

Baseline, Monitoring and Mid-term evaluation Strengthening Civil Society

Final report Third Party Monitoring & Data
Quality Assessment - Lebanon

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

Rotterdam, 26 January 2024



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Table of contents

Executive Summary	7
List of Abbreviations	13
1 Introduction	15
1.1 Background and objectives DQA & TPM	15
1.2 Methodology and approach	16
1.3 Challenges, limitations and bias	19
2 SCS policy framework, instruments and programmes	23
2.1 SCS policy and grant instruments	23
2.2 Partnerships active in Lebanon	24
2.3 Reporting on MFA indicators	25
2.4 Country context Lebanon	30
3 Findings	33
3.1 Organisation of monitoring results, safeguarding bias and monitoring unintended results (RQ1)	33
3.2 Reflection of results reported in relation to actual situation (RQ2)	43
3.3 Linkage of reported outcomes to implemented activities (RQ3)	45
3.4 Downward accountability (RQ4)	46
3.5 Follow up of recommendations for adaption of monitoring and evaluation systems as formulated in the DQA reports phase (RQ5)	48
4 Conclusions and recommendations	51
4.1 Synthesis of findings per research question	51
4.2 Overall conclusions	53
4.3 Recommendations	54
Annex 1 List of interviewees	57
Annex 2 Research matrix and DQA criteria	59
Annex 3 SCS Indicators and IATI guidelines	63
Annex 4 Data collection tools	75
Data Quality Assessment (DQA) Template	75
Third Party Monitoring (TPM) Template	79
Annex 5 Assessment per quality aspect for phase 1	83
Annex 6 Score for validity per SCS indicator	85

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Consortium Ecorys, Beyond Group, and AWRAD conducted the Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) and Data Quality Assessment (DQA) for the implementation of the Strengthening Civil Society (SCS) policy framework in Lebanon. The specific purpose of the TPM and DQA was: [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 programmes](#) The TPM & DQA exercise was to provide mutual learning: lessons learned for the MFA to improve its MEL practice, and support learning and improved MEL of the SCS programmes.

The first phase of TPM and DQA took place between March 2023 and September 2023 and focused on the partnerships' 2022 annual reports and linked IATI publications with a focus on SCS "basket" indicators requiring annual reporting. The second phase took place between November 2023 and January 2024 and focused on the partnerships' Mid-Term Reviews (MTR), and linked SCS "basket" indicators". A significant challenge during the last phase of the study was the changed security situation in Lebanon spilling over from the war in Gaza that started in October 2023, limiting (international) travel and delaying the field work.

The study was based on a desk review of partnership documentation, interviews with selected partners and more external stakeholders and focus groups/ interviews with rightsholders. The main findings responding to the five research questions are presented below.

Reviews Findings

Research Question 1: Organisation of monitoring systems and data quality

Although the implementation is already at mid-term stage, MEL systems, including (contextualisation of) indicators frameworks and data collection tools, are still being developed or renewed. This may improve quality, but limits consistency of data. Overall, data collection processes within most partner organisations are in place, with defined roles and responsibilities, and staff trained, although with quite some temporary setbacks due to staff turnover both at global and in-country or change of partners.

The SCS "basket" indicators are mapped onto partnership indicators, but some linkages are differently understood across and within partnership programmes. Not all partnerships have defined meta-data (yet) on how to operationalise the MFA indicators, affecting also the reliability and precision of data collected, specifically related to measuring capacity (SCS indicators 5, 7 and 8 and linked thematic indicators) and to "creating space for CSO demands" and "advocacy initiatives"(SCS 3, SCS 4 and linked thematic indicators). In a number of cases outcome indicators are not yet discussed/defined.

A number of partnerships use outcome harvesting as a tool to identify unintended effects, but not all partnerships have developed clear procedures in this respect. This, however, does not seem to feed into the IATI publishing as this is perceived as accountability-focused.

Systems in place to safeguard against biased results reporting are diverse and included at different levels within the MEL systems, and are merely based reflection sessions and requests for clarification. External stakeholders are only included to a very limited extent both for annual reporting as in the MTR processes. In general data security is up to standard, with ensured anonymity and confidentiality given the sensitivity of most of the topics. However much data is still secured by persons, not by systems, whilst limited specific guidance by the lead partner(s) is provided to partners on how to protect data.

For most partnerships data is reported frequently enough to support management's needs. In some cases it was mentioned that reporting for the MFA indicators was more seen as compliance, and not directly linked to the partnership MEL system, and to inform learning and decision-making. Specifically it was mentioned by several partnerships that the focus of indicators SCS 5 and higher on Tier 1 and Tier 2 organisations only, is perceived as not meaningful as the main work is with Tier 3 organisations. Furthermore the distinction between the Tiers is also not that clear and often depends on whether the in-country leads are Tier 1 or Tier 2 organisations. Also, for some partnership there is not even a country programme, so the consolidation of indicators which happens in headquarters yields even more abstract information, far from the field experiences and not providing any learning possibilities at country level. In general, data used more explicitly for learning is typically more narrative and procedural, coming from learning sessions or similar meeting/events.

Research Question 2: results and actual situation

During phase 1 the TPM spot checks were used to verify whether results at output and immediate outcome level reported by the partnerships reflect the actual situation. The spot checks to a large extent verified the results reported in terms of capacity strengthening as a result of training received, having received grants and more-long term support, confirming noteworthy strides in strengthening the Tier 2 and Tier 3 organisations/groups sampled. The spot checks showed that the level of clarity on the benefits in cases is different between the lead organisation and partner organisations who could not always clearly indicate the specific learning objectives, type of support and follow up needed. As changes in capabilities are difficult to measure and take time to materialise, spot checks at a later stage may provide clearer insights.

The TPM spot checks for phase 2, focussing on the outcome indicators, show more varied findings as in one case the reported achievements did not really reflect the actual situation, also linked to variable definitions of what an advocacy initiative is. The other three spot checks provided a clear validation of the reported results reflecting among others changes in perceptions of power holders, adaption of local bylaws and the establishment of new local setups. In general, reflecting on the (expected) outcomes reported by partnership programmes, and on unintended effects, it becomes apparent that capturing the full scope of the impact of activities is challenging.

Research Questions 3: Results and links to implemented activities

For immediate results the link between activities and results reported and specific contribution of the programmes is plausible to a large extent, as activities provide a direct, to a large extent self-explanatory link with the reported results. Specific project contributions differ in terms of support provided and intensity of the support. The TPM spot checks confirm the contributions of partnership activities but also show that contextual factors and other actors play a role.

With regard to the higher level more long-term results in most cases (TPM spot checks) the reported results and outcomes can be traced to interventions implemented by the partnerships as

reflected in the specific Theories of Change. In some cases however the reported outcomes seem to more the result of the specific activities of one of the consortium partners, and not so much the result of a chain of activities. Plausibility of contribution, the extent to which the activities have resulted in the outcomes, differed, from evident to less straightforward with other actors/ factors playing a role. To some extent contribution/attribution issues are starting to be captured through some enhanced forms of outcome harvesting that also ask for substantiation of contributions, however this was in most cases not reflected in the annual reports/ mid-term review.

Research Question 4: Downward accountability

All partnerships are sensitised to the feminist MEL principles, namely participation, inclusiveness, shifting power, intersectionality, representation, and flexibility in data collection and reporting, explaining an increasing attention for downward accountability to end-rightsholders in line but it is however not always clear yet how rightsholders are to participate in the MEL systems.

Involvement of rightsholders in the process of change and data collection, is varied, often due to the status of implementation of the different programmes and set up of feminist approach, but also to the number of activities involving certain communities. However, it appears that they are most involved in the learning part that is assured through participatory techniques (e.g. 'stories of change' and outcome harvesting) and regular meetings and not so much in co-design or co-management.

In the majority of partnerships, in-country partners, themselves have not reflected much in their own monitoring systems on downward accountability to end rightsholders, with only a few concrete mechanisms to report to and communicate with rightsholders. Similar rightsholders are in most cases not directly involved in monitoring and are not much aware of MEL activities. Partners generally do share data informally with rightsholders. A reason 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.

Nevertheless, partnerships are perceived as transparent and there are mechanisms in place that contribute to downward accountability, mainly in the form of feedback opportunities at activity level such as evaluation forms and complaint mechanism. Next some partnerships/ partners have designed more elaborate mechanisms, including annual reflection workshops and advisory bodies.

Research question 5: Follow-up of recommendations phase 1

The response to the recommendations made in Phase 1 varies across partnerships. In general, partnerships report developments (improvements) in their MEL systems since phase 1 such as development of joined tools and/ or contextualisation of indicators, often based on their own learnings and also the MTR processes, and to some extent also triggered or strengthened by the recommendations provided in phase 1.

Partners(hips) reportedly reflected on the recommendations made and some steps, particularly in areas related to capacity strengthening and enhancing their internal MEL systems were made by all partnerships, although these processes are in most instances still ongoing. Specific recommendations related to reliability of data with regard to issues flagged as needing attention, such as double counting and indicator measurement that was not in line with IATI guidance were in all but one case corrected by the partnerships, revising data collection protocols to ensure correct data.

Additionally, more global-level recommendations, including need for comprehensive M&E training and the standardisation of reporting tools aligned with IATI, were not yet followed up by some partners showing the rather slow pace in developing their MEL systems. Similar follow up of the recommendations made on data security/ protection, including development of partnership data protection guidelines, was still limited. Limited MEL capacity (overall) and for specific partners is a practical limitations partnerships face in developing their MEL system and implementing changes.

Overall conclusions

Generally speaking (with a few outliers), the partnerships seem to take M&E seriously, and are willing to commit time and efforts to provide reliable and valid information. There is of course room for improvement in certain aspects, such as digitalisation, or better understanding of differences between outputs and outcomes, but these are normal challenges especially in programmes focused on capacity building, human rights, behavioural changes and other “intangibles”. Contextualisation of indicators, specifically in the difficult Lebanese context, is another critical aspect, for improvement of the MEL systems. Furthermore one could also point to the need for greater downward accountability towards 3rd tier partners and constituencies, although this has been set in process with partners increasingly developing feminist MEL approaches. Lead partners could also better use the M&E capacities of in-country (grassroot) partners and involve them in M&E to a greater extent, not in terms of burdening 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). This would better align with the feminist principles of building trust among partners and with rights holders on reporting particularly in terms of sharing and managing knowledge, accountability to rights holders and awareness of power dynamics between stakeholders.

Several improvements are thus possible, however they also cost time and money and one should also look at the overall efficiency of the system, with often limited MEL capacity available. On the one hand there is a centralised reporting system built around a common ToC and result framework that to suit all contexts is necessarily broadly defined. Adaptation is allowed and encouraged, but it take times and efforts on behalf of the partnership leads, as well as the other (in-country) partners. Reporting back on the indicators is also time consuming, especially if more qualitative explanations are needed (like it is the case for IATI publishing). On the other hand, many partners(hips) have their own internal M&E systems, as well as learning practices (not always 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, but it is not clear if it is always useful for the partnerships own learning and also not always for MFA’s learning as the selection of indicators is left free, limiting the picture provided.

