.

Figure 3.1 Grants and sub-grant instruments of the SCS policy framework<sup>12</sup>



For OPT, the sub-grant instruments are the following:

1. **Power of Voices (PoV):** The PoV instrument aims to strengthen CSOs to lobby and advocate at local, national, and international levels to achieve SDGs and a more inclusive and sustainable society related to seven themes<sup>13</sup> and gender equality mainstreamed throughout;
2. **Power of Women (PoW):** The PoW grant instrument aims to strengthen women’s rights organisations so that they are capable of lobbying and advocacy;

<sup>11</sup> Source: <https://www.government.nl/binaries/government/documents/policy-notes/2019/11/28/policy-framework-strengthening-civil-society/Grant+instrument+PoV+FINAL.pdf>.  
<sup>12</sup> Source: <https://www.government.nl/documents/policy-notes/2019/11/28/policy-framework-strengthening-civil-society>.  
<sup>13</sup> 1) Climate mitigation and adaptation; 2) Trade and making value chains more sustainable; 3) Food security, sustainable water management and/or WASH (including water, sanitation and hygiene); 4) Women’s rights and gender equality (WRGE); 5) Freedom of speech or Freedom of Religion and Belief; 6) Equal rights LGBTIQ+; 7) Security and Rule of Law (SRoL).

3. **Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights (SRHR) Partnership Fund:** The SRHR Fund aims to strengthen sexual and reproductive health and rights including enhanced knowledge, greater availability of modern contraceptives, increased use of SRHR services, and reduced maternal and AIDS mortality;
4. **Women Peace and Security (WPS):** The WPS instrument aims to strengthen CSOs so that they are capable of lobbying and advocacy, with a specific focus on further implementing the Dutch NAP1325 (Protection of women and girls in (post-)conflict environments; decreasing harmful gender norms; and creating equal leverage in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, relief and recovery);
5. **Leading from the South (LFS):** The LFS grant instrument provides direct support to Southern feminist women's organisation, movements and networks, through the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) and three other regional women's funds;
6. **Civic Space Fund (CSF) & Civic Space Flex Fund<sup>14</sup>:** The CSF fund is available for embassies and it aims to promote capacity strengthening for lobby and advocacy and independence of CSOs. The CSF is focussed on the priority countries of the MFA, while a CSF-Flex Option is open to embassies in all OECD-DAC countries.

The SCS framework identifies eight core elements that apply to every instrument: i) Civic space, ii) Lobby and advocacy, iii) More ownership by local organisations, iv) Gender equality and inclusion, v) Strategic partnership, vi) Flexibility, vii) Mutual capacity development and viii) Innovation.

The Framework finances 42 strategic partnerships and four LFS funds around SCS worldwide between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2025. In OPT, ten partnerships and one of the LFS partners are active under these grants. The next section provides a further overview of the different partnerships active in OPT.

### 3.2 Partnerships active in OPT

The sections below provide further information on the tier structure<sup>15</sup> and thematic focus of the partnerships active in OPT. The organisations in blue are the in-country leads (and either 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier) and the organisations in green are 1<sup>st</sup> Tier organisations active in OPT. Organisations active in more than one partnership are marked in bold. Please note that the overview below is a representation of the situation at the time of writing and an update of the same table included in the Inception report, but that developments in the partnership structure are ongoing throughout. Names of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> tier organisations have been omitted on request in order to preserve anonymity.

**Table 3.1 Overview of partnerships in OPT**

Partnership	Lead and 1 <sup>st</sup> Tier	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tier	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tier	Theme
Fair, Green and Global Alliance	Both Ends, <b>SOMO</b> , <b>Transnational Institute</b> ActionAid, Stichting Schone Kleren Campagne,	N/A, minimal links to OPT and countries in general; Three of the consortium members work with different organisations in OPT.	No Tier 3	Trade and Making value chains more sustainable

<sup>14</sup> In OPT, there are no partnerships funded through CSF, in 2023.

<sup>15</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Tier are the consortium members, 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier are CSO implementing partners contracted by the 1<sup>st</sup> Tier partners, 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier are local partners (with 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier contracts), the constituency of 1st and 2nd Tier partners.



Partnership	Lead and 1 <sup>st</sup> Tier	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tier	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tier	Theme
	Vereniging Milieudedefensie, IT for Change, The Samdhana Institute			
Fair for All	Oxfam <a href="#">Oxfam Palestine</a>  <b>SOMO</b> , Huairou Commission, Third World Network-Africa	4 partner organisations	Networks, CSOs, women and farmers, women clubs, women farmers, unions, members of women coop., OPT public sector, gov. groups, small and medium-sized enterprises	Trade and Making value chains more sustainable
Giving for Change	Wilde Ganzen / Ikon Africa Philanthropy Network, Global Fund for Community Foundations, Kenya Community Development Foundation	3 partner organisations	Community/grass-root groups and individual youngsters and women	Freedom of Speech or freedom of Religion
Strengthening Civil Courage	<a href="#">Pax and ABAAD (Resource centre for gender equality)</a> (remote) <b>Amnesty International Nederland, DefendDefenders.</b>	6 partner organisations	Coalitions, local committees, CBO network for youth and women, young individuals	Security & Rule of Law (SRoL)
Count me in!	Mama Cash Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights (UAF) Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), Creating Resources for Empowerment in Action (CREA), <b>Just Associates (JASS)</b>	N/A, only grantees	No Tier 3 (short-term relation with small women's rights initiatives)	Women's rights and gender equality (WRGE)

Partnership	Lead and 1 <sup>st</sup> Tier	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tier	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tier	Theme
YW4A (Young Women for Awareness, Agency, Advocacy, and Accountability)	World YWCA Equality Now, Young women's Christian Association (YWCA Palestine), Young Women's Christian Association of Kenya	4 partner organisations	Young women (15-30 age category), of which 60% marginalised; women's rights organisations (WROs) and CSOs (youth clubs and women centres)	WRGE
Fem PAWER	Kvinna till Kvinna The Palestinian Working Woman Society for Development (PWWSD) Arab Women Organization of Jordan (AWO), Collective for Research and Training on Development action (CRTD.A)	N/A (TBD)	Women rights organisations and private sector organisations, including networks	WRGE
Power up	<b>Just Associates (JASS)</b> Gender at Work (G@W)  Coalition of African Lesbians, Yayasan Pemberdayaan Perempuan Kepala Keluarga (PEKKA)	1 partner organisation (not based in OPT)	(Emerging) feminist groups/initiatives.	WRGE
Palestinian Women and Girls lead and engage on WPS in OPT (We Rise)	War Child  War Child Palestine, together with: The Palestinian Initiative for Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH), The Women's Centre	6 partner organisations	WROs/grassroot organisations, local branches and offices, NGOs involved in social accountability action, youth groups/ documentarians/former trainees/volunteers	WRGE

Partnership	Lead and 1 <sup>st</sup> Tier	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tier	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tier	Theme
	for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC), Oxfam Palestine			
Masarouna	Oxfam Oxfam Palestine  Stichting Radio Nederland Wereldomroep (RNW) Media,	6 partner organisations	Grassroot organisations, activists, schools and individuals.	SRHR
Leading from the South	African Women's Development Fund (AFDW)	9 grantees	N/A	Economic security and justice; Leadership, participation and peace; Body and Health Rights

### 3.3 Reporting on MFA indicators

Table 2.3 overleaf summarises the indicators that every partnership reports on. All partnerships commit to the minimum of three indicators and most partnerships report on more than 3 or 4 indicators.

There are a few partnerships that report on more indicators, which is especially the case for thematic partnerships reporting on WRGE (Power up, Palestinian Women and Girls Lead and Engage and Yw4a), and SRHR (Masarouna), as they are reporting on different sub-themes. Fair Green, Global Alliance, Fair for all and Giving for Change, however, also report on 6 or 7 SCS indicators. The Fair for All partnership reports on other thematic indicators (Private sector Development; DDE). The numbers are based on the annual plans for 2023 and verified with the annual reports 2022. Indicators that were reported on in the annual report of 2022 and are thus part of this phase of the DQA TPM, are marked in green.

Phase 1 of the DQA/TPM focusses on SCS indicators 5-8 (and the related indicators) and phase 2 focuses on SCS indicators 1-4 and 9.

Annex 3 provides the overview of SCS indicators and linked thematic indicators with their specific quantitative and qualitative methodological note as provided in the SCS IATI Indicator Guidelines of the MFA. Table 2.4 shows a shortened version of the guidelines.

**Table 3.2 Summary of indicators reported on by each partnership**

Partnership, lead	#	SCS1	SCS2	WRGE 1.1	WRGE 2.1	WRGE 3.1	WRGE 4.1	WRGE 1.3	WRGE 2.3	WRGE 3.3	WRGE 4.3	SRHR H	SCS3	WRGE 1.2	WRGE 2.2	WRGE 3.2	WRGE 4.2	SRHR A, B, C, I	SCS4	SCS5	SRHR J	WRGE 5.2.1	WRGE 5.2.2	SCS6	SCS7	SCS8	SCS9	DDE
Fair, green and global alliance, Both Ends*	7	X	X										X						X	X				X			X	
Fair for all, Oxfam	7	X	X										X						X	X				X				X
Giving for Change, Wilde Ganzen	6	X	X										X						X	X					X			
Palestinian Women and Girls Lead and Engage, War Child	6						X				X						X					X	X	X				
Yw4a, World YWCA	6	X		X	X															X		X	X					
Count me in!, Mama Cash	4				X				X													X	X					
Fem Pauer, Kvinna til Kvinna	4					X								X		X							X					
Masarouna, Oxfam	8	X										X	X					X	X		X			X	X			
Power Up!, Just Associates**	9			X	X	X								X	X	X			X			X	X					
Strengthening civil courage, Pax	4												X						X	X				X				
Leading from the South, African Women Development Fund**	4				X										X					X		X						

\* No IATI data available at the time of data collection.  
 \*\* Data of CMI and Leading from the South is published at global level in IATI, and for Power up there is no OPT country data available either. Data from other partnerships is at the country level.

**Table 3.3 Summary of MFA guidance on quantitative and qualitative measurement.**

Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
SCS1 # of laws and policies for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement	Number of concrete changes in implementation of laws, policies and international agreements of targeted governments, private sector and societal actors as a result of CSOs engagement	<p>Explain how, as a result of CSO L&amp;A activities, governments, private sector and societal groups improved the implementation of laws, policies and practices to support sustainability and (gender) inclusiveness.</p> <p>In providing qualitative data it helps to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>describing the implementation process and extent of progress, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies (see also Table 1 in 2.1.44);</li> <li>explaining the advocacy process towards implementation, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CS011 # of laws for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement;</li> <li>SCS012 # of governmental policies for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement;</li> <li>SCS013 # of private sector company policies for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement;</li> <li>SCS014 # of by-laws for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement;</li> <li>SCS015 # of international agreements for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement.</li> </ul>
SCS2 # of laws, policies blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement.	Number of concrete and significant changes in laws or policies as a result of CSO engagement.	<p>Explain how, as a result of CSO L&amp;A activities, governments, private sector and societal groups change their laws and policies, to support sustainability and (gender) inclusiveness.</p> <p>In answering this question it helps to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>describing the content of law, policy,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCS021 # of laws blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement;</li> <li>SCS022 # of governmental policies blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement;</li> </ul>

Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
		<p>attitude and norm changes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>explaining the advocacy process towards changes, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies. (see also the table in 2.1.4)</li> </ul> <p>From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where L&amp;A activities did not result in the desired change, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for bringing about change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCS023 # of private sector company policies blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement;</li> <li>SCS024 # of by-laws blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement;</li> <li>SCS025 # of international agreements blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement.</li> </ul>
SCS3 # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage	Number of times L&A targets include CSOs in the decision making process + number of times L&A targets react upon the positions of the CSOs by adopting their argumentation and terminology + number of times L&A targets react upon the positions of CSOs by putting their issues on the agenda.	Explain how CSOs have played a transformative role in decision-making processes through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where CSOs were unable to play a transformative, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for this.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCS031 # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage at national and international level;</li> <li>SCS032 # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage at sub-national level.</li> </ul>
SCS4 # of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs, for, by or with their membership/constituency	Number of advocacy initiatives carried out. E.g. public campaign, policy briefs,	Explain how CSOs activate and educate citizens, how they mobilise support and create networks, and how this culminates in	<p>This indicator has two indicator codes: subnational level and all other levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCS041 # of advocacy initiatives carried out by</li> </ul>

Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
	commissioning research, initiating influencing processes, etc. An initiative should be a distinct set of actions.	political participation of excluded or marginalised groups. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where CSOs are unable to do so, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for this.	CSOs, for, by or with their membership/constituency; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCS042 # of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs, for, by or with their membership/constituency at sub-national level.</li> </ul>
SCS5 # of CSOs with increased L&A capacities	This includes both first and second tier partners with increased L&A capacities. Strategic partnership members are considered as first tier organisations, their implementing partners as second tier organisations.	Explain the capacities and expertise developed for performing political roles and implementing advocacy strategies. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where CSOs were unable to increase their capacity.	This indicator will be disaggregated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCS051 # of women led CSOs;</li> <li>SCS052 # of youth led CSOs;</li> <li>SCS053 # of other CSOs (not youth or women led);</li> <li>SCS054 # of CSOs which are both women and youth led.</li> </ul>
SCS6 # of CSOs included in SPs programmes	# of 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> tier civil society partners included in the programme. The number is also limited to civil society partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What types of partners are involved?</li> <li>What is the level of their involvement in programme development, design, implementation and evaluation?</li> </ul>	This indicator will be disaggregated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCS061 # of women led CSOs;</li> <li>SCS062 # of youth led CSOs;</li> <li>SCS063 # of CSOs (not youth or women led)</li> <li>SCS064 # of CSOs which are both women and youth led.</li> </ul>
SCS7 # of CSOs that have enhanced representation of constituencies	Binary: An organization works towards improvement or not.	Types of changes in terms of representation and the magnitude of the change, as well as representation by CSOs and their contributions.	This indicator will be disaggregated by: SCS071 # women led of CSOs that have enhanced representation of constituencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCS072 # youth led of CSOs;</li> <li>SCS073 # of CSOs (not youth or women led);</li> </ul>

Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCS074 # of CSOs which are both women &amp; youth led.</li> </ul>
SCS 8 # of CSOs using a Gender and Social Inclusion lens during all phases of the programming cycle with specific attention to youth.	Binary: An organization either has an ambition to use these lenses or not.	It is about the systematic use of the lenses which is expected to translate into more inclusive approaches to policy implementation or program development.	<p>This indicator will be disaggregated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCS081 # of women led CSOs;</li> <li>SCS082 # of youth led CSOs;</li> <li>SCS083 # of CSOs (not youth led or women led);</li> <li>SCS084 # of CSOs, which are both women &amp; youth led.</li> </ul>
SCS9 # of actions in support to better NGO and/or labour/trade union legislation, policies, by-laws and codes of conduct that improve civil society space	# of actions (similar to SCS4) to influence NGO legislation in favor of the protection of civic space and operational space for civil society.	This is about the regulatory environment that influences civic space and the number of actions CSOs take to contribute to improved legislation. These actions are often done by collectives and are more successful if more CSOs engage in the action. The indicator is not prescriptive in the type of action. It is about the participation of a single organization in the action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCS091 # of actions in support to better NGO legislation, policies, by-laws or codes of conduct that improve civil society space;</li> <li>SCS092 # of actions in support to better labour/trade union legislation, policies, by-laws or codes of conduct that improve civil society space.</li> </ul>



## 4 Findings

### 4.1 Organisation of monitoring results, safeguarding bias and monitoring unintended results (RQ1)

In this section, we answer research question 1: **How have the different partnerships organised their systems for monitoring results?** Sub-questions include: Are there any systems in place to safeguard against biased results reporting? If so, how does it function? Are there any systems in place to monitor unintended effects (positive and negative)? If so, how does it function?

#### 4.1.1 Overall MEL system: What is the adequacy and quality of partnership/ partners overall MEL systems?

The systems of the ten partnerships can roughly be divided into two different types of systems: 1) systems in which the in-country lead or partners report their data to the international lead partner which is responsible for transfiguration/consolidation and (IATI) reporting and 2) systems where monitoring of results (including IATI publishing) is done by in-country offices/ partners and only supported by the international lead partners if needed (or by in-country leads towards in-country partners). The organisation of the systems for monitoring results is highly linked to the organisational set-up of the partnership, with in-country consolidation only included for partnerships with a country programme. For two partnerships in the OPT, only global results are reported.

All organisations interviewed have appointed a MEL coordinator or someone responsible for the MEL requirement of the SCS partnership. For larger organisations and in-country leads, this tends to be a full-time MEL coordinator implementing other MEL activities for the organisation as well. For smaller organisations, the project staff is mostly responsible for MEL tasks alongside implementation. Data analysis regarding for example the results of pre- and post-training assessment is outsourced to external consultants or technical consortium partners. All partnerships have developed a MEL plan or strategy and many have additional reporting templates, data templates and data collection tools. The extent to which MEL materials specify and operationalize the indicators and corresponding ways of working varies heavily.

To assess the quality of the overall MEL system, the DQA looked at five specific quality aspects. The table in Annex 2 provides the key questions for the different quality aspects guiding the systematic assessment of the selected indicators and overall MEL system. The table shows an overall positive picture, with few cases of serious issues, although a few issues do exist leaving room for improvement. In Annex 4, the full template for the DQA is presented, which includes the scoring of ten questions linked to the quality aspects of the selected SCS indicators. Figure 4.1 below provides a summary of the DQA assessment in terms of strong and weaker issues requiring attention for the ten partnerships. Blue scores are provided when an issue is not applicable. Ten partnerships are included in these scores, as there was not enough information and country activity for one partnership to score (see methodology section). The numbers behind the DQA element names refer to the section of the DQA template.

**Figure 4.1 Overview of DQA scores, sorted by element of the DQA and question of the DQA templated (numbered 1-10)**



In the next section, we consider the strong and weak points of the partnerships' monitoring systems based on the five elements of the DQA and corresponding scores on the DQA template: validity reliability, timeliness, precision and integrity.

#### 4.1.2 Validity: does the data clearly and adequately represent the intended result? (DQA question 1)

The validity of the data to measure the MFA indicators is variable above all because MFA indicators are first and above all translated into partnership-specific indicators. All partnerships have mapped out how their own indicators link with MFA indicators. The extent to which this includes specific indicator definitions and further meta-data on the indicators varies. Often, the linkage of indicators is implemented by the partnership lead and partners are informed but not actively engaged and aware of the specifics of this linkage. That is to say, for most country-level partners, only the partnership results framework exists, not the policy-level MFA indicators as such, and conversion into MFA indicators via IATI is a task for the partnership lead only. Despite these, we do see that many organisations have ongoing conversations about the indicator definitions and that staff is getting more familiar with consistently using the indicators.

Almost all partners have defined meta-data on how to operationalise the MFA indicators, but definitions do vary by partnership. When this is translated into partnership-specific reporting there might be different interpretations:

As far as SCS5 is concerned, the meaning of numbers is affected by the varying approaches chosen by programmes to capacity strengthening: in some cases, organisations and individuals participate in single short training; in other cases, organisations and individuals are trained, coached and accompanied for a longer period.

A second issue is that in a few cases, information provided by partners on attendance of events and courses gets transformed into outcome indicators at the partnership level (e.g. improved skills). In general, participation in the programme is translated into strengthened capacities. For example:

- *WRG045 # of women-led CSOs with strengthened capacity to advance women's rights and gender equality.* This indicator is interpreted in one partnership as the number of women-led organisations partnering as a grantee;

- *WRG049 # of individuals (female) with strengthened capacity (knowledge and skills) to advance women's rights and gender equality.* In one partnership, the indicator is defined to be the number of young women engaged as champions, who receive training and form a network to support each other.

In both cases, assumptions on the capacity-strengthening effect of these trainings/partnerships are made and the outcome itself is not measured. The reasons for this differ, as some partners reflect on having too little MEL capacity to measure outcomes, others are mostly unfamiliar with measuring effects on outcomes like strengthened capacity and some do not stay in touch with participants to be able to follow-up on results. IATI guidelines refer to the outcome of capacity-strengthening activities. The indicator is very broad and requires further specification, but this is not given (although examples are provided). The confusion on the nature of the indicators can further be explained by the guidance which is provided by the MFA, stating clearly that SCS5 is to be treated as an output indicator (according to the feedback of some of the Partnerships). As a result, in many cases, the number of organisations (and the individuals) with increased capacities, is measured by looking at those that have been successfully participating in the training activities. "Successfully" would be the key term to differentiate the outcome from the output, but it can be differently interpreted – from showing proven increased knowledge to simply not dropping out until the end. More specifically, four partnerships have developed capacity assessment tools, one uses pre and post-training questionnaires testing perceptions and knowledge, another one conducts conversations with organisations based on an outline, and four do not use any specific tool to measure capacity strengthening. Also those which have sophisticated tools, find it difficult to define 'thresholds' above which the capacities of one organisation can be classified as overall improved (and thus allow counting of organisations).

Involvement in the partnership as measured by SCS6 is more straightforward, except for the issue of counting unique organisations vs reach, but it has been clarified at this stage.

Similar issues apply to SCS7, the number of CSOs that have enhanced representation of constituencies. Also in relation to this indicator, the use is not straightforward: "representation of constituency" is not a simple fact, but is a complex process that needs to be defined and measured, including the identification of what is meant by constituency and representation. One partnership has decided not to apply any more this indicator considering that it is already somehow covered by other SRHR indicators concerning youth participation.

The more high level indicators SCS2 and SCS3 present additional specific challenges. On SCS2, the main issue is determining the moment in which the actual becomes >0. All partnerships are convinced that changing laws and policies is an ambitious objective and some of them have been invited by the mid-term evaluators to revise the related targets downwards. Furthermore, the peculiarities of the Palestinian legislative system make so that any new law requires a presidential decree to be approved in the absence of a legislative body. This is a huge bottleneck, in general and especially for women and human rights-related legislation, given that the presidency is worried about keeping afloat and needs support also from conservative religious forces. But even in a less sensitive domain, there is one case in which a tax law reform pushed for by the programme got it until the ministerial endorsement but has not been approved yet. The partnership records this as a case of "creating space" (SCS3) that corresponds in its results framework to endorsement by "influential stakeholders". However there is the feeling that the achievement is a bit more than "creation of space" as it concerns a specific law amendment, but the indicators do not allow to capture this.

Another partnership has only indicators corresponding to SCS5 and SCS1/2. They do not have SCS3 or SCS4, but given the leap between capacity building and the impact of L&A, they define “intermediate milestones” towards SCS1/2. Thus the fact that using SCS3 and SCS4 (like any other SCS indicator) was optional is leading to variable and not always consistent solutions across partnerships to fill the gap. This is not a problem for programmes, but might be for the aggregation of data at the MFA level.

The indicators related to SCS4 concerning the number of advocacy initiatives are also subject to variable interpretation concerning what to count as an advocacy initiative. The guidance of the MFA tends to focus on campaigns or similar broad initiatives, however, these are not always clearly identifiable in partner activities. As such, an advocacy initiative can be a national coalition of women’s organisations, a local group set up to pursue a community project, or a big campaign as prescribed. There is also a partnership which counts the number of organisations carrying out advocacy initiatives each year. The variety of interpretations also stems from a very broad understanding of advocacy also encouraged by the MFA guidance pointing to “educating citizens” as an act of advocacy. Based on that, partners speak of “advocacy” even when there is just awareness raising of right-holders, without interaction with duty bearers.

The above-presented issues and challenges are the reason for many amber scores on this element, requiring attention and improvement. Other weaknesses that were not considered severe are mostly related to the absence of a clear common understanding of indicators within partnerships, as indicators are also being contextualised by the different partners of a same alliance. In one case, serious issues were flagged that require attention, as no meta-data or other definition/specification of indicators has been shared with partners and it was observed that indicators were interpreted incorrectly according to the MFA guidelines.

#### *4.1.3 Reliability: Are the indicator definition and data collection and analysis processes clear, and are these consistently applied over time? (DQA questions 2 and 5)*

In the previous paragraph, we have already discussed some definitional issues. Within these limitations, the reliability of the data collection is relatively good. During the interviews, the people involved were able to provide clear insight into their roles and the expected deliverables. Descriptions of roles and responsibilities were also found in supporting MEL documents provided, such as MEL plans and reporting templates. Frequently reported MEL training of partnership leads to their 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier partners contributed to clear roles and expectations. Regarding data collection consistency, interviewees self-report that data is indeed collected consistently, and this could be verified by comparing datasheets and reporting over time in a few partnerships. In some instances, also following recommendations in the DQA phase one to allocate new staff to MEL, MEL procedures have been and are still updated, expanded or improved, resulting in better MEL systems but a risk of less consistent data collection and interpretation, when comparing data and reporting from before and after changes in the process.