Key Recommendations

The assignment resulted in specific internal partnership reports including recommendations for the partnership leads and the in-country partner organisations. Next the following key recommendations are made to the MFA and partnership leads:

Recommendations to MFA

- MFA should provide more clear guidance to partnerships on the importance to operationalise concepts such as “strengthened capacities”, “enhanced representation” or “correct information (SRHR), as well as “advocacy initiatives” and “creating space”. Specifically for SCS 3 and linked thematic indicators, the IATI guidance could be better framed in the IATI guidelines;
- 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 to avoid that outcome measurement is replaced by output measurement (e.g. participation in the programme equalled to strengthened capacities);
- MFA should consider focusing SCS basket indicator 5 and higher also at Tier 3 level organisations, as the current focus on Tier 1 and Tier 2 organisations only, is perceived as not meaningful by some partnership as the main work is with Tier 3 organisations.
- MFA should discuss with partnerships on how to balance M&E efforts and continuous learning with efficient time management. A compromise could be that IOB criteria are to be applied to evaluations, and not to continuous monitoring allowing for more Southern leadership of these processes. In addition the MFA should continue to foster exchanges on good M&E practices among partners:
- MFA should clarify the importance of the qualitative element in the use of basket and other indicators, as in partnerships such importance does not seem not always to have trickled down to country level. At the same time, MFA should report back to partnerships its own analysis of the quantitative and qualitative information collected in IATI, in a spirit of downward accountability.
- MFA should ensure a clear M&E guidance for reporting, including for the MTR and FTR is developed at the start of a next programme, to ensure Partnerships can develop good internal guidelines and have sufficient preparation time to develop their MEL systems, including MTR.

Recommendations to partnership lead organisations

- Partnership leads should develop clear definitions and guidance on the MFA indicators to support contextualisation, data collection, comparability and learning.
- The development of intermediary steps and milestones towards SCS 1 and SCS 2 (going beyond creating space) would be required to capture what has been achieved. Such information should be published also in IATI as qualitative data. Considering that political context of Lebanon has been the same for some time, data collection and reporting would be required to record intermediary achievements
- Partnership lead organisations should better integrate M&E efforts for learning and for accountability. In particular, MFA indicators, properly understood also in their qualitative nature - and embedded in the partnerships results framework – could be used to guide reflection and learning also at country level, complementing the 2nd Tier organisations’ own MEL systems. All this to avoid that reporting on MFA indicators becomes a mere “compliance matter” while learning, when it happens, is totally disconnected from the results framework.

- Partnership lead organisations should stimulate exchange between their in-country partners on good M&E practices. The M&E good practices of 2nd Tier organisations should be disseminated on a wider scale when replicable, and fed into the global level M&E system.
- It is important that all partners continue developing and keep up-to-date security measures, in all concerned fields, from safeguarding of privacy of right defenders to security of data storage. Partnership lead organisations should provide internal guidance (and support/ training) to further this process.
- As part of the feminist approach to MEL, partnership lead organisations should strengthen it not only involving in-country, Tier 2 and Tier 3 partners, but also end rightsholders. This would include follow up on Feminist MEL, with a focus on building trust among partners and with rights holders on reporting correct and precise data/information and evaluating change (from a feminist perspective) and learning.
- Partnership lead organisations should encourage country partners to improve downward accountability towards their constituencies and target groups, and also provide the related support (as well as resources, if possible).

Recommendations to partner organisations in Lebanon

- In-country partner organisations should take the initiative to propose their consortium leaders suggestions on how to embed MFA and partnership indicators to better fit them into their programme and activities and 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 as much as possible objective norms and criteria for assessing capacity strengthening. This implies analysing progress or lack of progress towards 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 on 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 M&E 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 M&E practices that join implementation with MEL, such as reflection sessions outcome harvesting but also analysis of unachieved outcomes;

List of Abbreviations

AWDF	African Women Development Fund
AWRAD	Arab World for Research and Development
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CEFM	Child, Early and Forced Marriage
CPD	Commission on Population and Development
CRTDA	Collective for Research and Training on Development –Action
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSW	Commission on the status of Women
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCI	Defence for Children International
DQA	Data Quality Assessment
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
ISO	International Organisation for Standardization
LF	Logframe
LFS	Leading from the South
LGBTIQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, or questioning
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ODA	Official Development Aid
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPT	Occupied Palestinian Territories
PMEL	Programming, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
PMF	Performance Measurement Frameworks
RAG	Red, Amber, Green
RF	Result Framework
RQ	Research Question
SCC	Strengthening Civil Courage
SCS	Strengthening Civil Society
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
TDH	Terre des Hommes
TPM	Third-Party Monitoring
UAF	Urgency Action Fund
WGRE	Women Rights and Gender Equality
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

1 Introduction

1.1 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 tasks: 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 second task, the TPM and DQA, for Lebanon. 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](#)¹. This includes TPM spot checks, i.e. verifying 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. The DQA and TPM highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the partnerships' M&E systems to encourage learning and knowledge sharing. This is expected to result in mutual learning: lessons learned for the MFA to improve its MEL practice, and improved MEL of the SCS programmes.

The TPM and DQA were conducted in two phases. This first phase of the TPM and DQA focused on the partnerships' 2022 annual reports (published in May 2023) and linked IATI publications with a focus on SCS basket indicators 5 to 8 and related thematic indicators. It took place between March 2023 and September 2023. The second phase focused on the partnerships' Mid-Term Reviews (MTR) (published in November 2023), focussing on SCS basket indicators 1 to 4 and related thematic indicators, and includes elaboration on whether recommendations/lessons learned formulated during the first phase were taken into account. This phase took place between November 2023 and February 2024.

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 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 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?

The fifth research question was part of phase 2 only:

¹ 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 M&E 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.

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?⁸

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 MFAs role in the partnerships and formulate lessons learned.

1.2 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 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 is 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 indicators methods and sources can be found in Annex 2.

1.2.1 Data Quality Assessment

We understand DQA as an indicator-based review of data *validity, reliability, timeliness, precision and integrity* (see table below). The DQA has a key focus on the quality of the MEL systems of the partners, therewith comprising multiple indicators which differ for phase 1 and 2: SCS level and relevant thematic indicators (where applicable) 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 M&E system, and Annex 4 shows the template used for scoring of the different quality aspects per partnership.

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?

Quality criteria	Key question
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?

1.2.2 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 validation of reported results per selected indicator/ intervention and the specific contribution of the activities/ outputs as well as possibly other factors.

1.2.3 Sampling

For the DQA, all SCS partnerships active in Lebanon were included. The sample included: all Tier 1 partners active in Lebanon; and at least two 2nd and/or 3rd Tier partners². The 2nd and 3rd 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 organisations (theme and activities); and 2) geographical locations; and 3) size of organisations (as proxy for the (MEL) capacity of the organisation). In terms of geographical location, the areas covered were Beirut (most of the partnerships), Northern governorates, as well as two partnerships in the South (Tyre and Siad). The sample for phase 1 and 2 of the DQA was the same.

For the TPM, five partnerships (and 9 partners/CSOs) were selected for spot checks in phase 1, and six partnerships for spot checks in phase 2. Yet, as outcomes reported in the MTR for phase 2 were limited for some partnerships, it was only possible to conduct spot checks for 4 partnerships (see challenges and limitations below). The selection for phase 1 and 2 was based on the coverage of the different MFA indicators, representation of different locations (as well as coverage of all partnerships over phase 1 and 2), different type of partners (as proxy for M&E capacity) and also progress made by the different partnerships.

1.2.4 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) and Mid-Term Reviews (phase 2);
 - Result frameworks, Partnership reporting formats (2nd Tier towards first Tier, 3rd Tier towards 2nd Tier), MEL strategies, internal reports and any tools, guides and templates (partnership-dependent) made available;
 - IATI publications in 2021, 2022 and 2023.
 - 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 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), i.e. the constituency of 1st and 2nd Tier partners.

2. **Participatory online workshops.** 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 the approach, process and planning of phase 1 and 2.
3. **Interviews.** For each partnership (and each phase), we have interviewed a number of people, including:
 - MEL staff of the partnership lead organisation (online). Where possible (phase I), these were interviewed together with researchers involved in the study for Burkina Faso and of the international component, to limit the burden on the interviewees.
 - MEL staff and/or programme coordinators of in-country lead organisation and, if applicable, other 1st Tier partners with partners in Lebanon;
 - Two or three partners per partnership in Lebanon (2nd and 3rd Tier, in case of more than 2 partners in a partnerships);
 - Interviews with external stakeholders in phase 1, including INGOs, CSOs, rightsholders and the Embassy (see challenges below for elaboration).

In total, 38 interviews were conducted for phase 1, and 35 interviews for phase 2. An overview can be found in Annex 1. For phase 1, all interviews with organisations in Lebanon took place in-person, with a few exceptions due to the availability of the interviewees. In phase 2, interviews and FGDs took place largely through Teams/ Zoom, as the security situation did not allow for (international) travel.
4. **Focus group discussions.** FGDs took place with rightsholders of the partnership, i.e. external people reached or engaged by the partnerships to verify information received from the partnerships. In total eight FGDs were conducted. In Phase II it was not possible to organise FGD face-to-face due to the situation, instead two online FGDs were conducted.
5. **Partnership reports and individual feedback meetings.** We prepared partnership-specific assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the MEL system and data quality of the sampled indicators including recommendations, following the DQA template in Phase I of the assignment. These notes were shared with the in-country lead and discussed during individual online meetings. The meetings served to validate the findings for each partnership and discuss the recommendations given by the research team. For three partnerships, these validation meetings took place with the Partnership MEL leads (focusing on both Lebanon and OPT) as the partnerships did not have in-country lead partners present in one of the countries. In one case no partnership specific assessment was made as the partnership had not yet contracted in-country partners, and no in-country MEL was yet developed. In phase 2, these partnership-specific assessments were updated with findings from phase 2, including recommendations and shared with the partnerships, which were requested to validate and provide feedback if relevant.
6. **Learning workshop.** An online workshop was organised in August 2023 after phase 1 to share cross-cutting lessons and good practices with all partnerships in Lebanon. In total, nine people participated in the workshop from five different partnerships. Other partnerships initially were to participate but at a later stage declined the invitation because of busy period of data collection for the partnerships MTR. The overall findings and recommendations were discussed, followed by a discussion on three key dilemmas (i.e. ways to tighten data security processes; measuring results of capacity strengthening; elements that have increased representation and ownership). The workshop supported the preparation of the consolidated report.

Data analysis and triangulation. The data collected from the different methods (desk review, interviews and FGDs) was combined and compared through the DQA and TPM tools. For TPM, an elaborative qualitative assessment was done on the outputs and outcomes. For DQA, a qualitative review was conducted for each SCS basket indicator linked to the 5 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. The DQA data analysis and interpretation included (per selected SCS basket indicator and required disaggregation) the identification of a *data flow diagram*. The developed

diagrams sets out the entire data collection process for the selected indicators, starting with the activity level and the subsequent processing of data at output and outcome level. The findings and scoring of the DQA and TPM spot checks were then used to guide the feedback meetings. Making use of the different data collection tools and sources, data is as much as possible triangulated and validated throughout the data collection phase.