Reliability of data is negatively affected by high levels of staff turnover. The new staff is less familiar with indicator definitions and the MEL process in general, leading to lower consistency in data collection and analysis. In two cases, there was a vacancy in MEL staff at the time of data collection and project staff temporarily took up extra responsibilities. Another compromise in the reliability of the data collection and processes seen in two partnerships is that partnerships deliberately choose to leave the choice of tools and methods fully up to partners. This has the advantages of ownership and contextualisation, but the absence of a standardized and documented process may lead to variations in data handling and reporting practices. A corrective measure that has been taken by a

few partnerships is to create MEL working groups to share and align MEL practices within the partnership.

For higher-level outcome indicators (SCS1, SCS2 and SCS3) several partnerships consider and use outcome harvesting as a data collection method. Some of them developed and refined their approach to OH by including an assessment of the significance of the outcome for the organisations and asking for evidence (e.g. documentation) to substantiate the contribution of the projects to outcome achievement. These attempts certainly contribute to reducing the intrinsic risks of subjectivity of outcome harvesting making it a more sound and useful tool for reporting and storytelling. Verification of outcomes with external stakeholders is however not possible, it would be too time-consuming for partnership and has been sometimes asked to mid-term reviewers, but with mixed results. Furthermore, OH tends to record only positive results and not lack of results or failure, which is also useful for learning. Alternatively, one partnership is using a template which also allows for recording and explaining negative responses to advocacy and other unfavourable outcomes.

For SCS4, concerning advocacy initiatives, the verification of data is easier and can be conducted through collecting advocacy materials. One lead partner has a country office and has also undertaken visits to right-holders to gather their perspectives on participation in the advocacy campaign.

Concerning SCS5 and linked thematic indicators, much has been said in the previous section. The fact that the indicator has to be measured in annual reporting makes it so that, in between proper capacity assessments, even organisations with more sophisticated tools to assess capacities just count the number of organisations involved in activities, which might lead to inconsistencies and incorrectly taking output for outcome. A more realistic time frame for measuring changes in this indicator (e.g. only at baseline and end-line, or maybe midline) would have helped to have more consistent outcome-focused data.

Data collection on other indicators (from SCS6 below) is more straightforward, considering that no partnership measures SCS8, only one measures SCS9 and only two partnerships measure SCS7 (of which 1 does not do it anymore) – which would be the most complicated.

However, disaggregation of SCS6 (but also SCS5 and linked) is considered problematic, because the characteristics of being “women-led” or “youth-led” of one organisation can change over time, depending on changes in management and staff. One organisation for this reason has decided not to take into account changes and stick to the initial classification of the organisations they work with.

#### *4.1.4 Precision: Are the data sufficiently precise to present a fair picture of performance and enable management decision-making? (DQA questions 3 and 7)*

The precision of data is highly dependent on the degree to which the MFA indicators, which are high-level and broad, are further specified and operationalised by the partnerships. However, MFA indicators are in general not precise enough to be usable in decision-making and it is also questionable whether quantitative indicators on numbers of organisations or numbers of advocacy initiatives would be of any use at all for understanding how to have more impact with the projects, apart from reaching the established targets. Higher-level indicators SCS1 and SCS2 signal the achievement of outcomes that can be reached most often only at the end of the projects so are of little use for project management. SCS3 indicates some intermediate steps and signals that organisations are on the way to achieving SCS1 and SCS2 level outcomes, however not all

organisations have chosen for this indicator and now have to define their own intermediate milestones. SCS4 counts advocacy initiatives but it is not clear the meaning to be attached to numbers, also given the variable ways of counting. Concerning SCS5, as said before, four partnerships do apply capacity assessment tools that allow for a more nuanced assessment of the built capacities, but at different points in time than the annual monitoring (i.e. baseline and end-line, or baseline-midterm-endline). These more nuanced results are being used to establish complementarities and synergies between organisations with complementary capacities. One of these partnerships finds it reductive to translate the results of such assessments in a sharp number (organisations that have/have not enhanced capacities) but tries nonetheless. One partnership uses less structured tools such as annual conversations to assess capacities, which can lead to more qualitative/less precise information but in a way also information that can be more directly used for management purposes. In the case of data concerning the capacity strengthening of individuals (e.g. for indicator WRGE 5.1.2), pre- and post-training surveys are a common tool used by the majority of organisations. One particular issue often encountered with using this instrument is that many organisations have not established clear norms or targets of improvement, so any minimum difference between pre- and post-testing is regarded as a successful change and thus counted as an improvement of the indicator. The disaggregation by type of organisation is often done with some effort but does not lead to any consequent adjustment decision.

Two partnerships are seen to have a structured approach to capturing unintended results. Most partnerships, however, do not give specific attention to the monitoring and reporting of unintended effects. Generally, all partners explain that outcome harvesting is their main way of learning about unintended effects as it is a comprehensive way of observing and analysing a pathway of change and its effects. While unintended effects are often not reported on, partners describe that they are used for programme/partnership learning and adaptation in a non-formal way. As such, this could not be verified with documentation. We do see that the publishing in IATI and reporting in narrative reports is largely a reflection on prior set targets. This is a good way to track progress, but less inviting to document additional (positive and negative) unintended effects.

#### *4.1.5 Integrity: Do the data collection, analysis and reporting processes have clear mechanisms in place to reduce manipulation or errors in transcription? (DQA questions 4, 8, 9 and 10)*

Most of the MEL data handling discussed during interviews and observed in the desk research are manual processes. Data is often collected on paper, then manually entered into forms and manually used/analysed for reporting. This means that no automatic data verification takes place, and partners generally have no structured process to check for missing data, check integrity or spot errors (questions 8 and 9). As a result, seven partnerships were recommended to improve issues regarding data verification and eight partnerships to improve data checking for errors. In one partnership, we encountered that data is kept in many different places and forms and recommend immediate improvement. In the other partnerships, data collected by in-country partners is transferred to the in-country lead and then to the partnership lead, which is reviewed by multiple people who check if the data seems plausible and correct.

Systems in place to safeguard against biased results reporting are diverse and included at different levels within the MEL systems and involve in most cases requests for clarification and regular reflection sessions with partners. Most interviewees explained they have regular 1-to-1 data sensemaking meetings between the organisation that shared and the organisation that received the data, during which data is verified to the extent possible by asking questions. This usually happens twice, between the in-country leads and their partners as well as between international partnership leads and the in-country leads/consortium partners.

An explaining factor for the weaknesses identified in terms of verification of data but also for some other indicators is that some partners felt that some aspects of the conventional MEL approach requested by the MFA are not fully in line with the principles of feminist reporting. Examples include the verification of data and data sources or certain levels of disaggregation. The feminist approach to monitoring and evaluation acknowledges and combats power and gender dynamics between those who own and manage the knowledge and research subjects (rightsholders) as well as acknowledges that the process is more important than outcomes alone.

Applying a **feminist approach to monitoring and evaluation** requires capturing how changes in gender and power relations are produced and how they happen over the lifetime of a project/intervention. Feminist scholars have long questioned the dominance of particular forms of **knowledge** and challenged assumptions underpinning what “data” are and what ways of knowing count. They have noted the exclusion of women’s voices and knowledge in monitoring and evaluation.<sup>16</sup>

In our DQA we didn’t apply a systematic assessment of the application of the feminist approach to MEL by the different partnerships. The feminist approach to MEL is not yet at full capacity for those partnerships and/or organisations that systematically adopt it. At the present stage of project implementation, where the relationships between those who manage the data (the MEL responsible persons/the consultants, etc.) and the rightsholders begin to consolidate, it is important for the partners to reflect on the construction of a solid relationship of trust between those who collect and verify the data and those who provide them (the rightsholders/the partners/institutions/etc.). In phase 2, we found that most partnership leads are committed to strengthening their application of some of the principles of feminist MEL even if they don’t name it so more emphasis on learning and qualitative information, participation and involvement of rightsholders, etc. One partner flagged that they record also backlashes of lobby and advocacy, which is typical of feminist MEL.

Double counting is mostly checked for manually when consolidating data and the country level and/or at the global level. It is seen to be most relevant if multiple partnerships work in the same region, which is often not the case. Double counting over time, referring to counting the same organisations over different years of reporting, has been an issue for SCS5 but is now clarified because of attention to this by the MFA. Partnerships now only count organisations in the first year in which they are enrolled and put 0 on the actual of the following years if they work together with the same CSOs, or just add the newly enrolled ones. One organisation still has a few issues about double counting horizontally when aggregating data on organisations participating in different components of the programme, but is building a database of unique organisations to avoid that. Similarly, checking for errors is mostly done when data is consolidated either at the country or global level. Knowledge of tools like trend analysis, outliers analysis and others is not widespread and most analysis by partners is intuitive and on the spot, with most of the MEL data handling being manual.

As for survey quality (DQA question 4), only two partnerships were found to use surveys to collect data. These seem to implement good survey practices, one using SurveyMonkey and one hiring an external company to execute the surveys. Other partnerships do not make use of survey data collection, other than simple pre- and post-training questionnaires.

Looking at the security of data (DQA question 10), interviewees were all aware of measures to secure the anonymity of participants if needed and data set security was mostly arranged by limited access to online or local storage of data. As technological and digital developments develop fast, the need was recognised to keep up to date with data security measures. Two partnerships

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<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Ahmad, N. (2021), "Feminist Approaches to Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning", Sport, Gender and Development (Emerald Studies in Sport and Gender), Emerald Publishing Limited, Bingley, pp. 191-209. <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-83867-863-020211008>.

indicated they are currently reviewing and improving data security. Examples named are improving the security of cloud storage of files and improving procedures for sharing data between organisations. In the case of weak security of data, the main improvement recommended is to limit access to data files currently accessible organisation-wide to only those users that need access to the data.

#### 4.1.6 *Timeliness: Are the data sufficiently timely and current (up to date) to influence management decision-making? (DQA question 6)*

Organisations are generally aware of the timelines of the MEL system. Typically, progress is tracked continuously, and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier partners produce semi-annual reports to in-country leads. However, the majority of interviews showed that lessons learned that influence decision-making are mostly drawn from other moments in the year than those connected to the MFA reporting cycle. The organisations draw lessons from ongoing monitoring and this information from the general monitoring system is also used for the MFA indicators. The eventual MFA indicators, however, are seen as necessary for accountability and compliance, keeping track of progress, but less so to inform learning and decision-making. Partners explained that they find it a challenge to intertwine the MFA indicators with learning and decision-making. The data they use more explicitly for learning is typically more narrative and procedural, coming from learning sessions or similar meetings/events. The MFA indicators seem to be perceived as merely quantitative and the understanding of complementary explanations as qualitative narrative data seem not to have reached 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier partners.

The fact that all indicators are measured annually, in principle, does not take into account the different short-term or long-term achievability of results, however, in some cases, untimeliness is starting to be an issue. Reporting on SCS1 and SCS2 annually does not make much sense, but some partnerships at midterm haven't even yet started to seriously collect data on these outcome indicators and are making only now themselves questions on how to measure them. Reporting on SCS5 annually might be too ambitious (and lead to inconsistency as explained above), but not reporting improvements at least at midline might make the measurement insufficient to adjust the programme focus and approach when needed.

## 4.2 Reflection of results reported in relation to actual situation (RQ2)

The next paragraph relates to research question 2: *To what extent do the (intended and unintended) results at the output and outcome level reported by the partnership programmes reflect the actual situation? Are there any interesting (intended or unintended) results that have not been captured in the monitoring reports?*

### **Reported results reflect the actual situation, while outcomes and mechanisms are harder to capture**

We find that most results reported by partnerships are a comprehensive reflection of activities and their results on the output level. With the TPM spot checks, we have been able to verify some of the reported results from the perspectives of project participants, rightsholders or other external stakeholders. A challenge faced in the nature of the SCS partnerships is that changes or results are often intangible and hard to measure and in such a volatile context as the OPT, there are enormous setbacks from the environment that make it difficult to establish the role of strengthened capacities. The results of skills improvement, behaviour change, and meetings or events taking place might not be visible at a later point in time when TPM is performed. Within these limitations, the TPM spot checks did confirm reported activities and results to some extent. The most common examples that



could be verified are participation in training, having received grants and self-reported strengthened capacities. When interviewees were asked for more detailed information about these activities and results, however, interviewees were not able to explain. For indicator SCS5, for example, this concerns questions about the quality of activities undertaken, changes in their lobby and advocacy activities compared to before the SCS implementation period, or the type of capacities strengthened. A similar issue was seen in obtaining information about the other indicators. Because no TPM took place in phase 2, a more detailed reflection on how the results reported relate to the actual situation is not feasible. We can only conclude that the general trend we have observed is that reported results could be confirmed by involved 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier organisations and their constituents/rightsholders.

### 4.3 Linkage of reported outcomes to implemented activities (RQ3)

This section addresses research question 3: [Can the reported results, especially those at the outcome level, convincingly be linked to the implemented activities? If so, how? If not, why not?](#)

#### **Measurement of contribution to reported results is often limited to immediate results and self-explanatory linkages**

Partnerships generally do not make assumptions about the mechanisms whereby effects are obtained or about attribution. Rather, contribution to an effect is substantiated by the activities undertaken and outputs delivered. A log frame or different diagram is used to link MFA indicators to lower-level indicators related to projects or components led by partners from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tier, in line with the Theories of Change (ToCs) of partnerships. In some instances, the entire partnership works with these linkages and in others, only the partnership lead is tasked with linking the indicators and aggregating the data correctly and consistently. Generally, partners were engaged with developing, linking or reviewing the indicators.

We have seen in multiple partnerships that activities are equalled to outputs or even outcomes. For example, participation in a training or event is counted as a strengthened capacity of an individual. This is a very direct linkage of outputs and (immediate) outcomes to implemented activities, but not always valid because it includes assumptions about the effect of implemented activities. Another frequently seen linkage of activities to outputs is using pre- and post-training assessment. For indicators relatively closely related to the activity, this can be a good way to measure immediate results. Sustained results on a longer term are rarely seen to be measured. Multiple partnerships have indicated they would like to take up collecting data on contributions to longer-term outcomes, but have a limited MEL capacity to do so. As most organisations involved work with funding from multiple donors, the SCS funding contribution would need to be distinguished from the overall organisational impact on for example capacity strengthening. The MTR, however, will provide an opportunity to dive deeper into the linkage of reported outcomes to implemented activities. In phase 2, we will be able to analyse the linkage of more outcome indicators to activities, as most indicators from phase 1 were relatively closely linked to activities already.

#### **IATI data often includes qualitative comments about activity linkages, complemented by more extensive narrative reports**

Analysis of the data partnerships published in IATI shows that almost all partnerships provide a qualitative comment to explain which organisations or individuals were engaged and/or what activities took place with those organisations and individuals. These comments, however, frequently do not explain *how* an activity contributes to the desired effect and if this is verified. For example, comments include a count of workshops and events and describe the number of individuals engaged. Only in a few cases, we found a reference to the link between the activities and results,

e.g. ‘...online annual progress survey and post-training assessments ...’, revealed that our capacity-strengthening training and financial support has contributed to the organisation’s capacity to use effective advocacy tools and write proposals and reports to attract funders attention and garner support from duty bearers’. Only one partnership did not include qualitative descriptions to link activities to published results and for one partnership no IATI data was found at all.

The narrative reports (annual report 2022) often complement information about linkages between activities and outputs/outcomes, providing a deeper analysis of stories of change, success stories or narratives on *how* activities contribute to outputs/outcomes.

Throughout the interviews, we note that organisations perceive the monitoring requirements to be predominantly quantitative, with qualitative comments in IATI perceived as merely serving to explain the quantitative findings. The intention of the MFA to balance and combine qualitative and quantitative data seems not to have reached all partners involved in reporting.

#### 4.4 Downward accountability (RQ4)

This section addresses research question 4: **To what extent is downward accountability part of the monitoring systems of strategic partnerships? How is downward accountability organised and who is involved?** Downward accountability can take place at different levels, most importantly between the different tiers of the partnership and between the organisations and their rightsholders or target group. In line with the MFA guidance note, we focus this section on the latter: the accountability of NGOs and CSOs towards the end rightsholders. This can involve informing, consulting or engaging them in different forms.

##### **Limited downward accountability seems a result of unclear expectations and efforts to limit the burden for partners and rightsholders**

Partnerships generally do not have an integral approach to downward accountability, but elements of it are seen throughout the MEL systems. Many partners at the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tiers have continuous communication with their participants/rightsholders, but this is often not focused on MEL-related content. Partly, downward accountability is operationalised by including feedback questions to participants of trainings, e.g. asking them to grade different elements of the training and provide points for improvement. One partnership has established a reference group consisting of one rightsholder as a representative in every country. This group is, among others, engaged in aligning the MEL system and MEL results to rightsholder needs. Another partner explained that they sometimes employ people who participated in their training to collect data for MEL purposes. Apart from these examples of downward accountability, most communication with participants/rightsholders is not MEL-related. It is not common for organisations to share MEL reports or extracts/summaries thereof with the people they engage with/reach with the partnership (for example on their website/media channels) or to organise feedback meetings or data validation/interpretation meetings with target groups. Although many partnerships have the aim to improve downward accountability, it seems that most are unsure about how to do this and do not know exactly what is expected of them by the MFA or the rest of the partnership. Multiple international partnership leads have indicated in interviews that they intend to share more learning materials back with the people data is collected from. One partnership, for example, aims to produce accessible overviews of lessons learned and success stories, based on data collected for the mid-term reviews. It seems, however, that the most useful information for downward accountability is the MEL data available to 3<sup>rd</sup> tier organisations and at times Tier 2 organisations, because once data is aggregated to the partnership level it becomes less context-specific and less suitable for in-country sharing.

Another reason why downward accountability is limited is that organisations do not want to burden other organisations and target groups more than necessary, as the organisations often deal with multiple MEL systems (their own and donors') and corresponding time investments and requirements. Some recommendations to improve downward accountability were made in the partnership reports.

#### 4.5 Follow-up of recommendations phase 1 (RQ5)

This section addresses research question 5: [To what extent have recommendations for the adoption of monitoring and evaluation systems as formulated in the DQA reports been implemented and led to improved MEL systems?](#)

As a result of limited data collection in phase 2, the insights into the follow-up of recommendations of phase 1 are few. Due to the current situation in Gaza and West Bank, partnerships have since October 2023 not seen opportunities to follow up on recommendations and to develop their MEL processes in general. Up to October 2023, partnerships generally do report developments in their MEL systems since phase 1 data collection, sometimes triggered or strengthened by the recommendations of phase 1. For example, one partnership explained that they have improved some data collection forms and tools to improve consistency in indicator definitions and data collection, and another one has given additional training to strengthen their partners in their MEL capabilities. In other cases, follow-up of recommendations proves difficult because of limited time and budget resources or digital infrastructure.

Many organisations were engaged in interviews in phase 1 and those conversations flagged some recommended improvements. Recommendations in the partnership report, however, were sent to in-country leads and not often shared further by the in-country leads. In phase 2, we have shared updated partnership reports with international lead partners as well.

##### **Developments in partnership learning**

One key recommendation of phase 1 concerned making more use of MEL information for learning purposes. The partnerships have different ways in which they report to learn together. Throughout the findings, we have identified some ways in which monitoring requirements and processes contribute to partnership learning, as data collection has stimulated reflections on the partnership approach and contributed to connecting these topics between the partners. Most interviewees agreed that the final data reported to the MFA is not very suitable for learning as the data is aggregated and generalised to a global level, but the processes that lead towards this do include opportunities to learn at more local levels. Especially data collection using outcome harvesting is often reported to contribute to learning. Many partnerships organise learning events or meetings, the results of which sometimes feed into monitoring data or vice versa: monitoring data is used as input for the learning events/meetings. There seems to be room for better integrating these activities which now often take place separately. One reason for this separation seems to be that partnerships want to make sure that learning activities have no interference from the interests at play when reporting on monitoring and evaluation for external parties, e.g. admitting the non achievement of results has no consequences for the funding of organisations.



## 5 Conclusions and recommendations

### 5.1 Synthesis of findings for research questions

Below the main findings of the TPM and DQA phase 1 are presented for each research question.

#### **RQ1 Organisation of monitoring systems**

MEL systems are still in development, but the processes at most organisations are now in place, with tools developed and staff trained. There is a clear division of roles and responsibilities within partnerships, although staff turnover affects consistency to some extent. MFA indicators have been mapped onto partnership indicators and partners are increasingly aware of the linkages. There are partnership guidelines for operationalising the MFA indicators, some of which are differently understood across partnerships but may serve the purpose within individual partnerships. Organisations find that gathering information on the indicators is feasible, while administering the data in the IATI system is experienced as a larger challenge. Data verification processes are mostly manual, almost all partnerships have multiple persons checking the same data although there are not external verification processes. After 7 October, some new challenges might come from the restriction of movements within the West Bank (and all the more in Gaza) to the possibility for staff to verify some of the information reported by local groups. Most partners conduct some kind of outcome harvesting to monitor for unintended effects on learning. This, however, does not feed into the IATI publishing as the IATI publishing is perceived as accountability-focused. Lessons learned at the implementation level can get lost in the translation to higher-level indicators reporting. Finally, it has to be noted that the organisation of the systems for monitoring results is highly linked to the organisational set-up of the partnership, with in-country consolidation only included for partnerships with a country programme. For two partnerships, only global results are reported.

#### **RQ2 Results and actual situation**

The indicators that were checked for TPM concerned outputs and immediate outcomes. With the TPM spot checks, we were able to verify some of the reported results from the perspectives of project participants, rightsholders or other external stakeholders. TPM on higher-level indicators did not take place because of the security developments in the OPT.

We found that most results reported are a comprehensive reflection of activities and their results at the output level. The most common examples that could be verified are participation in training, having received grants and self-reported strengthened capacities. More problematic is the outcome level reporting, as figures provided by partners on attendance of events and courses are often used to measure indicators of strengthened capacities of individuals and organisations. There are variable definitions of what an advocacy initiative is. Rightsholders could rarely elaborate on the quality of activities undertaken, changes in lobby and advocacy compared to before the SCS implementation period, or the type of capacities strengthened.

#### **RQ3 Results and links to implemented activities**

Measurement of contribution to reported results is often limited to immediate results. Long-term results which might potentially raise contribution/attribution issues are starting to be captured through some enhanced forms of outcome harvesting that also ask for substantiation of contributions. Self-explanatory linkages are presented between activities, outputs and outcomes, as hypothesized in the results frameworks of the partnerships, but without discussing the underlying assumptions. The narrative reports (annual report 2022) often complement information about linkages between activities and outputs/outcomes, by providing examples of success stories or

other change narratives. However, these illustrative examples do not say much about the overall effectiveness of interventions and the project contributions. Four out of ten mid-term reviews have conducted some kind of contribution analysis although the detail at the level of OPT is not always available.

#### **RQ4 Downward accountability**

It is not common for organisations to share MEL reports or extracts/summaries thereof with the people they engage with/reach with the partnership or to organise feedback meetings or data validation/interpretation meetings with target groups. Although many organisations have indicated in the interviews that they aim to improve downward accountability in the context of adopting elements of “feminist MEL”, it seems that most are not familiar with how to do this and also do not know exactly what is expected of them by the MFA or the rest of the partnership. Another reason that downward accountability is limited, is that organisations do not want to burden other organisations and target groups more than necessary, as the organisations often deal with multiple MEL systems (their own and donors’) and corresponding time investment and requirements.

#### **RQ5 Follow-up of recommendations phase 1**

Due to the current context of the OPT being violently disrupted by the escalation of the conflict in Gaza and increasing violence in the West Bank, follow-up of recommendations of phase 1 is limited. Some partnerships we have been able to talk to, do report MEL-developments related to continuous improvements of indicator definitions, data collection tools and capacitation of partner organisations. Others, however, are restricted in their follow-up of recommendations by limited resources. While there are some reflections on phase 1 meetings and reports having contributed to strengthening MEL systems, most developments seem to be a result of ongoing partnership learning structures in place.