Also for the TPM spot checks data collected with the different methods will be combined and compared, including independent information sources which were used to triangulate and validate findings. At the country level, also a comparison across partnerships was made to identify broader cross-cutting lessons and good practices.

Reporting and reference group feedback. The findings of phase 1 were consolidated into a draft report submitted 15 September 2023 and discussed with the reference group. In this final report findings from phase 1 and 2 are combined, taking account of the comments from the reference group.

1.2.5 *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 results of participation in the study. The SCS partnerships are working on topics that or of a sensitive political or culture nature in Lebanon, such as LGBTIQ+, GBV or migration issues, and societal freedoms around these issues are constrained. In addition during phase II the distressing contextual issues (see section 2.4) affected the implementation of the programmes and also possibilities to do data collection. The following measures were taken, relating to both safeguarding and data protection. We provided explanation and reassurance about the purpose of and nature of involvement in the research to participants. Participants were able to choose whether to answer or not questions in case they not feel safe or comfortable in answering, or 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 highly needed for the purpose of the assignment, and data collection will be administered in such a way that personal data is collected, analysed and stored in a secure manner on Ecorys' secure servers. This information will be deleted after the completion of the assignments in compliance with the MFA contractual provisions. No data has been or will be shared by us with government bodies/ agencies or other institutions. Specifically during phase II we provided full flexibility in how and where interviews/ data collection etc took place.

1.3 Challenges, limitations and bias

1.3.1 *Challenges and limitations*

- **Changed security situation**

A significant challenge during phase 2 of the study was the changed security situation in Lebanon spilling over from the war in Gaza that started in October 2023 (see further context analysis in chapter 2.4). As the in-country data collection phase was planned in November/December, international travel became significantly restricted and international team members were not able to travel to Lebanon. Yet most of the study could resume as planned with many interviews taking place online, and/or conducted by the Lebanese team members. Respondents to a large extent remained willing to participate in the study, although replies were somewhat delayed extending the field work considerably.

- **Reaching the right people and information**

Despite that partnerships had been informed about the DQA and TPM assignment - and overall SCS evaluation – in both phases it appeared time-consuming to reach and arrange interviews with all partners. Organisations were mostly willing to participate, but specifically in Phase 1 limited by their busy schedule, also in light of partnership's data collection period over summer for their own MTR (due in November) and other ongoing MEL activities such as outcome harvesting meetings. Some partners were hesitant to burden 3rd 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, both during phase 1 and 2.

- **High staff turnover**

Furthermore, 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 in their in-country (lead) partner. In these cases, the interviewees were not fully informed on the assignment or on details of the MEL-systems or partnerships. Further in phase 1, 4 out of 11 programmes had conducting no or only limited reporting for 2022, due to the limited progress made. This limited the possibilities to make a full DQA. Similar during phase 2 it was a challenge that a considerable number of the Partnerships did not provide (and collect) the required information for Lebanon in their MTR reports, including quantitative and qualitative data linked to the outcome indicators. Other partnerships only report data at regional or global level (sharing partner reporting only in a few cases), which limited the possibility to do DQA and make TPM spot checks. A further related challenge was that some of the partnerships were not yet in the process of generating outcomes and impacts as it was too early.

- **Finding external stakeholders**

It appeared highly challenging and not feasible to find external stakeholders for each partnership that were able to reflect on the MFA indicators for Phase 1 (i.e. only stakeholders closely linked to the organisation could reflect about increased capacities of the organisation). This was apart from rightsholders that were more external to the project and who were included in focus group discussions; and apart from an employer and CSOs who experienced outreach activities by partners/women groups involved in two partnerships and a more general interview with the Embassy. While it was more easy to identify external stakeholders to reflect on the MFA indicators for phase 2, some of them were unresponsive or could not be contacted because of the security situation.

- **Accommodating diversity**

Finally, the Lebanese landscape is characterized by a diverse array of CSOs, spanning different sizes, thematic focuses, and organizational natures. Recognizing and accommodating this diversity was paramount for our research. Yet, following delays in project implementation and partnership building, the research team has not been able to establish contact with Tier 3 organisations as they were not yet fully onboarded. Additionally, some Tier 2 organisations have been replaced by others, further limiting our ability to engage with them. This limitation means that perspectives of smaller or less established organisations may have been underrepresented in the sample, and thus in the findings and conclusions (see section below).

1.3.2 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 Lebanon, internal tensions that play out within the country provide for a highly politicised environment, in which CSOs as mentioned earlier, are working on sensitive issues, for instance regarding LGBTIQ+, gender and SRHR issues. Both CSO as well as external stakeholders can provide inaccurate or social desirable responses. Throughout the assignment, the team tried to be aware of potential respondent bias. 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 in phase 1 (phase 2 international travel was not possible) - who together discussed the scores of the DQA and TPM.

Finally, selection bias in sampling may also have been a factor as some interviews with 3rd Tier partners were arranged on suggestion of the in-country lead organisations (in the case the initial selected partner was not available or no longer engaged), which may have influenced the representativeness of the sample. In addition, non-responsiveness of some 3rd Tier partners may have also impacted the representativeness of the sample. This bias was mitigated where possible in phase 2 by following the sample and to keep the selection random.

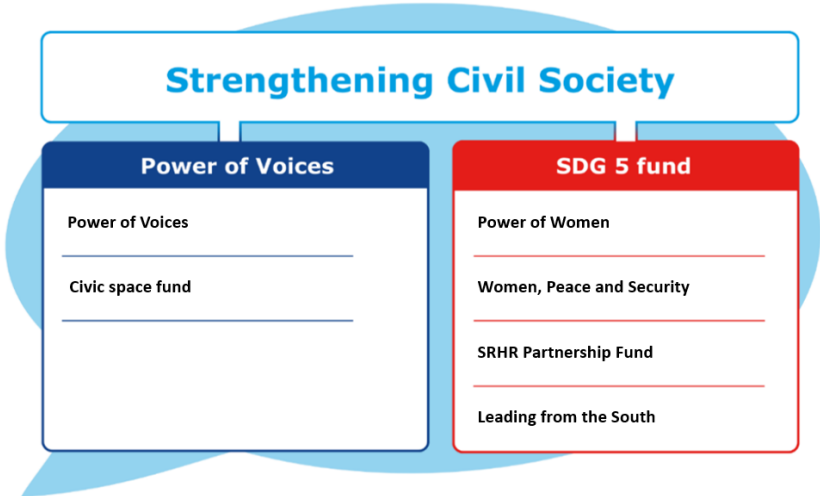
2 SCS policy framework, instruments and programmes

2.1 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 representing and strengthening people’s voice 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 cross-cutting objective of the Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation policy³. Also, the role of youth and young people are 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 2.1 below). All instruments relate to the aim of strengthening lobbying and advocating for human rights compliance, and to thereby achieve the SDGs.

Figure 2.1 Grants and sub-grant instruments of the SCS policy framework⁴



For Lebanon, the sub-grant instruments are the following⁵:

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 themes⁶ and gender equality mainstreamed throughout;

³ Source: <https://www.government.nl/binaries/government/documents/policy-notes/2019/11/28/policy-framework-strengthening-civil-society/Grant+instrument+PoV+FINAL.pdf>.
⁴ Source: <https://www.government.nl/documents/policy-notes/2019/11/28/policy-framework-strengthening-civil-society>.
⁵ Women Peace and Security (WPS) and Civic Space Fund (CSF) & Civic Space Flex Fund are also part of SCS, but not active in Lebanon. The WPS has a focus on further implementing the Dutch NAP1325 (Protection of women and girls in (post-)conflict environments) and SCF is specifically available for embassies.
⁶ 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).

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;
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. **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;

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 Lebanon, 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 Lebanon.

2.2 Partnerships active in Lebanon

The sections below provide further information on the Tier structure⁷ and thematic focus of the partnerships active in Lebanon. The table provides an update of the same table included in the Inception report.

Table 2.1 Overview of partnerships in Lebanon

Name and lead organisation	Consortium members (tier 1)	Partners (tier 2 and 3, anonymised)	Thematic area
Free to be me Hivos	N/A	1 partner Human right organisations	Equal rights LGBTQ+
Generation G Rutgers	ABAAD Resource Centre for Gender Equality (In-country lead)	1 partner Youth organisations, women organisation	Women's rights and gender equality (WRGE)
She Leads Plan International (in-country lead)	Terre des Hommes Italy (TDH IT) Defense for Children International (DCI) Dar Al Amal	2 partners Adolescent girls and young women (groups)	WRGE
Count me in! Mama Cash (remote)	CREA Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights (UAF) Just associates (JASS) Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) (<i>not active in Lebanon</i>)	3 partners None	

⁷ 1st Tier are the consortium members, 2nd Tier are CSO implementing partners contracted by the 1st Tier partners, 3rd Tier are local partners (with 3rd Tier contracts), the constituency of 1st and 2nd Tier partners.

Name and lead organisation	Consortium members (tier 1)	Partners (tier 2 and 3, anonymised)	Thematic area
Strengthening Civil Courage Pax (remote lead)	ABAAD, Amnesty International NL, DefendDefenders	5 partners (Young) activists and activist groups	Security & Rule of Law (SRoL)
Our Voices, Our future CREA (remote lead)	<i>Association for Progressive Communications (APC), East African Sexual Health & Rights Initiative (UHAJ-EASHRI), WO=MEN (all not active in Lebanon)</i>	1 partner Migrant domestic workers, sex workers, refugees, feminist organisations	WRGE
Fem Power Kvinna till Kvinna	Collective for Research and Training on Development – Action (CRTDA)	9 partners	WRGE
Power Up Just Associates (JASS)	Gender at Work	1 partner Young activists, and 6 community cooperatives.	WRGE
We Lead Hivos (in-country lead)	Marsa, Restless Development <i>Positive vibes (not active in Lebanon)</i>	1 partner Health/gender and human rights organisations	WRGE
Masarouna Oxfam	RNW Media Female SMEX	Youngsters	WRGE
Leading from the South Instrument African Women's Development Fund (AWDF)	N/A	6 in Lebanon	Economic security and justice and Body and Health Rights

2.3 Reporting on MFA indicators

The table overleaf summarises the MFA 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 partnerships reporting on WRGE (Generation G and Power up), as they are reporting on different sub-themes, and SRHR (Masarouna). No partnerships were found to report on other thematic indicators (e.g. SRoL).

Phase 1 of the DQA/TPM focussed on SCS 5, 6, 7 and 8 (and linked indicators), and phase 2 focussed on SCS 1, 2, 3, and 4. Annex 2 provides the overview of SCS indicators and linked indicators for WRGE and SRHR with the specific quantitative and qualitative methodological note as provided in the SCS IATI Indicator Guidelines of the MFA. Table 2.2 shows a shortened version of the guidelines.

Table 2.2 Summary of IATI guidance for SCS indicators on quantitative and qualitative measurement

Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
<p>SCS1 # of laws and policies for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement</p>	<p>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>	<p>Explain how, as a result of CSO L&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"> describing the implementation process and extent of progress, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies (see also Table 1 in 2.1.44); ...explaining the advocacy process towards implementation, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies. <p>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.</p> <p>Indicator codes & disaggregation This indicator is disaggregated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laws; Governmental policies; Private sector company policies; By-laws; International agreements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CS011 # of laws for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement; SCS012 # of governmental policies for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement; SCS013 # of private sector company policies for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement; SCS014 # of by-laws for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement; SCS015 # of international agreements for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement;
<p>SCS2 # of laws, policies blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement.</p>	<p>Number of concrete and significant changes in laws or policies as a result of CSO engagement.</p>	<p>Explain how, as a result of CSO L&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"> ...describing the content of law, policy, attitude and norm changes ...explaining the advocacy process towards changes, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies. (see also the table in 2.1.4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCS021 # of laws blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement SCS022 # of governmental policies blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement SCS023 # of private sector company policies blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement SCS024 # of by-laws blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement

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"> SCS025 # of international agreements blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement
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"> 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 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
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, commissioning research, initiating influencing processes, etc. An initiative should be a distinct set of actions.	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. Also explaining cases where CSOs are unable to do so, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for this.	This indicator has two indicator codes: subnational level and all other levels. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCS041 # of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs, for, by or with their membership/constituency SCS042 # of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs, for, by or with their membership/constituency at sub-national level
SCS5 # of CSOs with increased L&A capacities	This includes both first and second tier partners with increased L&A capacities. Strategic	Explain the capacities and expertise developed for performing political roles and implementing advocacy strategies. From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining	This indicator will be disaggregated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCS051 # of women led CSOs SCS052 # of youth led CSOs SCS053 # of other CSOs (not youth or women led) SCS054 # of CSOs which are both women and youth led

Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
	partnership members are considered as first tier organisations, their implementing partners as second tier organisations.	cases where CSOs were unable to increase their capacity.	
SCS6 # of CSOs included in SPs programmes	# of 1 st and 2 nd tier civil society partners included in the programme. The number is also limited to civil society partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What types of partners are involved? What is the level of their involvement in programme development, design, implementation and evaluation? 	This indicator will be disaggregated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCS061 # of women led CSOs SCS062 # of youth led CSOs SCS063 # of CSOs (not youth or women led) SCS064 # of CSOs which are both women and youth led
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCS071 # women led of CSOs that have enhanced representation of constituencies. SCS072 # youth led of CSOs SCS073 # of CSOs (not youth or women led) SCS074 # of CSOs which are both women & youth led
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.	This indicator will be disaggregated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCS081 # of women led CSOs SCS082 # of youth led CSOs SCS083 # of CSOs (not youth led or women led) SCS084 # of CSOs, which are both women & youth led
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 favour 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"> SCS091 # of actions in support to better NGO legislation, policies, by-laws or codes of conduct that improve civil society space SCS092 # of actions in support to better labour/trade union legislation, policies, by-laws or codes of conduct that improve civil society space

Table 2.3 Summary of indicators reported on by each partnership

Partnership, lead	#	SCS 1	SCS 2	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	SCS 3	WRGE 1.2	WRGE 2.2	WRGE 3.2	WRGE 4.2	SRHR A, B, C,	SCS 4	SCS 5	SRHR J	WRGE 5.1.2	WRGE 5.2.2	SCS 6	SCS 7	SCS 8	SCS 9
Free to be me, Hivos	3		X										X											X			
Generation G, Rutgers	9	X		X	X	X								X	X	X			X			X					
Our voices, our futures, CREA	3																		X			X	X				
She Leads, Plan International	5				X										X							X		X	X		
We lead, Hivos	4	X	X																		X			X			
Count me in!, Mama Cash	4				X				X													X	X				
Fem Pauer, Kvinna til Kvinna	4					X								X		X							X	X			
Masarouna, Oxfam	8	X										X	X					X(B)	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		X	
African Women Development Fund	3				X																	X	X				

Data for Count Me In, African Women Development Fund and Free to be Me is published at global/regional level in IATI, whereas data from other partnerships is at country level

2.4 Country context Lebanon

This section outlines the country context and contextual risks associated with the implementation of partnership programmes and linked data collection process. Phase 2 was highly impacted by the war in Gaza that started October 7, 2023. While potential respondents were still willing to participate in the study, the security situation in Lebanon and the region particularly did impact the ability to travel for the international team members (see also chapter 1).

A major driver of current instability in Lebanon is the spillover of the Gaza conflict. It has led to increased tension along Lebanon's southern borders and in the suburbs of Beirut, including an attack targeting a Hamas leader⁸. In the first week of January 2024, villages further away from the border were targeted as well. People from southern villages along the borders moved to safer areas such as Nabatieh and Tyre. Some Lebanese have even left the country to find safety and stability elsewhere. This includes both locals and foreigners living in Lebanon, many of the latter following Embassy's instructions to leave. The unpredictability in the attacks and of the further course of the conflict leads to high levels of uncertainty. This increased turmoil, along with an economic crisis that started in 2019, has impacted Lebanon's safety and economic well-being and increased problems for all Lebanese people, especially those most vulnerable.

Within these current increased insecurities, the policy landscape stands at a critical crossroad between the inefficiency of the state institutions because of a political deadlock and economic crisis on the one side and the increased need for those policy reforms on the other. The relatively weak central government is complemented by a legal landscape which is rather liberal, which historically allowed for the emergence of many CSOs. The distrust between CSOs and powerholders such as government and political parties, however is limiting the influence of civil society on the policy process. The fact that many activists ran for the June 2022 parliamentary elections contributed to the perception of CSOs as political actors.

Civic space in Lebanon is identified as obstructed, especially for actors focusing on political or "controversial" topics (including LGBTIQ+ and refugee rights). For instance, the research team encountered challenges when trying to engage with rightsholder organisations from the LGBTIQ+ community in Lebanon due to the heightened sensitivity surrounding these topics. Recently, many activists reported fear from an upcoming crackdown on civic space, with several signs showing further tightening of freedom of expression including stopping the Beirut pride week and calling activists for interrogation for Facebook posts. Civil society in Lebanon faces structural challenges, most notably the politically volatile environment and current economic crises and the dependence on funding, with many foreign governments steering away from providing support to the Lebanese state directly, for fear of the leakages of funds.

Within the inefficiency of the state and its limited capacity for implementation, recent events have cast a shadow on the country's trajectory. Notably, Lebanon has witnessed a distressing surge in Gender-Based Violence (GBV) cases⁹, resulting in tragic fatalities and alarming incidents of child violent and sexual abuse, in addition to increasing cases of freedom suppression¹⁰. These volatile dynamics significantly affect the daily concerns of the population and the priorities of various organizations. These deeply concerning developments have underscored the urgent need for policy reform and societal change. While there has been a relatively active pace of legislation in the

⁸ Al Jazeera (2024) Israeli military strikes South Lebanon stoking fears of widening conflict, Al Jazeera. Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/1/4/israeli-military-strikes-south-lebanon-stoking-fears-of-widening-conflict>

⁹ <https://today.lorientlejour.com/article/1344805/man-kills-woman-in-zahle-before-taking-his-own-life.html>

¹⁰ <https://apnews.com/article/lebanon-lgbtq-beirut-human-rights-38399886d44895c85eb70bbfd8e711ac>

parliament, driven by political parties responding to civil society demands, the persistent political instability and power struggles among these factions have led to a significant policy deadlock. Despite the appetite for reforms, navigating the complex interplay of political forces presents a major challenge on the path towards meaningful policy changes. Additionally, there is a concern about suppression of freedom, particularly affecting the LGBTIQ+ community, the political activists and other vocal stakeholders. Within those lines, Lebanon has recently witnessed a violent attack on the LGBTIQ+ community, that translated into an attack on a queer friendly pub, alongside hate speech from political parties towards the queer community¹¹. These incidents have increased the fear among community individuals and allies; hence suppressing freedom, delaying events and prioritizing personal safety.

¹¹ Lebanon: Attack on LGBTI bar another 'ominous sign' of deteriorating rights situation (2023) Amnesty International. Available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/08/lebanon-attack-on-lgbti-bar-another-ominous-sign-of-deteriorating-rights-situation/#:~:text=Videos%20of%20the%20attack%2C%20reviewed,continued%20to%20%E2%80%9Cpromote%20homo sexuality%E2%80%9D>.

3 Findings

In this chapter we present the findings for the four research questions with a focus at the SCS indicator 1 to 9 and linked thematic indicators, whilst also any changes will be taken into account (research question 5).

3.1 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?*

The systems of the ten partnerships/Fund can roughly be divided in two different types of systems for monitoring of results, 1) systems in which the in-country lead/ partners aggregates and reports to the lead partner and 2) systems where monitoring of results is done by different consortium partners separately based on the reporting by their in-country offices/ partners. The organisation of these systems is very much linked to the organisational set up of the partnership, with in-country consolidation only included for partnerships with a programmatic set up. In addition also responsibilities for publishing in IATI differ between partnerships were all publishing is done by only the lead partner and partnerships where different consortium partners are responsible for IATI publishing for different programme elements. Choices in this respect are guided by the wish of consortium partners to publish and the perceived complexity of IATI publishing.

Five of the partnerships have not developed a specific MEL plan/strategy, whilst all partnerships have appointed (or are still in the process to) an overall MEL lead/coordinator. The extent to which these are involved in data verification and consolidation however differs (depending on the involvement of other consortium partners in monitoring of results). 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 dedicated MEL coordinator often implementing other MEL-activities for the organisation as well. For smaller organisations, the project staff is mostly responsible for MEL tasks alongside implementation.

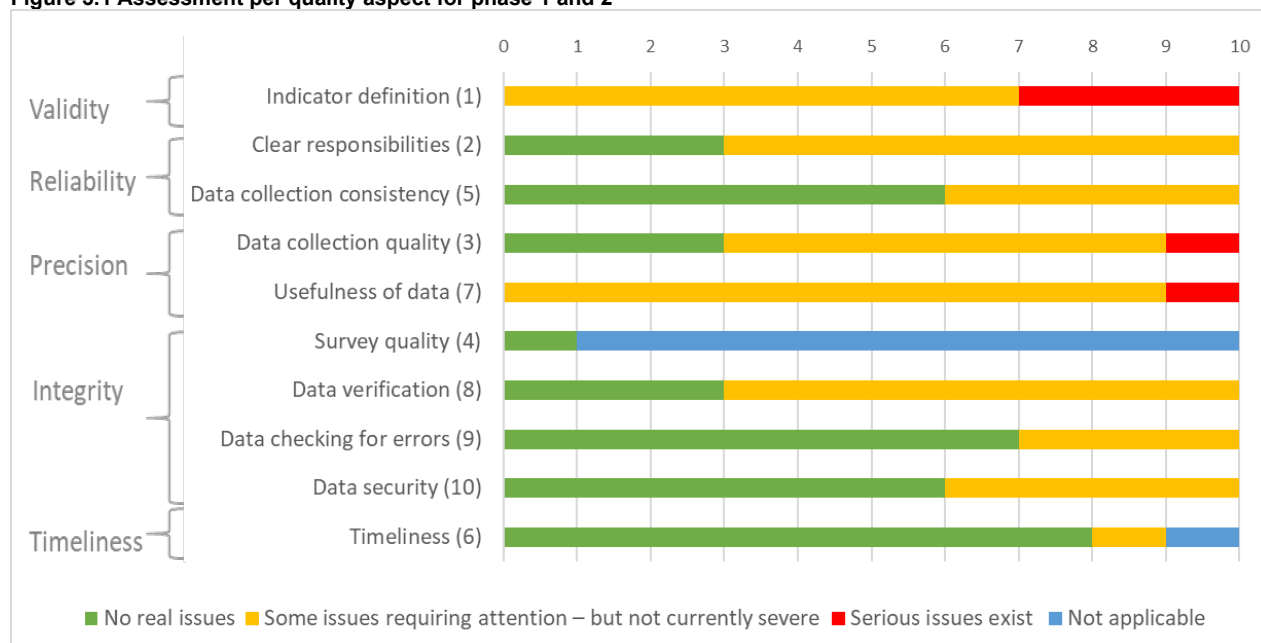
Partners have in general developed overarching Performance Measurement Frameworks (PMF) as part of their proposal and baseline study linked to their ToC. Contextualisation of these frameworks linked to development of a country specific ToC, however in a number of cases was still work in progress.