## **5.2 Overall conclusions**

Generally speaking (with a few outliers), the partnerships seem to take MEL seriously and are willing to commit time and effort to provide reliable and valid information. There is of course room for improvement in certain aspects, such as digitalisation, or a better understanding of differences between outputs and outcomes. These are normal challenges, especially in programmes focused on capacity building, human rights, behavioural changes and other “intangibles”. One could also point to the need for greater downward accountability towards 3<sup>rd</sup> tier partners and constituencies. Lead partners could also better use the MEL capacities of in-country partners and involve them in MEL to a greater extent, not in terms of burden but in terms of including their perspectives and contextual knowledge in global reporting (some partnerships do not have any country by country reporting at the moment).

Several improvements are thus possible, however, they also cost time and money and one should also look at the overall efficiency of the system. On the one hand, there is a centralised reporting system built around a common ToC and results framework that is necessarily broadly defined to suit different contexts. Adaptation is allowed and encouraged, but it takes time and effort on behalf of the partnership leads, as well as the other international and in-country partners. Reporting back on the indicators is also time-consuming, especially if more qualitative explanations are needed (like it is the case of IATI publishing). On the other hand, many partnerships/ partners have their own internal MEL systems, as well as learning practices, that are not necessarily connected to specific donors. Alternative approaches such as outcome harvesting or “feminist approaches” are adopted, in some cases – while in other cases learning is more informal and strictly linked to implementation. At the moment it seems that reporting along the lines established by the SCS

framework is useful for accountability purposes. It is not clear if it is really useful for the organisations' learning and also for the MFA, as the selection of indicators is left free and some of the partnerships indicate they on purpose selected the most 'easy' indicators for reporting.

Data collected via SCS5 and linked indicators seems of little use for in-country partners (it was not possible to verify the same for the higher level indicators, in absence of a mission in the OPT in Phase II). For OPT, the baseline had highlighted that the CSOs already have good general organisational capacities, and required strengthening in very specific thematic areas as well as international lobby support. But it seems that these areas are just the most intangible and "political", not very suitable for technocratic approaches to measurement, or on the contrary too "technical" for a common framework. Also, for some partnerships there is no country programme, so the consolidation of indicators which happens in headquarters yields more abstract information, far from the field experiences and is not useful for learning in local contexts. To make capacity-related information more useful, some partnerships have adopted organisational capacity assessment tools and promoted the use of results to identify complementarities and synergies between partner organisations. The actual added value of these efforts has yet to be demonstrated.

## 5.3 Recommendations

Without pretending to provide exhaustive answers to the above questions, the following recommendations can be addressed to the various stakeholders based on the research findings and subsequent discussions with implementing partners:

### 5.3.1 Recommendations to MFA

Provided that activities will continue despite the ongoing war, the following recommendations could apply:

- MFA should provide clearer guidance to partnerships on the importance of operationalising concepts such as "strengthened capacities" or "advocacy initiatives" as well as those indicators that will undergo DQA assessment in the following phase; all this without prejudice to the necessary tailoring to be made by partnerships themselves, to take into account, not only the partnership programme specificities, but also regional/country specificities;
- MFA should set realistic expectations concerning the ongoing monitoring of outcomes that require long-term change processes and sophisticated measurement tools, often more suitable for an independent evaluation (mid-term or – even better - final). All this is for efficiency reasons but also to avoid outcome measurement being replaced by output measurement (e.g. participation in the programme equalled strengthened capacities). In particular, for L&A capacity strengthening, there should be awareness that if one wants to avoid mere self-reporting, the best way to measure capacities is to look at how they are used;
- MFA should discuss with partnerships how to balance MEL efforts and continuous learning with efficient time and resource management. Efforts should continue simplifying the process of data entry in IATI. Overall, space should be left for other than theory-based MEL approaches that partner organisations use on their own, and that are best suited to their strategies, programmes and themes. The ministry should also foster exchanges on good MEL practices among partners, including the partners' own MEL practices, beyond the measurement of indicators;
- Reporting requirements for SCS5, SCS7 and SCS8 differ. While SCS6 and SCS8 have an annual reach, the focus of SCS1, SCS2, SCS3, SCS4, SCS5 and SCS7 is on unique persons, organisations, etc irrespective of the number of activities they attended. The qualitative information (asked in the comment box) is to be used to establish the magnitude of change in qualitative terms. Many partnerships struggle with this distinction, and qualitative information

about further improvements often lacks. MFA should clarify the importance of the qualitative element in the use of basket and other indicators, as in partnerships such information does not always reach the country level. This leads to different understandings of reporting priorities and goals. At the same time, MFA should report back to partnerships its analysis of the quantitative and qualitative information collected in IATI, in a spirit of downward accountability;

- Conflict sensitivity should increasingly inform MEL systems and the way MFA asks for reporting and information in the OPT and should be a point of attention if an MTR will be conducted in the upcoming months at the policy framework level.

### 5.3.2 *Recommendations for partnership lead organisations*

- Partnership lead organisations should better integrate MEL efforts for learning and for accountability, connecting learning opportunities at multiple levels. In particular, MFA indicators, properly understood also in their qualitative nature - as embedded in the partnerships results framework together with partnership-specific indicators – could be used to guide reflection and learning also at the country level, complementing the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier organisations' own MEL systems. All this is to avoid that reporting against the results framework becomes a mere “compliance matter” while learning, when it happens, is totally disconnected from the results framework;
- Partnership leads should give proper space to country-level reporting, in their global reports, involving in-country partners to a greater extent, and learning from the MEL practices of in-country partners. Countries that haven't been sampled in the MTR should be included in the final evaluations;
- Partnership lead organisations should stimulate exchange between their in-country partners on good MEL practices, similar to how exchange about project implementation is frequently ongoing. The MEL good practices of 2<sup>nd</sup> tier organisations should be disseminated on a wider scale when replicable, and fed into the global level MEL system. MEL officers from 2<sup>nd</sup> tier organisations that wish so should be involved at least in some of the activities of the MEL “communities of practice” that are being established by some partners to include consortium partners' MEL officers;
- Partnership lead organisations should provide clear guidance and feedback on the difference between outputs and outcomes, particularly as far as SCS5 is concerned, to avoid output data being used to measure outcome indicators. Clear guidance on how to count advocacy initiatives under SCS4 should be provided as well;
- To capture steps towards SCS1 and SCS2 targets, guidance should be provided on how to record intermediate L&A successes that go beyond ‘creating space’ but are not yet ‘improved implementation’ or ‘change’ in policies, laws, regulations, etc. Such intermediate successes should be reported also in IATI in the comments part, if possible;
- Partnership lead organisations should encourage country partners to improve downward accountability towards their constituencies and target groups and also provide related support (as well as resources, if possible);
- Finally, while MEL system strengthening and MEL tool improvement is a positive development, we also note a trade-off between improving quality and maintaining comparability and consistency throughout the implementation period. As partnerships have now completed their mid-term reviews, it is important to also value keeping new data collected comparable with earlier data collected.

### 5.3.3 *Recommendations to partner organisations in OPT*

- In-country partner organisations should take the initiative to propose their consortium leader's suggestions on how to embed MFA and partnership indicators better into their programmes and



activities. This is to make them useful for their learning needs while safeguarding consistent data collection, interpretation and reporting across the partnership;

- In particular, in-country partners in collaboration with lead partners should develop objective norms and criteria for assessing capacity strengthening as much as possible. At the moment there is the use of self-assessment tools, but it would be more important to develop indirect indicators looking at how capacities strengthened through training and coaching, among others, are actually used in lobby and advocacy activities. This implies analysing progress or lack of progress on higher level indicators (SCS1, SCS2 and SCS3 and linked sector indicators) in light of context vs. internal capacities;
- In-country partner organisations could develop the collection of external feedback from rightsholders as well as external observers on the level of attainment of their objectives and the quality of their activities. Such feedback should be used for organisational learning and fed into the partnership reports. Downward accountability to 3rd tier organisations and rightsholders could also be improved by sharing MEL results and engaging them in data interpretation. However, this should not take too much time and resources from the actual implementation of activities. It would be good to adopt MEL practices that join implementation with MEL, such as reflection sessions, outcome harvesting but also analysis of unachieved outcomes;
- In-country partner organisations, within the limits of available resources, could better formalize data verification processes and support them with digital tools and processes, e.g. by introducing automated signalling of missing data and outliers;
- Finally, it is important that all partners continue developing and keeping up-to-date security measures, in all concerned fields, from safeguarding of privacy of rights defenders to the security of data storage. The national context guides in applying the do no harm principles, but on some common data security issues some guidance from the partnerships would be beneficial.



# Annex 1: List of interviewees

## International leads and 1<sup>st</sup> Tier organisations (Phase 1 and again in Phase 2)

	Organisation	Position/function	Partnership	DQA / TPM
1	AWDF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme coordinator</li> <li>• Project coordinator &amp; temporary MEL coordinator.</li> </ul>	Leading from the South	DQA (General MEL-system)
2	Both Ends	Programme coordinator	Fair, Green and global alliance	DQA (General MEL-system)
3	Just Associates Gender@Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme coordinator</li> <li>• Senior programme manager</li> </ul>	Power up	DQA (General MEL-system)
4	KIT – Royal Tropical Institute	M&E advisor	Yw4A	DQA (General MEL-system)
5	Kvinna till Kvinna	Regional Consortium Coordinator & MEL	Fem Pauer	DQA (General MEL-system)
6	Mama Cash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme coordinator</li> <li>• PMEL officer</li> </ul>	Count me in	DQA (General MEL-system)
7	Oxfam Novib	MEL coordinator	Fair for all	DQA (General MEL-system)
8	Oxfam Novib	Mel coordinators (2x)	Masarouna	DQA (General MEL-system)
9	Pax for Peace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme manager</li> <li>• Policy advisor PMEL (2x)</li> <li>• PMEL advisor partnership</li> </ul>	Strengthening civil courage	DQA (General MEL-system)
10	Pax for peace	Country lead OPT	Strengthening civil courage	DQA
11	UAF	MEL coordinator	Count me in	DQA
12	War Child	Unit manager MEAL	Palestinian women and girls lead and engage (We Rise)	DQA (General MEL-system)
13	Wilde Ganzen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme coordinator</li> <li>• MEL coordinator</li> </ul>	Giving for change	DQA (General MEL-system)

## In-country organisations

Partnership	Organisations interviewed phase 1	Organisations interviewed phase 2
Masarouna	3 partner organisations (4 interviews)	
Fair, green and global alliance	1 partner organisation 1 former partner organisation (no longer engaged)	
Strengthening civil courage	2 partner organisations 1 external stakeholder	
Giving for change	1 partner organisation 1 FGD rightsholders	1 partner organisation

Partnership	Organisations interviewed phase 1	Organisations interviewed phase 2
Power Up	1 partner organisation	
YW4A	2 partner organisations	
Palestinian women and girls lead and engage	4 partner organisations 2 external stakeholders 1 FGD rightsholders	
Leading from the South	2 partner organisations	
Fair for all	3 partner organisations 1 FGD rightsholders	1 partner organisation
Fem Pauer	2 partner organisations 1 FGD rightsholders	1 partner organisation
Economic Center	1 external stakeholder	

## Annex 2 Research matrix and DQA criteria

In the evaluation matrix presented below, we link to the five research questions to specific indicators and indicate for every research question which element of the DQA & TPM applies and which research methods contribute to answering the research questions.

Research question	Indicators / judgement criteria	Research element		Data collection methods <sup>17</sup>						Data analysis methods
		DQA	TPM	DR	ES	IP	IES	FGD	PS	
<p>1.How have the different partnerships organised their systems for monitoring results? Are there any systems in place to safeguard against biased results reporting? If so, how does it function? Are there any systems in place to monitor unintended effects (positive and negative)? If so, how does it function?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M&amp;E manual or established M&amp;E policy;</li> <li>Result Frameworks and linkages between selected indicators at partnership level with SCS level and thematic frameworks, including indicator reference sheets;</li> <li>M&amp;E data collection systems (data flow diagrams) implemented by the SCS partnerships;</li> <li>Scores on the quality aspects of the data collection (data validity, reliability, timeliness, precision and integrity) for selected indicators, including for safeguarding against biases and monitoring of unintended effects.</li> </ul>	X		X		X		X	X	Data flow diagram
<p>2.To what extent do the (intended and unintended) results at output and outcome level reported by the partnership programmes reflect the actual situation? Are there any interesting (intended or unintended) results that have not been captured in the monitoring reports?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Result Frameworks and linkages between selected output and outcome indicators at partnership level with SCS level and thematic frameworks;</li> <li>Data flow diagrams for selected output and outcome indicators;</li> <li>Scores on the quality aspects of the data collection, in particular reliability and precision;</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Data flow diagram Analysis of quality aspects of data collection. Comparative Analysis of

<sup>17</sup> DR=Desk review of partnership documents, ES= external sources (analysed with desk research), IP=Interviews partnerships, IES = Interviews external stakeholders. FGD= focus groups discussions, PS= participatory sessions with Partnerships.

Research question	Indicators / judgement criteria	Research element		Data collection methods <sup>17</sup>						Data analysis methods
		DQA	TPM	DR	ES	IP	IES	FGD	PS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extent to which reported results are validated in the TPM spot checks.</li> </ul>									reported results and spot checks
3.Can the reported results, especially those at outcome level, be linked to the implemented activities? If so, how? If not, why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Result Frameworks and linkages between indicators at partnership level with SCS level and thematic frameworks, including indicator reference sheets;</li> <li>Linkages between outputs of activities with outcomes in the Result Frameworks;</li> <li>Scores on the quality aspects of the data collection (data validity, reliability, timeliness, precision and integrity) for selected indicators;</li> <li>Extent to which reported results are validated in the TPM spot checks.</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	Assessment of plausible contribution of reported results to the interventions
4.To what extent is downward accountability part of the monitoring systems of strategic partnerships? How is downward accountability organised and who is involved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established reporting/communication to people involved/reached by the project/ constituencies (e.g. website publications, focused on informing) and inclusivity thereof;</li> <li>Established feedback and validation mechanisms or meetings with target groups (focused on learning and consulting and follow up);</li> <li>Participation of target group/ constituencies in MEL processes/evaluations.</li> </ul>	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	Data flow diagram
<i>Phase 2 - 5.To what extent have recommendations for adaption of monitoring and evaluation systems as formulated in the DQA reports been implemented and led to improved MEL systems?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extent to which recommendations from phase 1 have been implemented or are still valid;</li> <li>Extent to which MEL systems have improved between phase 1 and phase 2.</li> </ul>	X				X		X	X	Comparative analysis

The below table provides the key questions for the different quality aspects guiding the systematic assessment of the selected indicators and overall MEL system.

Quality aspect	Key question	Sub-question (s) (# DQA template)
Overall MEL System	What is the adequacy and quality of partnership/ partners overall MEL systems?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent do partners have adequate systems and capacity to report progress against key indicators?</li> <li>Do the MEL systems of the partners produce high-quality data that can support management and generate programme learning?</li> <li>Does the MEL system supports the MEL strategy of the Partnership/ programme</li> <li>To what extent is downward accountability part of the monitoring systems of the partnerships? How is downward accountability organised and who is involved?</li> </ul> (overall score)
Validity	Does the data clearly and adequately represent the intended result?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the indicator(s) clearly defined (i.e. with appropriate meta-data)?</li> <li>To what extent is (are) the ToC indicators (which is (are) mapped to the MFA indicator) valid indicators (according to the MFA indicator definitions)?</li> </ul> (1)
Reliability	Are the indicator definition and data collection and analysis processes clear, and are these consistently applied over time?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the indicators definition and data collection and analysis methods documented?</li> <li>Has the data been collected through a consistent process (i.e. tools and methods are not changed over time)?</li> </ul> (2, 5)
Precision	Are the data sufficiently precise to present a fair picture of performance and enable management decision-making?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the data collection processes/ methods and instruments/ tools of sufficient quality to ensure clear, consistent, accurate and complete data collection? Are they designed in a way to “do no harm”?</li> </ul> (3,7)
Integrity	Do the data collection, analysis and reporting processes have clear mechanisms in place to reduce manipulation or errors in transcription?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What procedures (if any) are used to check the quality of the data which is reported for the indicator (e.g. spot-checks; data verification, etc)?</li> <li>To what extent is there a system/mechanism in place to check in the database for duplication, missing records, transcription errors and manipulation errors, logical errors, and any unusual progress?</li> <li>To what extent are supporting documents available, including pictures, attendance sheets, contracting documents, contacts of people involved or reached, GPS coordinates, etc.) to check and verify the integrity of data?</li> </ul> (4,8,9,10)
Timelines	Are the data sufficiently timely and current (up-to-date) to influence management decision-making?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are data collected as per the agreed frequency and timeline?</li> <li>Are the data supplied frequently enough for management's needs?</li> </ul> (6)





## Annex 3 SCS Indicators and IATI guidelines

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
1	SCS1 # of laws and policies for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement	Number of concrete changes in implementation of laws, policies and international agreements of targeted governments, private sector and societal actors as a result of CSOs engagement	<p>Explain how, as a result of CSO L&amp;A activities, governments, private sector and societal groups improved the implementation of laws, policies and practices to support sustainability and (gender) inclusiveness.</p> <p>In providing qualitative data it helps to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>describing the implementation process and extent of progress, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies (see also Table 1 in 2.1.44);</li> <li>explaining the advocacy process towards implementation, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies.</li> </ul> <p>From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where L&amp;A activities did not result in the desired change, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for bringing about change.</p> <p><b>Indicator codes &amp; disaggregation</b> This indicator is disaggregated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Laws;</li> <li>Governmental policies;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CS011 # of laws for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement;</li> <li>SCS012 # of governmental policies for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement;</li> <li>SCS013 # of private sector company policies for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement;</li> <li>SCS014 # of by-laws for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement;</li> <li>SCS015 # of international agreements for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement.</li> </ul>

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Private sector company policies;</li> <li>- By-laws;</li> <li>- International agreements.</li> </ul>	
2	SCS2 # of laws, policies blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement.	Number of concrete and significant changes in laws or policies as a result of CSO engagement.	<p>Explain how, as a result of CSO L&amp;A activities, governments, private sector and societal groups change their laws and policies, to support sustainability and (gender) inclusiveness.</p> <p>In answering this question it helps to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describing the content of law, policy, attitude and norm changes;</li> <li>• explaining the advocacy process towards changes, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies. (see also the table in 2.1.4).</li> </ul> <p>From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where L&amp;A activities did not result in the desired change, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for bringing about change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCS021 # of laws blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement;</li> <li>• SCS022 # of governmental policies blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement;</li> <li>• SCS023 # of private sector company policies blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement;</li> <li>• SCS024 # of by-laws blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement;</li> <li>• SCS025 # of international agreements blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement.</li> </ul>
H	<b>H: Changes in (inter)national laws, policies, norms and practices leading to decrease of barriers to SRHR and HIV/AIDS services</b>	N/A	For this indicator please report on changes in international resolutions such as CPD, CSW, HLPF, 3rd Committee and HRC; that where brought about with contribution of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SRH015 # of laws blocked, adopted, improved leading to decrease of barriers to SRHR and HIV/AIDS services;</li> </ul>

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
			<p>your program. At (sub)national this could entail changes in for instance health laws &amp; policies, SRH policy, a reproductive health bill, the CSE curriculum, HIV/aids policy, termination of pregnancy act/abortion act, relevant local by-laws incl. on CEFM, FGM and others. Changes in norms and practices are defined at the institutional level, not the individual level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SRH016 # of governmental policies blocked, adopted, improved leading to decrease of barriers to SRHR and HIV/AIDS services;</li> <li>• SRH017 # of private sector company policies blocked, adopted, improved leading to decrease of barriers to SRHR and HIV/AIDS services;</li> <li>• SRH018 # of by-laws blocked, adopted, improved for leading to decrease of barriers to SRHR and HIV/AIDS services;</li> <li>• SRH019 # of international agreements blocked, adopted, improved leading to decrease of barriers to SRHR and HIV/AIDS services.</li> </ul>
WRGE 1.1	<b>WRGE 1.1. # of laws, policies and strategies blocked, adopted or improved to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private life</b>	Number of concrete and significant changes in laws or policies as a result of CSO engagement.	<p>Explain how, as a result of CSO L&amp;A activities, governments, private sector and societal groups change their laws and policies, to support sustainability and (gender)inclusiveness.</p> <p>In answering this question it helps to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describing the content of law, policy, attitude and norm changes</li> <li>...explaining the advocacy process towards changes, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WRG001 # of laws blocked, adopted or improved to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private life;</li> <li>• WRG002 # of governmental policies &amp; strategies blocked, adopted or improved to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private life;</li> <li>• WRG003 # of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private life;</li> </ul>

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
			From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where L&A activities did not result in the desired change, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for bringing about change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WRG004 # of by-laws blocked, adopted or improved to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private life;</li> <li>• WRG005 # of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private life.</li> </ul>
WRGE 2.1	<b>WRGE 2.1. # of laws, policies and strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere.</b>	Number of concrete and significant changes in laws or policies as a result of CSO engagement.	<p>Explain how, as a result of CSO L&amp;A activities, governments, private sector and societal groups change their laws and policies, to support sustainability and (gender)inclusiveness.</p> <p>In answering this question it helps to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describing the content of law, policy, attitude and norm changes;</li> <li>• explaining the advocacy process towards changes, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies.</li> </ul> <p>From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where L&amp;A activities did not result in the desired change, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for bringing about change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WRG012 # of laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere;</li> <li>• WRG013 # of governmental policies &amp; strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere;</li> <li>• WRG014 # of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere;</li> <li>• WRG015 # of by-laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote</li> </ul>

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
				women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere; WRG016 # of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative.
WRGE 3.1	<b>WRGE 3.1. # of laws, policies and strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship</b>	Number of concrete and significant changes in laws or policies as a result of CSO engagement.	<p>Explain how, as a result of CSO L&amp;A activities, governments, private sector and societal groups change their laws and policies, to support sustainability and (gender)inclusiveness.</p> <p>In answering this question it helps to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>describing the content of law, policy, attitude and norm changes;</li> <li>explaining the advocacy process towards changes, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies.</li> </ul> <p>From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where L&amp;A activities did not result in the desired change, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for bringing about change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WRG023 # of laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship;</li> <li>WRG024 # of governmental policies &amp; strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship;</li> <li>WRG025 # of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship;</li> <li>WRG026 # of by-laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship;</li> <li>WRG027 # of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship;</li> </ul>

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
WRGE 4.1	<b>WRGE 4.1. # of laws, policies and strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's meaningful and equal participation and leadership in conflict prevention, peace- and state-building and protect women's and girls' rights in crisis and (post-)conflict situations.</b>	Number of concrete and significant changes in laws or policies as a result of CSO engagement.	<p>Explain how, as a result of CSO L&amp;A activities, governments, private sector and societal groups change their laws and policies, to support sustainability and (gender)inclusiveness.</p> <p>In answering this question it helps to consider...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>...describing the content of law, policy, attitude and norm changes</li> <li>...explaining the advocacy process towards changes, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies</li> </ul> <p>From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where L&amp;A activities did not result in the desired change, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for bringing about change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WRG034 # of laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's meaningful and equal participation and leadership in conflict prevention, peace- and state-building and protect women's and girls' rights in crisis and (post-)conflict situations;</li> <li>WRG035 # of governmental policies &amp; strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's meaningful and equal participation and leadership in conflict prevention, peace- and state-building and protect women's and girls' rights in crisis and (post-)conflict situations;</li> <li>WRG036 # of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's meaningful and equal participation and leadership in conflict prevention, peace- and state-building and protect women's and girls' rights in crisis and (post-)conflict situations.</li> </ul>
3	<b>SCS3 # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage</b>	Number of times L&A targets include CSOs in the decision making process + number of times L&A targets react upon the positions of the CSOs by adopting their argumentation and terminology + number of times L&A targets react upon the positions of	Explain how CSOs have played a transformative role in decision making processes through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where CSOs were unable to play a transformative, and/or where other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This indicator has two indicator codes: SCS032 is to be used to report on # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space at subnational level. Creating space on all other levels can be reported under SCS031;</li> <li>SCS031 # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO</li> </ul>

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
		CSOs by putting their issues on the agenda.	<p>actors (not CSOs) were more important for this.</p> <p>In answering this question it helps to consider...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>explaining how CSO involvement changes decision making processes and policy discussions of targeted government, private sector and societal actors ...explaining how and what frames introduced by CSOs are taken up by targeted;</li> <li>actors, for instance by the media, in policy documents and in official speeches ...explaining how and what CSO issues reach the agenda of targeted government, private sector and societal actors.</li> </ul>	<p>demands and positions through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage at national and international level;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCS032 # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage at sub-national level.</li> </ul>
WRGE 1.2	<b>WRGE 1.2 # of times that CSOs (disaggregated by women-led, youth-led or other and formal/ informal) succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on violence against women and girls, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building</b>	CSO's succeeding in creating space for their demands and position on VAWG can include the number of times: L&A targets include CSOs in the decision making process; targets react upon the positions of the CSOs by adopting their argumentation and terminology; and L&A targets react upon the positions of CSOs by putting their issues on the agenda.	Explain how CSOs have played a transformative role in decision making processes through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where CSOs were unable to play a transformative, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for this.	Disaggregated by women-led, youth-led or other and formal/ informal CSOs.
WRGE 2.2	<b>WRGE 2.2 # of times that CSOs (disaggregated by women-led,</b>	CSO's succeeding in creating space for their demands and	Explain how CSOs have played a transformative role in decision making	Disaggregated by women-led, youth-led or other and formal/ informal CSOs.