As for data gathering in relation the MFA indicators subject to phase 1, in most cases only the Tier 1 or in-country lead organisations are translating the information which is provided by the partners through narrative (activity based) reports and in cases further data is collected through (bilateral) partner meetings and observations.

Data gathering for the higher level indicators that only need to be reported at baseline, mid-term and end-line (subject to phase 2) differs, with responsibility for translating and reporting with the global lead partners. In about half of the partnerships Outcome Harvesting is the main tool, with the lead partners translating the information for reporting to the MFA. In the other cases the lead partners are reporting based on narrative reports or the process has not yet been fully designed.

Next to the quality of the overall MEL system, the DQA looked at five specific quality aspects: *data validity, reliability, precision, integrity and timeliness*. The table in Annex 2 provides the key questions for the different quality aspects guiding the systematic assessment of the selected indicators and overall M&E system. In Annex 4, the full template for the DQA is presented, which includes the scoring of the ten questions linked to the quality aspects for the selected SCS indicators. The table below provide a summary of the DQA assessment in terms of strong (green) and weaker (amber and red) concerns identified for the ten partnerships/ fund combined for phase 1 and 2.¹² In Annex 5 the diagram for Phase 1 is provided with the specific scoring per indicator for validity¹³. Blue scores are provided when an issue is not applicable or when we could not yet make an assessment as the partnership was still establishing its in-country MEL system and/ or had not yet reported on the SCS indicators.

Figure 3.1 Assessment per quality aspect for phase 1 and 2



Looking at the overall quality (all aspects) nine of the ten partnerships/fund received an overall amber rating showing that the MEL systems still have a reasonable number of issues that require attention. Nevertheless, phase 2 scores have been improved vis-à-vis phase 1 scores.

Below we discuss the weaker and stronger points of the partnerships monitoring of results based on the indicator-based review per quality aspect.

3.1.1 Validity: does the data clearly and adequately represent the intended result?

Reported data does not in all cases clearly represent the intended results as stipulated in the IATI guidance. Not all partners have defined meta-data or have contextualised indicator definitions, whilst there are still ongoing discussions about indicators. Interpretations of indicators differ between and even within partnerships.

¹² As mentioned the assessment excludes one of the Partnerships active in Lebanon due to the initial stages of the programme and the fact the in-country partners have not yet been contracted

¹³ Providing a sperate score is not possible for the other quality criteria, as these include general aspects which relates to all indicators

Partnerships have mapped out their (overarching) Performance Measurement Framework (PMF) indicators with the selected MFA Indicators, either by including the MFA indicator integrally or by linking specific ToC indicators to the MFA indicator. 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. Consequently 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. As mentioned, many partnerships have still ongoing conversations about the indicator definitions (also with the MFA), and/or rephrased or simplified their initial indicator definitions. In two cases partnerships have stopped reporting on certain basket indicators (i.e. SCS 7 or 3) given the difficulty reporting on them or the perceived limited value of the measurement for the partnership programme.

The extent to which partnerships have defined meta-data¹⁴ on how to operationalise the MFA indicators varies. Some have just shared the IATI guidance (which is very broadly formulated and does not always give clear guidance at partnership level) with the different partners. Others have formulated specific internal guidance for measurement (including tools). As a result definitions do vary by partnership or even within partnerships. For example:

- SCS5 # of CSOs with increased L&A Capacities:
In some partnerships capacity strengthening is understood as participation in a single training or receiving a grant whereas in others it means longer engagement and follow-up.
- SCS4 # of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs, for, by or with their membership/ constituency:
Different activities are counted as one advocacy initiative, whether each product or one activity, or only a full campaign – operationalisation differs between partnerships, or even between countries within one specific partnership, which appeared difficult to aggregate. Overall the variety of interpretations also stems from a very broad understanding of advocacy also encouraged by the MFA guidance.

One partnership indicated in this respect that it leaves the definition intentionally somewhat open (similar to the definitions of the MFA), both to keep ownership with partners, and to acknowledge the contribution small initiatives may have (for instance in relation to SCS4). However, this is affecting the validity of the data reported to the MFA. Another partnership indicates that it is still developing meta-data for their PMF indicators linked to higher level SCS basket indicators (1 to 4), whilst already at mid-term stage with the MTR finalised.

As shown in Figure 3.1, all but one of the partnerships score weaker on validity (DQA question 1, Valid Indicator definition and appropriate metadata), with in three cases more serious issues identified. These refer to an invalid indicator definition (e.g. Tier 3 organisations being included for SCS6 and/or SCS5) or an interpretation that does not fully align with the IATI guidance (SCS4). The last resulting in reporting of activities that are implemented as part of the project and that cannot be considered a distinct set of actions as the IATI guidance stipulates.

Weaker issues – that are not considered severe but would require attention – are in 4 of the 6 cases the absence of (or sharing of) specific partnership guidance and/or contextualisation of the MFA indicators. In another case, specific for SCS3, the partnership developed guidelines which do not fully align with the IATI guidance as intended reporting is looking more at the intention than the actual outcomes.

¹⁴ Meta-data refers to indicator definition, calculation method, indicator type, unit of analysis, disaggregation of data, etc

Below we provide key findings per SCS basket indicator¹⁵:

- Most partnerships selected basket indicator **SCS 6**. Of these, some partnerships provided further guidance to specify the meaning of 'involved in partnership'. This instance is specified as the number of organisations supported in plans and budgets, or the number of organisations getting direct and indirect grants. However, this latter definition may result in also measuring Tier 3 organisation which is not according to the IATI guidance (only referring to Tier 1 and 2), which explains the orange score for two partnerships. The same applies to other partnerships, where the partnership-indicator refers to *local organisations/groups involved*, which would also include Tier 3 organisations. In the case of some partnerships there is still unclarity on the inclusion of certain networks or communities, which are between rightsholders and implementing organisations.
- Many partnerships consider **indicator SCS 5 and SCS 8** (and linked indicators) to be output indicators. However, the IATI guidelines – although very broad – refer more to the outcome of capacity strengthening activities, among others to organisational capacity assessment which would require further measures but these are not specified (although examples are provided). The confusion on the nature of the indicators can to some extent be explained by the feedback of several partnerships that guidance at the start of the programme provided by the Ministry, stated that SCS5 was to be treated as an output indicator¹⁶. As a result in quite some cases the organisations (and the individuals) with increased capacities, are measured by looking at those that have been successfully participating in training activities, have received grants etc. with as a key modality for data gathering the ex-ante/ex-post survey among participants to the training and the records about their participation. The actual focus on the indicator tends in these cases therefore to be on trainings provided and the # of participants of training/capacity strengthening activities. Similar issues apply for **SCS7** # 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 for the identification of what is meant by constituency and representation. Orange scores are provided in cases where clear meta data has not yet been shared/ developed including contextualisation of the indicators. In one case meta data was not shared with the in-country lead who was not involved in analysis and reporting, whilst also the qualitative data reported did not represent results.

Most issues identified relate to the **SCS basket indicators 3 and 4** on 'creating space for CSO demands and positions' and 'advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs'. This can to some extent be explained by the broad guidance provided by the MFA. Partnerships specifically for SCS3 indicated that they found the guidance challenging and a bit vague. Weaker points relate mostly to the absence of partnership specific guidance and related confusion of the in-country partners. For one partnership, there has been an amendment on the phrasing and definitions of indicator 3 as the previous definition was not suitable to all countries. In case of SCS4 in one case it is not clear how the local indicator links to the SCS indicator – looking at 'individual actions of women' whereas the IATI guidelines clearly indicate a set of initiatives – meta-data in this case is missing, pointing to "educating citizens" as an act of advocacy.

- Eight of the partnerships/ Fund report (or intend to) on indicator **SCS1 and/or SCS2**. Three of these partnerships score weaker as there is no guidance yet on how data is to be collected and

¹⁵ To ensure anonymisation we have combined the assessment of indicators when necessary

¹⁶ After the initial confusion the MFA decided not to talk about output/outcome anymore but only about reporting frequency.

or measured, or there is still no clarity among partners on the context-specific definition of the indicator. In general, all partnerships agree that policy change is particularly challenging (or even impossible) in the current context of Lebanon with political disagreements and deadlocks hampering changes in laws. Furthermore, the current political and socio-economic situation in Lebanon makes it difficult to implement laws and policies etc. These complexities are the reason why some of the partnerships decided not to report (progress) on these indicators but only on SCS 3 and SCS 4. Only one of the partners mentioned that it was in the process of developing (intermediary) outcomes and milestones to measure progress.

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

For half of the partnerships the outline of MEL roles and responsibilities could be improved, whilst also the high staff turnover affects data reliability. In a number of cases consistency was affected by the absence of meta-data resulted in different methods used within the same partnerships and/ or confusion among the in-country partners on how to measure.

In the previous paragraph, we have already discussed some definitional issues, which to some extent also affect data reliability. The DQA shows that in most cases roles and responsibilities for MEL are clearly outlined and understood by the different partners although comprised by staff turnover (DQA question 2). During the interviews, programme staff involved in general were able to provide a clear insight into their role and the expected deliverables.

Descriptions of roles and responsibilities were also found in supporting MEL documents provided (if available), such as MEL plans and reporting templates. In a number of cases more clarity could be provided on the roles/ responsibilities of specific partners/ grantees or for certain tasks such as verification at different levels which may affect reliability overtime. Reliability of data is negatively affected by high levels of staff turnover and also changes in partner organisations. 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 one case, there was still a vacancy in MEL staff at the time of both phases and project staff temporarily took up extra responsibilities. In two cases outsourcing of MEL activities such as development of the framework, made it difficult to assess MEL capacity as inhouse staff were not always fully familiar. Next as mentioned quite a number of partnerships were still in the process of (further) developing their MEL systems, structures and tools, with a difference between more grant-based partnerships and programmatic partnerships. Grant-based partnerships are relying more on MEL systems already in place, while programmatic ones, especially the partnerships that are new (to the country) need to develop their own systems - which is quite time-intensive.

Looking at the consistency of the measurement process (question 5), the absence of indicator meta-data, specifically in relation to SCS 5, SCS 7, SCS 3 and SCS 4 resulted in different methods used within the same partnerships and/ or confusion among the in-country partners on how to measure). Many of the partnerships have developed and shared reporting templates, data templates and joined data collection tools, but most also rely to a large extent on the MEL systems of the different (in-country) partners involved, making use of partner specific tools and systems. In other cases partners indicated that tools were shared, particularly for outcome harvesting but they did not feel confident yet to make use of them. As a result data on for instance capacity strengthening is collected in different ways by different partners within a partnership. In one of these cases, although partners use their own tools, clear guidelines on what is needed in terms of data and frequent discussion allowed for consistency of what is reported on. In some instances, MEL procedures are still being updated, expanded or improved, or joined data collection tools are being

developed, affecting consistency or data collection and interpretation, when comparing data and reporting from before and after changes in the process. In other cases data as reported for MFA indicators did not seem to align with the definition of this indicator.

Some partnerships are critical with regard to the required disaggregation of indicators as it is felt that this is not always straightforward in terms of gender and defining what means women-led. In most cases the partnerships follow the Lebanese registration of the CSO. Characteristics of the partners can change overtime, depending on changes in management, but several of the partnerships do not take these into account and stick to the initial classification of the organisations, also as it felt that making these changes is quite cumbersome within IATI.

3.1.3 Precision: Are the data sufficiently precise to present a fair picture of performance and to enable management decision-making? (DQA question 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 Particularly for SCS 5 to 8 but also for SCS 3, not all partnerships have developed and/ or are consistently using specific measurement tools. As for higher level indicators, linked to policy change, reporting to provide a fair picture would also need to list failure.

During phase 2 it was not always possible to make a full assessment for the two questions as the MTRs of many of the partnerships did not provide the required quantitative and qualitative data per SCS indicator, with publishing in IATI only due in May 2024.

Looking at the quality of data collection (DQA question 3) and whether data had sufficient level of detail to present a fair picture of performance, most weaknesses relate to the measurement of **SCS 5, 7 and 8**. In three cases no tools were developed to measure capacity strengthening of Tier 2 (in one case even not for pre and post training testing). In one case meta data was not shared with the in-country lead who was not aware that the partnership had reported on this specific indicator and was thus not involved in data collection and analysis. In multiple cases there is limited exchange with the Tier 2 partners on the strengthening of their organisation, or inclusion of other consortium partners involved in the process. These measurement challenges on the ground are also linked with the focus of in-country partners on activities and their limited small capacity to track changes. Another key issue is that changes in capabilities are difficult to measure and take time to materialise. For this reason (and also due to the time required) three of the partnerships indicated that capacity assessments were made only at baseline, mid-term and end-line stage, but are not performed annually. The capacity assessment tools allow for a more nuanced assessment of the built capacities. Other partnership use 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 capacity strengthening of individuals (e.g. for indicator **WRGE 5.2.2**), pre- and post-training surveys are a common tool used by the majority of partners. 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 improvement toward the indicators.

As mentioned for higher-level outcome indicators (**SCS1 to SCS 4**) several partnerships (plan to) use outcome harvesting as a data collection method. Some of them developed and refined their approach to outcome harvesting by asking for evidence (e.g. documentation) to substantiate the outcome achievement in addition to extensive reflection with partners/ right holders involved to

evidence the (plausibility of contribution to) the outcomes. This certainly contributes to reducing the intrinsic risk of subjectivity of outcome harvesting making it a more sound and useful tool for reporting and storytelling. However verification of outcomes with external stakeholders is not part of the processes. The MTR, in many cases, was intended to provide this verification, but none of the MTRs seem to have included external stakeholders, whilst also a contribution analysis was made for only a limited number of countries/ outcomes. Furthermore, outcome harvesting tends to record only positive results and not lack of results or failure, which is also useful for learning. At this stage we are not sure to what extent IATI publishing will also include an explanation of cases in which L&A activities did not result in the desired change, and/or the specific contribution, as this information was lacking in most of the MTRs.

For SCS4, concerning advocacy initiatives, the verification of data is easier and can be conducted through collecting advocacy materials and (social) media coverage.

With regard to the precision of data (DQA question 7), specifically for the MFA, the DQA shows weak elements in the case of all partnerships. In two cases this referred wrongly reported data, e.g. reporting on Tier 3 organisations for SCS5, as the results framework of the MFA only focused on 1 and Tier 2 organisations or wrongly counting an organisation for SCS6 whilst ultimately no MOU was signed. In another case data collection systems of one partner did not allow yet to make a disaggregation for youth. It also seems problematic to report on indicators whose data are collected by other partners and not shared, which was the case in one partnership.

Some of the partnerships also questioned the usefulness of the published data for the MFA and other stakeholders. In terms of precision of data the large variability in indicator definitions as described above is not seen as a problem for the partnerships, but limits comparability (and value) of data at MFA level. The same applies to the selected SCS indicators, which with only three mandatory indicators (and some of the partnerships indicating they on purpose selected the most 'easy' indicators for reporting) often only provide a partial picture of what is being achieved. Particularly when no higher level indicators are selected or only SCS 1 and/ or 2. The overview provided in table 2.1 shows that none of the partnerships publishes on indicators such as WRGE 1.3, 2.3 and 3.3, which focus on improved attitudes and practices of individuals, which could provide valuable insights in the context of Lebanon. A key reason stated for not selecting these indicators are the methodological difficulties for measuring such change. Similar no reporting is made on SCS 9. In addition it is felt that the SCS indicators, specifically SCS 1 and 2, in context of Lebanon, provide limited information on the programmes impact on change.

A few partnerships also commented that the data published in IATI for their programmes is less meaningful as their main work is with Tier 3 partners, whilst the SCS5, SCS6, and SCS7 indicators focus on Tier 1 and Tier 2 organisations only. Another comment made is that in cases partnership activities cover more indicators (WRGE themes) and a best option needs to be selected. It is felt that reporting in this way does not always make sense (or does lose its meaning), and is complicated (putting another layer on the reporting).

In three cases the partnerships (or specific data collection by one of the consortium partners) did not develop clear procedures to identify **unintended effects** (yet). In these cases it was mentioned that unintended effects "may come up during the exchanges with partners". In most other cases the narrative reporting format contained a questions to this respect, whilst outcome harvesting is used as a tool to monitor these as well. As mentioned, some partnerships are still in the process of improving M&E processes, including for measurement of unintended effects.

3.1.4 *Integrity: Do the data collection, analysis and reporting processes have clear mechanisms in place to reduce manipulation or errors in transcription? (DQA questions 8, 9 and 10)*¹⁷

Systems in place to safeguard against bias involve in most cases requests for clarification and regular reflection sessions with partners. Verification through external sources is only made to a very limited extent, whilst also the MTR processes which was in many cases intended to provide external verification, did not really involve external sources.

For integrity we looked at verification of data (DQA question 8), checking of data errors (question 9) and data security (DQA question 10). In all cases partnerships had comprehensive safeguard measures in place ensuring that monitoring is done in a way to “do no harm”. In most partnerships, data collected by in-country partners is transferred to the in-country lead or partnership lead and 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 partnerships have regular 1-to-1 data sensemaking meetings between the organisation that shared and the organisation that received the data. 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. In fewer cases monitoring visits including direct observations are included (depending on available budget for MEL) and in one case the MEL lead made online reviews of publicly available information to cross check claims. During the data analysis, in many partnerships bias prevention is based on ongoing interaction and trust building with the partners (by which trust is linked to feminist principles, see this section below), but also the notion that you cannot or do not want to verify all data. According to the partnerships, involvement of staff that have affinity and experience with the rightsholder (groups) is supporting good insights. Only in one case (partner) it was mentioned that external stakeholders and rightsholders were included (through a survey and regular exchanges) to verify results as part of the regular process.

Based on the DQA weaknesses that required attention were identified for five of the partnerships. In all of these cases procedures to check (verify) the data collected for the indicators were not clearly outlined at the different levels of the MEL systems, resulting in a variety of actions and lack of structural verification. Specifically in some cases internal verification was considered too limited or non-existent (no questions asked only in terms of outliers). In two cases this was clear from the limited precision of the data reported. In another case data collection only relied on self-reported data from grantees with no verification.

Many of the partnership stated that the MTR would be used to verify data collected. A review of evaluations nevertheless showed that consultation of more external sources during the different MTR processes did not really take place for Lebanon, with most review based on surveys among partners.

An explaining factor for the weaknesses identified in terms of verification of data but also for some other indicators, is that, in the framework of the DQA, some partners felt that aspects of the conventional MEL approach requested by the MFA, e.g. verification of data and data sources, or certain levels of disaggregation, are not fully in line with **principles of feminist reporting**. Feminist approaches to monitoring and evaluation acknowledge and combat power and gender power

¹⁷ This would also refer to question 4 but only one of the partnerships has applied survey data collection at this stage (for the specific MFA indicators)

dynamics between those who own and manage the knowledge and research subjects (rightsholders) as well as it acknowledges that the process is more important than outcomes alone. Feminist MEL is about shifting these power relations by allowing local partners to lead the change, decide what data they need to measure the social transformation.

Applying a **feminist approach to monitoring and evaluation** requires capturing how changes in gender and power relations are produced and how they happened 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.¹⁸

In Phase 1 of the DQA we didn’t apply a systematic assessment of the application of a feminist MEL by the different partnerships. The reason for that was that a feminist MEL was not yet at full capacity for those partnerships and/or organisations that systematically adopt it. At that stage of projects’ implementation, where the relationships between those who manage the data (the MEL responsible persons/the consultants, etc.) and the rightsholders began to consolidate, it was 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.).

During Phase 2 of the DQA, we asked specific questions to understand if the partnerships adopted a feminist MEL and how they applied it to data collection and reporting for the different basket indicators. All partnerships are sensitised to the feminist MEL principles, namely participation, inclusiveness, shifting power, intersectionality, representation, and flexibility in data collection and reporting. In some cases, partnerships understand the gender transformative approach of consortium partners as leading directly to the adoption of a feminist MEL approach.

However, a feminist MEL also requires the adoption of monitoring tools that incorporate the feminist principles of MEL and meet, at the same time, the requirements of the basket indicators metadata. This appears to be challenging with specific reference to the quantification of CSOs’ engagement for better implementation of laws and policies in SCS 1, for laws and policies adopted or improved in SCS 2, for the monitoring of agenda setting in SCS 3, for the enhanced representation of constituencies in SCS 7, and for the changes in laws and policies, norms, and practices to SRHR and HIV/AIDS services in indicator SRHR H. Although trust is at the core of feminist reporting, so is accountability and this would include sharing information, taking into account safety and ethics of data collectors. While all partnerships focus on building trust with their constituencies, rightsholders and stakeholders, more clarity would be needed on how data collection is organised for the basket indicators and how do rightsholders participate in the data collection process.