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
	<b>youth-led or other and formal /informal) succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women’s voice, agency, leadership and representative participation in decision-making processes in public, private and civic sphere, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building</b>	position on Women’s Leadership and Participation can include the number of times: L&A targets include CSOs in the decision making process; targets react upon the positions of the CSOs by adopting their argumentation and terminology; and L&A targets react upon the positions of CSOs by putting their issues on the agenda. Disaggregation for this indicator will be at the (inter)national level or subnational level as presented in below.	processes through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where CSOs were unable to play a transformative, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for this.	
WRGE 3.2	<b>3.2. # of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on women’s economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building (link SCS3)</b>	CSO’s succeeding in creating space for their demands and position on women’s economic rights and empowerment can include the number of times: L&A targets include CSOs in the decision making process; targets react upon the positions of the CSOs by adopting their argumentation and terminology; and L&A targets react upon the positions of CSOs by putting their issues on the agenda. Disaggregation for this indicator will be at the (inter)national level or subnational level as presented in below.	Explain how CSOs have played a transformative role in decision making processes through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where CSOs were unable to play a transformative, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for this.	Disaggregated by women-led, youth-led or other and formal/ informal CSOs.



#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
WRGE 4.2	<b># of times that CSOs succeed in creating space for CSO demands and positions on promote women’s meaningful and equal participation and leadership in conflict prevention and peace- and state-building and protecting women’s and girls’ rights in crisis and (post-)conflict situations, through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or movement building (link SCS3)</b>	Women, Peace and Security (WPS) indicator. CSO’s succeeding in creating space for their demands and position on WPS can include the number of times: L&A targets include CSOs in the decision making process; targets react upon the positions of the CSOs by adopting their argumentation and terminology; and L&A targets react upon the positions of CSOs by putting their issues on the agenda. Disaggregation for this indicator will be at the (inter)national level or subnational level as presented below.	Explain how CSOs have played a transformative role in decision making processes through agenda setting, influencing the debate and/or creating space to engage. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where CSOs were unable to play a transformative, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for this.	Disaggregated by women-led, youth-led or other and formal/ informal CSOs.
4	<b>SCS4 # of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs, for, by or with their membership/constituency</b>	Number of advocacy initiatives carried out. These can be as diverse as organizing a public campaign, writing a policy brief and submitting it to the concerned authority, commissioning research to generate the evidence base, initiating influencing processes or the like. An initiative should be a distinct set of actions we a pre-set objective as qualified in the comment field.	Explain how CSOs activate and educate citizens, how they mobilise support and create networks, and how this culminates in political participation of excluded or marginalised groups. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where CSOs are unable to do so, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for this. In answering this question it helps to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explaining the process of activation;</li> <li>• explaining the process of mobilisation;</li> <li>• explaining the process of political participation;</li> <li>• describing different types of advocacy strategies employed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This indicator has two indicator codes: SCS042 is to be used to report on advocacy initiatives at subnational level. Advocacy initiatives on all other levels can be reported under SCS041;</li> <li>• SCS041 # of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs, for, by or with their membership/constituency;</li> <li>• SCS042 # of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs, for, by or with their membership/constituency at sub-national level.</li> </ul>

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
5	<b>SCS5 # of CSOs with increased L&amp;A capacities</b>	This includes both first and second tier partners with increased L&A capacities. Strategic partnership members are considered as first tier organisations, their implementing partners as second tier organisations.	<p>Explain the capacities and expertise developed for performing political roles and implementing advocacy strategies. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where CSOs were unable to increase their capacity.</p> <p>In answering this question it helps to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>...explaining what different types of capacities different types of CSOs need for performing different political roles and implementing advocacy strategies</li> <li>...explaining how this is context-specific and tailors to the needs of CSOs and their constituencies</li> <li>...explaining the process of capacity building, what approach works and what doesn't.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young people;</li> <li>Women led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by women;</li> <li>Women &amp; youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young women;</li> <li>Other.</li> <li>SCS051 # of women led CSOs with increased L&amp;A capacities;</li> <li>SCS052 # of youth led CSOs with increased L&amp;A capacities;</li> <li>SCS053 # of other CSOs (not youth or women led) with increased L&amp;A capacities</li> <li>SCS054 # of CSOs which are both women and youth led with increased L&amp;A capacities.</li> </ul>
SRHR J	<b>J # of communities, CSOs and advocacy networks with increased lobby &amp; advocacy capacities</b>	This indicator includes, communities, advocacy networks and both first and second tier partner CSOs with increased L&A capacities. Strategic partnership members are considered as first tier organisations, their implementing partners as second tier organisations.	<p>Explain the capacities and expertise developed for performing political roles and implementing advocacy strategies. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where CSOs were unable to increase their capacity.</p> <p>In answering this question it helps to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>explaining what different types of capacities different types of CSOs need</li> </ul>	<p>SRHR indicator J is linked to SCS basket indicator 5 and follows the same disaggregation for CSOs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young people;</li> <li>Women led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by women;</li> </ul>

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
			<p>for performing different political roles and implementing advocacy strategies;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>explaining how this is context-specific and tailors to the needs of CSOs and their constituencies;</li> <li>explaining the process of capacity building, what approach works and what doesn't.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women &amp; youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young women;</li> <li>Other</li> </ul> <p>with two additional sub-indicators for - communities advocacy networks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SRH021 # of women led CSOs with increased L&amp;A capacities;</li> <li>SRH022 # of youth led CSOs with increased L&amp;A capacities;</li> <li>SRH023 # of CSOs (not youth or women led) with increased L&amp;A capacities;</li> <li>SRH024 # of CSOs which are both women and youth led with increased L&amp;A capacities;</li> <li>SRH025 # of communities with increased L&amp;A capacities;</li> <li>SRH026 # of advocacy networks with increased L&amp;A capacities.</li> </ul>
WRGE 5.2.1	<b># of organizations with strengthened capacity to advance women's rights and gender equality (link SCS5)</b>	This includes both first and second tier partners with increased L&A capacities. Strategic partnership members are considered as first tier organisations, their implementing partners as second tier organisations.	Explain the capacities and expertise developed for performing political roles and implementing advocacy strategies. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where CSOs were unable to increase their capacity.	Disaggregated by women-led, youth-led or other.
6	<b># of CSOs included in SPs programmes</b>	# of civil society partners included in the programme. This indicator	Describe and reflect on your partner portfolio.	This indicator will be disaggregated by:

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
		<p>serves to establish the reach of the programme. It includes both first and second tier partners. 1st Tier partners are included in the alliance agreement and have committed to the partnership agreements that are part of each programme proposal. 2nd Tier partners are partner who are directly contracted by any of these partners within the scope of the implementation of this programme.</p> <p>The number is also limited to civil society partners. At times government partners, companies or other stakeholders may also take part in lobby and advocacy initiatives. Still they are not part of civil society and therefore are excluded. Labour Unions are part of civil society, trade unions are not.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What types of partners are involved?</li> <li>• What is the level of their involvement in programme development, design, implementation and evaluation?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young people;</li> <li>• Women led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by women;</li> <li>• Women &amp; youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young women;</li> <li>• Other.</li> <li>• SCS061 # of women led CSOs included in SPs programmes;</li> <li>• SCS062 # of youth led CSOs included in SPs programmes;</li> <li>• SCS063 # of CSOs (not youth or women led) included in SPs programmes;</li> <li>• SCS064 # of CSOs which are both women and youth led included in SPs programmes.</li> </ul>
7	<b># of CSOs that have enhanced representation of constituencies</b>	<p>The focus of this indicator is on representation, which strongly links to ownership and legitimacy. It is important to recognize that representation is not the only aspect of legitimacy as also Bossuyt and Ronceray argue. Still the focus of this indicator is on representation strongly linking to</p>	<p>It will be important to reflect on the types of changes in terms of representation and the magnitude of the change. In this process an examination of the diversity within and representation by CSOs as well as amongst CSOs in their contributions to inclusive and sustainable development through representation can be assessed.</p>	<p>This indicator will be disaggregated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young people;</li> <li>• Women led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by women;</li> </ul>

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
		ownership. This indicator is binary. An organization works towards improvement or not. Constituencies can be expanded, diversified or even changed. They can also remain the same over time.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women &amp; youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young women;</li> <li>• Other.</li> <li>• SCS071 # women led of CSOs that have enhanced representation of constituencies;</li> <li>• SCS072 # youth led of CSOs that have enhanced representation of constituencies;</li> <li>• SCS073 # of CSOs (not youth or women led) that have enhanced representation of constituencies;</li> <li>• SCS074 # of CSOs which are both women &amp; youth led that have enhanced representation of constituencies.</li> </ul>
8	<b># of CSOs using a Gender and Social Inclusion lens during all phases of the programming cycle with specific attention to youth.</b>	The indicator appears as a binary indicator. An organization either has an ambition to use these lenses or not.	There are a number of ways to use gender and social inclusion lenses both for program implementation as well as policy development. Examples are the Gender and Social Inclusion Toolkit (CIVICUS) and the OECD-DAC Gender-Equality Policy Marker. Also NGOs have developed a variety of tools that help to apply a gender and social inclusion lens to the programming cycle. Therefore no single prescribed set of lenses is recommended. It is about the systematic use of the lenses which is expected to translate into more inclusive approaches to policy	<p>This indicator will be disaggregated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young people;</li> <li>• Women led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by women;</li> <li>• Women &amp; youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young women;</li> <li>• Other.</li> <li>• SCS081 # of women led CSOs using a Gender and Social Inclusion lens</li> </ul>

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
			<p>implementation or program development (which is reflected upon as part of the qualitative assessment of the use of the lenses).</p>	<p>during all phases of the programming cycle with specific attention to youth;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCS082 # of youth led CSOs using a Gender and Social Inclusion lens during all phases of the programming cycle with specific attention to youth;</li> <li>• SCS083 # of CSOs (not youth led or women led) using a Gender and Social Inclusion lens during all phases of the programming cycle with specific attention to youth;</li> <li>• SCS084 # of CSOs, which are both women &amp; youth led using a Gender and Social Inclusion lens during all phases of the programming cycle with specific attention to youth.</li> </ul>

# Annex 4 Data collection tools

## Data quality assessment (DQA) template

### Background Information:

<b>Programme Name</b>	
<b>Name of Lead Organisation</b>	
<b>Name of Partner Organisation(s)</b>	
<b>Date DQA mission</b>	

### Indicators Selected for DQA:

<b>MFA Number and Indicator Title</b>	<b>Project Logframe Indicator (LF) Number and Title</b>

### 2. Brief description of the DQA process followed

*Max 150 words on the process followed, institutions and locations visited (general, no address to be recorded) as well as possible overlaps with other work (e.g. TPM visits).*

### 3. Findings on overall MEL system

<b>MEL system</b>
<p>Up to 300 words describing the partnerships overall MEL system and considerations. Questions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are partners' experiences with and considerations in using the MFA indicators?</li> <li>• How do partners perceive the possibilities of and challenges of data collection tools and processes? What are lessons learned regarding data collection?</li> <li>• Why are the data collection tools, methods and MEL processes chosen?</li> <li>• What are experiences with the data flow and reporting?</li> <li>• What are partners' experiences with and considerations on downward accountability?</li> </ul>

### 4. Findings Indicator level (repeat per indicator)

<b>MFA Indicator</b>	<b>Project Logframe Indicator</b>
<i>The name of the SCS RF Indicator</i>	<i>The name of the Project LF Indicator (if they map across onto the SCS RF Indicator)</i>

<b>Data Flow</b>
<p>The Data Flow describes - via a numbered list - the flow of data from the source (where the data is captured) all the way through to its submission to the NL MFA.</p> <p>More specifically, the data flow provides information on the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From where is data collected (data source) and by whom?</li> <li>• Are there any systems in place to monitor unintended effects (positive and negative)?</li> <li>• In which format is data collected at the source (paper-based, electronic, others)?</li> <li>• When and how often is data collected (timing and frequency)?</li> </ul>

- What aggregation/combination of data from multiple sources is conducted, and at what stage/level in the overall data collection process?
- Who checks data quality (integrity, completeness, etc.) and at what stage (pre database entry or post database entry)? Are there any systems in place to safeguard against biased results reporting?
- How/where is data registered in MIS/database and by who? Does this allow for reporting on unintended results
- Who analyses data (and how often)?
- What reports are prepared using the data, how often and for whom?
- How and to what extent is downward accountability (informing, consulting and or engaging of end rightsholders) part of the monitoring system?
- Who shares data with the NL MoFA, and when?