Feminist MEL poses more attention on the qualitative reporting versus the quantitative one. Phase II of DQA showed that most of the partnerships had adopted tools to collect qualitative information based on feminist principles, e.g. storytelling and outcome harvesting templates. The development of the tools is often outsourced to external consultancy firms which are guided and supervised by partnership technical experts and the data collection is often done by other consultants, i.e. trainers. In this latter case, it’s not always clear how end-rightsholders are involved. They are certainly suppliers of information but if and how they drive the data collection process is unclear, although we collected information about some rightsholders being trained in data collection for specific indicators

¹⁸ 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>

(e.g. WGRE 5.1.2 and 5.2.2, SRHR H). Also, it is not yet clear at this stage how reporting is made accessible to end-rightsholders as several partnerships declared that data are mainly used internally and reporting is shared among partners and with donors, not with end-rightsholders or other interested stakeholders.

On the aspect of learning, it is worth dwelling more on the feminist principles of MEL. From the interviews conducted, it appears that learning takes place within the partnership itself with regard to feminist MEL issues and in some cases with regard to progress on results through indicators. This is commendable. However, learning also needs to take place regarding the progress on projects' outcomes and impact to assess how change is produced so that strategy can be influenced and shared decision-making can take place.

Double counting is mostly checked when consolidating data at country level and/ or at global level, but can according to the majority of partnership easily be avoided as partners are active in different areas. For one partnership the DQA identified double counting in terms of activities (grantees who received a second grant were counted again) and support provided by different partners within one partnership.

Checking for errors is mostly done when data is consolidated either at country or global level, as knowledge on 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 processes.

In general data security is up to standard, with ensured anonymity and confidentiality given the sensitivity of most of the topics. Much data, however is still secured by persons, not by systems. As technological and digital developments go fast, the need was recognised to keep up to date with data security measures. In most cases the partnerships were in the process of improving the security of their systems, also supported by improved insights based on the trainings provided on safety and security. In a number cases limited specific guidance by the lead partner(s) is provided to partners on how to protect data.

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

The MEL processes, in general, support timely data collection. In a number of cases reporting for the indicators is more seen as compliance, not linking to the main objectives of the partnership

Organisations generally make timely data collection and reporting. Typically, bi-annual reports at country level are produced, whilst the practice for Tier 2, and Tier 3 partners differs between producing activity based reports and bi-annual reports to in-country leads. Next ongoing monitoring takes place including learning sessions. For most partnerships data is reported frequently enough to support management's needs. In three cases some weaknesses were identified relating to a backlog in data to be analysed due to limited M&E capacity and delays in the use of certain tools, particularly outcome harvesting also due capacity issues and turnover of staff.

In most cases Information collected from ongoing monitoring (and evaluation) are also used for the MFA indicators. In three cases it was mentioned that reporting for the MFA indicators was more seen as compliance, and not directly linked to the partnership MEL system, and to inform learning and decision-making. Overall data used more explicitly for learning is typically more narrative and procedural, coming from learning sessions or similar meeting/events.

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

This section relates to research question 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?

Reported results for the majority of partnerships to a large extent reflect the findings from the TPM spot checks. In one case results reported do not fully mirror the nature of the initiatives and another case data does not reflect the specific contribution by the partnership.

For five partnerships TPM spot checks were made for validation of reported results for SCS5, SCS7 and SCS 8.

As mentioned above, a challenge faced is that in the nature of the SCS programmes changes or results are often intangible and hard to measure, e.g. skills improvement, behaviour change and meetings or events that take place, of which the results might only be visible at a later point in time. In addition, qualitative reporting in IATI is limited whilst the annual report in most cases provide very limited specific information for the country programmes. Nevertheless, in all but one of the TPM spot checks we have been able to verify the reported results in terms of capacity strengthening based on the perspectives of project participants, rightsholders and to some extent external stakeholders. In one case the qualitative reporting results for SCS7, which were also questioned based on the DQA, reflect the involvement of rightsholders in programme activities but do not seem to result in an increase in representation/ ownership by constituencies. As mentioned lack of guidance and confusion among the in-country partners affected measurement for this indicator, whilst the TPM interviews did not point at a clear path for increasing ownership and structuring the representation for the targeted rightsholders. The rightsholders shared high enthusiasm and motivation, but their involvement did not reflect the representation criteria needed for SCS7.

In general, interviewees confirmed that partnerships have made noteworthy strides in strengthening the Tier 2 and Tier 3 groups involved in the TPM spot checks, empowering women despite the challenging conditions in the country. Initiatives undertaken by in-country partners have undeniably resonated with the target audience, notably inspiring youth, girls and women alike. It is evident that their outreach has been impactful, with targeted groups feeling encouraged to aspire for more and ask for further support and information. Strengthened capacity (SCS5) is confirmed by rightsholders, other partners and other stakeholders, which refer to the increased capacity to educate/ train rightsholders and engage stakeholders and also the capacity to respond to contextual challenges. The spot checks showed that the level of clarity on the benefits in cases is different between the lead organisation and partner organisations. The partners reflect benefitting extensively but cannot describe the specific learning objectives, type of support and follow up needed, while it is more structured on the level of lead organisations.

For SCS 4, in one case, a TPM spot check was conducted in both phases to try and validate the published data as the first spot check left the team doubtful. It is clear that there is still a need for further guidance and internal clarity on the indicator. Reported achievements in terms of advocacy initiatives do not really seem to reflect the actual situation: capacity strengthening workshops followed by micro projects in women's villages, which may be seen as a more indirect form of advocacy. The unintended results specifically those related to utilization of newly required skills, including on advocacy, creation of local networks, changes in societal norms and cultural shifts as a

result of the support provided to women groups that lead to more changes on local communities are harder to validate through spot checks. However the tone, language, enthusiasm, and commitment observed across interviews shows that the achievements although not fully in line with the data published come from a solid background of hard work.

A further spot check with regard to results reported for SCS 4 provides a clear indication of the campaign and the pre-set objective which was partially achieved. The momentum of the campaign, which got a very positive response, was used to get the endorsement of MPs for envisaged adaptation of the law. However the data does not reflect that the initiatives combined efforts of multiple projects including one of the other partnerships.

TPM spot checks for SCS 2 (on changing norms and engaging influential leaders especially on local level to result in adaption of local bylaws and the establishment of new local setups) and SCS3 (an increased involvement in decision making, as the initiatives drove changes to the sub-national level, enhancing community participation in decision-making, and creating spaces for solidarity and knowledge building) validated the tangible local changes reported upon. The spot checks conducted examined the details of the above, including the establishment of a hotline for cyber harassment cases, the show of solidarity and support by a local mayor shooting a video to encourage girls' participation, and the change in impressions gathered from analysing social media reactions following a national campaign. The level of effort put on tailoring messages, editing activity ideas and changing plans to accommodate for contextual difficulties was highly evident in the spot checks. Moreover the TPM interviews did reflect the successful implementation of strategic activities such as movement building and use of technology and their influence on the partners capacity to advocate and carry their causes to the local community. The terminology used by the interviewees reflects an enhanced capacity to advocate and specifically breaking the notion of helplessness and replacing it by the belief in the capacity to influence, even if it is on a longer term. This is a clear validation of the results reflecting more space for advocacy and changes in perceptions, and it gains more relevance when put in the general Lebanese context that currently discourages positive belief in capacity to influence a gloomy bigger picture.

When it comes to SCS 4, the data collected shows that there was versatility and flexibility in choosing advocacy initiatives that suit the context, and accommodate for the challenges faced. This includes shifting focus to local level, engaging local communities in design, strategically selecting champions and local stakeholders, etc.. However, there has not been enough adaptability to the latest security conditions and their possible influence by the majority of partnerships.

Reflecting on the (expected) outcomes reported by partnership programmes, and on unintended effects, it becomes apparent that capturing the full scope of their impact is challenging. The depth and sustainability of changes in social norms, for instance, are complex and not entirely reflected in current reporting (also as partnerships consider this difficult to measure as mentioned earlier). Similarly, the broader societal effects, such as those stemming from increased female participation in decision-making, are significant yet not comprehensively documented, long-term application of skills from training programmes and more institutional implications are often overlooked. Additionally, the indirect yet vital effects of solidarity spaces, like the development of informal support networks and their contribution to community resilience, are not fully detailed. This reflection underscores the need for a more nuanced approach in data collection and reporting , including reflecting on unintended effects to truly grasp the transformative impacts of these initiatives.

3.3 Linkage of reported outcomes to implemented activities (RQ3)

This section addresses research question 3: *Whether - and if so how - the reported results, especially those at outcome level, can be linked to the implemented activities*. We have hereby looked at the linkages between the reported results and the implemented activities, including validation during the TPM spot checks.

For the majority of partnerships, the link between activities and results reported for SCS5, SCS7 and SCS8 (and linked indicators) and specific contribution of the programmes is plausible to a large extent. Plausibility of contribution for the higher level outcomes in two cases is less straightforward due the already favourable position of the duty bearer and/ or multiple other projects funding the same activity .

The basket indicators targeted for this Phase 1 are more immediate outcomes (and by a number of the partnerships seen as outputs). In both cases the link between reported results and activities is obviously there. The reported outputs are for instance based on the participation in training and other activities, pre- and post-training testing provide a direct link between the outputs and activities.

In phase 2 in most cases the reported results and outcomes can be traced to interventions happening being implemented by the partnerships. Partnerships highlighted challenges in measuring progress towards set outcomes in topics related to behavioural change, and perceptions on capacity influence and creating space for influence, and their attempts to develop more tangible process results that can be more clearly traced. The cases where tangible outcomes were reported, like power actors support, the change in perception because of national or local campaigns or creation of more space are all more easy tracked to the partnerships activities. The creation of solidarity spaces and knowledge-building activities has influenced the views of power actors and laid a foundation for feminist economic alternatives. Such tangible outcomes indicate a direct and positive impact on the community level. However, the extent of the change in social norms beyond these specific instances is not clearly measured or reported. The depth and sustainability of such normative changes remain uncertain.

The partnership ToCs provide the pathways to achieve the outcomes. For most TPM spot checks the ToCs reflect the causal links between the reported results and partnership interventions. Nevertheless in two cases the reported outcomes (reported in the MTRs) are not reflected in the partnership ToC and its pathways, with no clear link to programme interventions, but seems more the result of activities of one of the consortium partners.

Qualitative data published in IATI often contains information about linked activities. Analysis of this data 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, in most cases do not explain how an activity contributes to the desired effect, but serve more to explain the quantitative findings. This applies to indicators SCS 5 to 8 but also related to the data focused on for phase 2 (particularly MTR data), with heavy dependence on qualitative data and challenges in linking the advocacy initiatives to the desired effects because of the absence of tangible results at macro policies level at this stage.

In the case data reported relates to (immediate) outcomes in terms of capacity strengthening measurement is linked to the initial capacity assessments. Partnerships generally do not report on attribution and mechanisms whereby effects are obtained. 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 2nd and 3rd Tier. 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. With respect to SCS 5 to 8, TPM spot checks confirm the contributions of programme activities to the reported results but also show that contextual factors and other actors play a role. About half of the Tier 2 and Tier 3 partners selected for TPM has received support in terms of funds, trainings and other capacity strengthening activities through other programmes. Reflections with the project staff and rights holders show that partnership programmes specifically contributed to increased capacity in specific focus areas, on specific topics (e.g. gender lens) etc.