The parameters that are used to calibrate the RAG score, i.e. when a MEL element is scored as green, amber or red, are based on whether issues exists within the MEL system that affect the quality of data. Red indicates that there are issues that are likely to lead to invalid, unreliable (etc.) data in conformity with good practice and which require immediate action; Green indicates that the MEL systems leads to clear, valid, reliable (etc.) data; And amber indicates that the data quality leads to valid, reliable, (etc.) data in general but that there are some issues that require attention.

<b>Green</b> (No real issues)	<b>Amber</b> (Some issues requiring attention – but not currently severe)	<b>Red</b> (Serious issues exist requiring attention)	<b>Blue</b> Not applicable
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Sub-questions	Findings				
1. a. Is the indicator(s) clearly defined (i.e. with appropriate meta-data)? b.To what extent is (are) the ToC indicators (which is (are) mapped to the MFA indicator) valid indicators (according to the MFA indicator definitions)?	G	A	✓ R	B	
	Up to 150 words explaining the issues which have determined the rating given. In some cases, the sub-question won't be relevant and so "Not applicable" or "N/A" can be mentioned.				
	Note: Meta-data refers to indicator definition, calculation method, indicator type, unit of analysis, disaggregation of data, etc.				
2. Are the data collection, checking, analysis and management responsibilities for this indicator clearly defined and documented across the SCS MEL Lead Organisation and/or partners? Check for double counting procedures and implementation thereof.	G	✓ A	R	B	
	Up to 150 words explaining the issues which have determined the rating given. In some cases, the sub-question won't be relevant and so "Not applicable" or "N/A" can be mentioned.				
	Note: Roles and responsibilities refer to assigning (and documenting) responsibilities (within the team) for data collection, data checking, data entry, data analysis, and reporting.				
	G	✓ A	R	B	



<p>3. Are the data collection processes/ methods and instruments/ tools of sufficient quality to ensure clear, consistent, accurate and complete data collection? Are they designed in a way to “do no harm”?</p>	<p><i>Up to 150 words explaining the issues which have determined the rating given. In some cases, the sub-question won't be relevant and so “Not applicable” or “N/A” can be mentioned.</i></p> <p><i>Note: This question checks the quality of data collection tools used to collect data as per the indicator reporting requirements.</i></p>
<p>4. If any surveys have been implemented for the indicator, do they appear to have been implemented in conformity with good survey practices (e.g. regarding sampling, data collection instruments, survey protocol, research ethics, etc.)?</p>	<p><b>G</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>A</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>R</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>B</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Up to 150 words explaining the issues which have determined the rating given. In some cases, the sub-question won't be relevant and so “Not applicable” or “N/A” can be mentioned.</i></p> <p><i>Note: This question focuses on the methodology (method and sampling) and the survey tool used to collect indicator data.</i></p>
<p>5. Has the data collected over multiple time periods been collected and analysed using consistent or comparable methods (i.e. that tools and methods are not changed over time)?</p>	<p><b>G</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>A</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>R</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>B</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Up to 150 words explaining the issues which have determined the rating given. In some cases, the sub-question won't be relevant and so “Not applicable” or “N/A” can be mentioned.</i></p> <p><i>Note: ‘Consistent’ refers to the method and/or tool which is not changed over time, and applied consistently while collecting data for the indicator.</i></p>
<p>6. Are the indicator data collected, analysed and reported according to the established frequency and timeline? If the established frequency or timeline had to change, was an explanation given? b. Are the data supplied frequently enough for management's needs?</p>	<p><b>G</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>A</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>R</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>B</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Up to 150 words explaining the issues which have determined the rating given. In some cases, the sub-question won't be relevant and so “Not applicable” or “N/A” can be mentioned.</i></p> <p><i>Note: This question checks whether data is collected as per the established frequency and timeline.</i></p>
<p>7. a. Are the indicator data and its associated analysis reported clearly, comprehensively and in accordance with the intended data users' needs? b. Do the MEL systems of the partners produce high-quality data that can support management and generate programme learning? Do the MEL systems support the MEL strategy?</p>	<p><b>G</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>A</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>R</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>B</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Up to 150 words explaining the issues which have determined the rating given. In some cases, the sub-question won't be relevant and so “Not applicable” or “N/A” can be mentioned.</i></p> <p><i>Note: This refers to the actual data, analysis and reporting as per the reporting requirements/template. For example, if the indicator requires age disaggregated data, whether or not the collected data has followed the required disaggregation categories.</i></p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>G</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>A</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>R</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>B</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p>

- a. Are appropriate procedures in place to check (verify) the data collected for the indicator? (e.g. consistency of data with the indicator's required metadata/responsible person for the verification/use of digital tools for verification, etc.) How do partners link their efforts to results?
- b. Are appropriate data checking /testing processes applied in order to identify potential errors/manipulated data (e.g. trend analysis; outlier analysis etc.) (checking for unusual values/changes) and potential biases?
- c. Does the Project systematically keep supporting documents /material to enable subsequent independent checking of the integrity of the data?

*Up to 150 words explaining the issues which have determined the rating given. In some cases, the sub-question won't be relevant and so "Not applicable" or "N/A" can be mentioned.*

*Note: This question checks whether a system is in place (and followed) to check the data for logical errors as well as to verify the integrity of the data. Does the Project keep supporting documents to verify and validate the reported progress?*

	G	✓	A	R	B
<p>9. To what extent is there a system/mechanism in place to check the master data set (or database) for duplication, missing records, transcription errors and logical errors?</p>	<p><i>Up to 150 words explaining the issues which have determined the rating given. In some cases, the sub-question won't be relevant and so "Not applicable" or "N/A" can be mentioned.</i></p> <p><i>Note: This question focuses on the actual controls and mechanism in place (and applied) to check for duplication, missing records, data entry errors, and logical errors.</i></p>				
	G	✓	A	R	B
<p>10. Are there appropriate procedures/tools in place to ensure the security of the collected and analysed data?</p>	<p><i>Up to 150 words explaining the issues which have determined the rating given. In some cases, the sub-question won't be relevant and so "Not applicable" or "N/A" can be mentioned.</i></p> <p><i>Note: Security refers to both the system and the authorization process available/applied to access/edits/delete data for the indicator. A system/dataset which can be accessed without an authentication process (and the lack of maintaining a log) results in compromised data security.</i></p>				

### Scores

Assign 1 point for each Green; 0.5 points for Amber; 0 point for Red; 0.5 points for Blue

	G	A	R	B	Total
<b>Frequency</b>					
<b>Total No. of Points</b>					
<b>Percentage (%): Total points / 10</b>	75%				

### Overall rating (per indicator)

**Note:** Tick Green if the total points (from the individual ratings) are 7 or above; Amber = between 4 and 6 points; Red = less than 4 points; Blue = Not applicable

Green	Amber	Red
✓ (total points = ???)		

>> All of the boxes above in Section 3 are then repeated for each additional indicator covered in the specific DQA exercise. <<

### 4. Key Findings and Recommendations from DQA

Indicator <sup>18</sup>	Key Findings	Recommendations (Including entity to which the recommendation is addressed)

### Third party monitoring (TPM) template

#### Background Information:

<b>Partnership/ Programme Name:</b>	
<b>Activity (Project) Name:</b>	
<b>Name of Lead Organisation:</b>	
<b>Name of Partner Organisation(s):</b>	
<b>Project Start Date:</b>	
<b>Project End Date:</b>	

#### TPM Mission Information:

<b>TPM Mission Dates and locations:</b>	
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#### Feedback on TPM:

*Please include up to 200 words on how the TPM mission went, including the overall schedule and any methodological challenges encountered such as key documents that were missing or key stakeholders (organisations or individuals) that it was not possible to meet.*

*This section could also include recommendations on coverage for future TPM to this particular partnership and/or overall suggestions for how the overall TPM approach could be strengthened in a general sense.*

<sup>18</sup> Mention 'All indicators' if the findings and recommendations are applicable to all the DQA'ed indicators.

**Achievement of Outputs:**

Please include up to 400 words covering (where relevant) the following sub-criteria plus any other issues relevant to documenting the achievement of outputs:

- Outputs (planned or unplanned) that have been achieved to date;
- To what extent do the (intended and unintended) results at output level reported by the partnership programmes reflect the actual situation;
- The (likely) quality of these outputs and whether they are (gender) inclusive;
- Factors that are impeding the delivery of outputs or their quality.

Green (No real issues)	Amber (Some issues requiring attention – but not currently severe)	Red (Serious issues exist requiring attention)

**Achievement of Outcomes:**

Please include up to 400 words covering (where relevant) the following sub-criteria plus any other issues relevant to documenting the achievement of outcomes:

- Selected indicators and Outcomes (planned or unplanned) that have been achieved to date;
- Related outputs that have been achieved to date;
- To what extent do the (intended and unintended) results at output level reported by the partnership programmes reflect the actual situation;
- The degree of certainty that outcome-level changes have stemmed from the partnership’s work and/or a combination of other factors;
- The likely durability of these outcomes;
- What evidence of progress is available on the selected indicators and relevant intermediate outcome indicators;
- How has the civic space and human rights situation concerning the topics the partnerships focuses on changed?
- To what extent do the (intended and unintended) results at outcome level reported by the partnership programmes reflect the actual situation?
- How is MEL data being used in learning lessons in the partnership?

*Remember an outcome is a behavioural or institutional change resulting from one or more outputs (as well as possibly other factors).*

Green (No real issues)	Amber (Some issues requiring attention – but not currently severe)	Red (Serious issues exist requiring attention)

**Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations**

Finding:	Conclusion:	Recommendation:

Finding:	Conclusion:	Recommendation:

**Overall Rating:**<sup>19</sup>

Green	Amber	Red
(No real issues)	(Some issues requiring attention – but not currently severe)	(Serious issues exist requiring attention)

<sup>19</sup> Please award 2 points for every 'Green' rating above; 1 point for every 'Amber' rating; and 0 points for every 'Red' rating. This gives an overall spectrum between eight (4 x 2 points) and zero (4 x 0 points). A project receiving between 6-8 points should be rated 'Green'; between 3-5 points 'Amber'; and 0-2 points 'Red'.

# About Ecorys

Ecorys is a leading international research and consultancy company, addressing society's key challenges. With world-class research-based consultancy, we help public and private clients make and implement informed decisions leading to positive impact on society. We support our clients with sound analysis and inspiring ideas, practical solutions and delivery of projects for complex market, policy and management issues.

In 1929, businessmen from what is now Erasmus University Rotterdam founded the Netherlands Economic Institute (NEI). Its goal was to bridge the opposing worlds of economic research and business – in 2000, this much respected Institute became Ecorys.

Throughout the years, Ecorys expanded across the globe, with offices in Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Our staff originates from many different cultural backgrounds and areas of expertise because we believe in the power that different perspectives bring to our organisation and our clients.

Ecorys excels in seven areas of expertise:

- Economic growth;
- Social policy;
- Natural resources;
- Regions & Cities;
- Transport & Infrastructure;
- Public sector reform;
- Security & Justice.

Ecorys offers a clear set of products and services:

- preparation and formulation of policies;
- programme management;
- communications;
- capacity building;
- monitoring and evaluation.

We value our independence, our integrity and our partners. We care about the environment in which we work and live. We have an active Corporate Social Responsibility policy, which aims to create shared value that benefits society and business. We are ISO 14001 certified, supported by all our staff.





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