Specific project contributions differ in terms of support provided and intensity of the support. In a few cases information from the partnership's annual reports 2022 provide a narrative on linkages between activities and outputs/outcomes by providing a deeper analysis of stories of change, success stories and/ or other (short, sometimes relatively limited) information on how activities contribute to outputs/outcomes. These narratives are in most cases based on periodic learning moments throughout the years (i.e. outcome harvesting) that capitalise on outcomes. Possible bias can be related to still insufficient formation/training of the partnerships' staff on (feminist) reporting. This entails building trust among partners and with rights holders on reporting correct and precise data/information and evaluating change (from a feminist perspective).

The TPM spot checks on SCS 3 (creating space) showed that the programmes contribution was evident as participants were introduced to the topics through the partnership. The TPM interviews highlight the growing influence that the continuation of such programmes have. There is a striking difference between the tone and language of the interviewed (including partnership staff) and the outside context. In other cases subject to phase 2 the contribution was less straightforward, the power actors support to women participation was an important and tangible result, but tracing the position of that particular actor show that he held the same position before. Naturally, some of the targeted rightsholders are already active and exposed, making it harder to attribute the result to the specific partnership intervention but undoubtedly the efforts done by the partnerships to reach them and build on their engagement to engage others and spread the influence is notable. As mentioned earlier the TPM spot checks also showed that reported achievements do not always reflect the specific contribution of a programme in some cases this might only support accountability, but in others it would provide key data to support learning.

3.4 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 from the organisations (1st/2nd Tier) to rightsholders, communities or target groups. In line with the MFA guidance note, we focus this section on the latter: The accountability of NGOs and CSOs towards the end-rightsholders. Downward accountability can involve more passive forms of merely informing, as well as more active forms of consulting or engaging.

Downward accountability is limited and mainly related to feedback mechanisms for rightsholders participating in activities.

In the majority of partnerships, in-country partners have not reflected much in their monitoring systems on downward accountability to rightsholders, with few concrete mechanisms built in the SCS programmes to report to and communicate with rightsholders. The TPM spot checks provided positive examples as well as examples in which rightsholders were not aware of the (L&A) activities implemented as part as the partnership programmes.

Partners generally do not share data formally with rightsholders on an overall programme level, but rather through informal communication - if they do. Furthermore, the FGDs show that rightsholders generally are not directly involved in monitoring and are not much aware of MEL and Feminist MEL activities. In only two partnerships, the MEL strategy includes a specific section on downward accountability. In one of these cases, the consortium members have developed partnership principles that include downward accountability. One partnership specifically hired an external consultant to learn more about directly involving external partners and ensuring downward accountability.

Nevertheless, partnerships are perceived as transparent and there are mechanisms in place that contribute to downward accountability, mainly in the form of feedback opportunities at activity level.

Firstly, partnerships have established feedback, validation and complaint mechanisms for learning and consulting purposes. The mostly used mechanism is through evaluation forms and post-activity questionnaires through which rightsholders can share their input and ideas on program elements as effectiveness and relevance (e.g. elaborating on points for improvement), and through which information shared during workshops is verified. However, this request for input is more focussed on activity level, rather than SCS program/strategic level or related to MEL content. Similarly, there are opportunities and procedures such as anonymised hotlines to issue complaints or feedback.

Furthermore, there are specific partnerships that have designed more elaborate mechanisms. These for instance include an annual reflection and adaptive management workshops on a strategic level with end-rightsholders (and sharing aggregated results of their programmes to rightsholders, although not specifically linked to SCS); One partner indicates that it organises FGDs to engage rightsholders and to validate and reflect on data collected; one partnership organises periodic meetings involving rightsholders; one partnership made rightsholders part of Community of Actions which co-design and implement activities, and another partnership organises downward accountability through including rightsholders in advisory bodies - i.e. they include external women and girls who monitor what is happening and hold partners accountable through network meetings. Lead organisations of two partnership emphasised that over the course of the partnership, communities have become better able to keep the partners informed about their needs, the challenges and the backlashes they face.

Within partnerships, information related to MEL is generally shared through reports and periodic meetings/consultations with Tier 2 and Tier 3 partners/ groups, and transparency is much promoted by partners and perceived that way.

The interviews showed an increasing attention for downward accountability to end-rightsholders in line with the feminist approach to monitoring and evaluation.

A number of partnerships indicated that they were in the process of designing mechanism for downward accountability following the feminist approach (both during phase 1 and 2). Following this approach, downward accountability to end rightsholders means engaging rightsholders in choices and actions that involve changes for them and their communities, including in the co-design and co-

management of MEL systems, through co-ownership and participatory and qualitative techniques. Interviewees specifically mention outcome harvesting as the participatory technique in which rightsholders are involved, although not all partnerships (yet) include external stakeholders in their outcome harvesting sessions.

Although with various differences, often due to the status of implementation of the different programmes and set up of feminist approach, but also to the number of activities involving certain communities, we found that rightsholders in these partnerships are indeed involved in the process of change and data collection. However, it appears that they are most involved in the learning part that is assured through participatory techniques (e.g. 'write shops' where rightsholders and partners write their stories of change) and regular meetings and not so much in co-design or co-management.

3.5 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?*

All partners(hips) flagged some recommended improvements, however in general partnerships were still in the process of improving their MEL system, mainly based on learnings and the MTR processes.

The response to the recommendations made in Phase 1 varies across partnerships. In general, partnerships report developments (improvements) in their MEL systems since phase 1 such as development of joined tools and contextualisation of indicators, often based on their own learnings and also the MTR processes, and to some extent also triggered or strengthened by the recommendations provided in phase 1.

Partners(hips) reportedly reflected on the recommendations made and some steps, particularly in areas related to capacity strengthening and enhancing their internal MEL systems were made by all partnerships, although these processes are in most instances still ongoing. Specific recommendations related to reliability of data with regard to issues flagged as needing attention, such as double counting and indicator measurement that was not in line with IATI guidance were in all but one case corrected by the partnerships, revising data collection protocols to ensure correct data.

Additionally, more global-level recommendations, including need for comprehensive M&E training and the standardisation of reporting tools aligned with IATI, were not yet followed up by some partners showing the rather slow pace in developing their MEL systems. Similar follow up of the recommendations made on data security/ protection, including development of partnership data protection guidelines, was still limited.

Overall, there was progress in certain areas, but more effort is needed (and to some extent planned) to improve MEL systems and better coordinate and align the diverse activities of the partnerships. Limited MEL capacity (overall) and for specific partners is a practical limitations partnerships face in developing their MEL system and implementing changes. In addition the interviews showed that recommendations for phase 1, which were shared with the in-country leads, were often not shared with the in-country partners and/ or the international lead. In phase 2, we have shared updated partnership reports with international lead partners as well.

Partnerships learning

One of the recommendations in the phase 1 report focused on improving the link between M&E and learning. The partnerships, have different ways in which they intend to learn together. Many of the partnerships, including the more grant-based partnerships have developed a number of learning questions specific for the SCS partnership to support learning across countries and partners, for which often data is collected separately from the monitoring processes. In addition learning takes place during global/ regional exchanges often linked to certain topics. Furthermore in-country partners also have their own learning practices, often not connected to specific donors.

As part of data collection, at country level, reflections during sensemaking sessions and outcome harvesting reportedly contribute to learnings. In addition, many partnerships, have regular learning events/ sessions to stimulate exchange and reflection on approaches and experiences more outside of the data collection processes, for which monitoring data in cases is used as input. In cases there seems to be room to integrate these activities better with the monitoring processes. This links with the observation made above on feminist MEL approaches and the need to improve learning regarding the progress on programmes and outcomes and impact.

4 Conclusions and recommendations

4.1 Synthesis of findings per research question

Below the main findings of the two TPM and DQA Phases are presented, per research question.

4.1.1 RQ1 Organisation of monitoring systems

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. Although the programmes are already at mid-term stage, MEL systems, including (contextualisation of) indicators frameworks and data collection tools, are still being developed or renewed, specifically for new partnerships and or partnerships that are new to the country, which may improve quality, but limits consistency of data. The data collection processes within most organisations are in place, with defined roles and responsibilities, and staff trained, although with temporary setbacks due to staff turnover both at global and in-country or change of partners.

In general, the MFA basket indicators are appreciated for being open and adaptable to the context of the different partnerships (although this has not always been done (yet)). MFA indicators have been mapped onto partnership indicators, but some linkages are differently understood across and within programmes. Not all partnerships have defined meta-data (yet) on how to operationalise the MFA indicators, affecting also the reliability and precision of data collected, specifically related to measuring capacity (SCS 5/ SCS 7 and SCS 8), and creating space for CSO demands (SCS 3). In a number of cases outcome indicators that need to be published in IATI in May 2024 are not yet discussed/defined.

A number of partnerships use outcome harvesting as a tool to identify unintended effects, but not all partnerships have developed clear procedures in this respect. This, however, does not seem to feed into the IATI publishing as the IATI publishing is perceived as accountability-focused.

Systems in place to safeguard against biased results reporting are diverse and included at different levels within the MEL systems, and are merely based reflection sessions and requests for clarification. External stakeholders are only included to a very limited extent both for annual reporting as in the MTR processes. In general data security is up to standard, with ensured anonymity and confidentiality given the sensitivity of most of the topics. However much data is still secured by persons, not by systems, whilst limited specific guidance by the lead partner(s) is provided to partners on how to protect data.

Organisations are generally well aware of the timelines for data collection and reporting but in general data used for learning and management decisions is derived through learning sessions or similar meeting/events.

4.1.2 RQ2 Results and actual situation

The indicators that were checked for phase 1 concerned outputs and immediate outcomes. The TPM spot checks to a large extent verified the results reported in terms of capacity strengthening. In general, interviewees confirmed that partnerships have made noteworthy strides in strengthening the Tier 2 and Tier 3 organisations/groups involved in the TPM spot checks. Initiatives undertaken by in-country partners have resonated with the target audience, notably inspiring youth, girls and

women alike. Strengthened capacity of partners is confirmed by rightsholders, other partners and other stakeholders. The spot checks showed that the level of clarity on the benefits in cases is different between the lead organisation and partner organisations who could not always clearly indicate the specific learning objectives, type of support and follow up needed. As changes in capabilities are difficult to measure and take time to materialise, spot checks at a later stage may provide clearer insights.

The TPM spot check for phase 2, focused on the outcome indicators. In one case the spot check showed that the reported achievements do not really reflect the actual situation, whilst the TPM also showed that it is difficult to capture unintended results specifically those related to utilization of newly required capacity. The other three spot checks provided a clear validation of the reported results reflecting more space for advocacy, changes in perceptions and adaption of local bylaws and the establishment of new local setups. In general, reflecting on the (expected) outcomes reported by partnership programmes, and on unintended effects, it becomes apparent that capturing the full scope of their impact is challenging.

4.1.3 RQ3 Results and links to implemented activities

For the indicators subject of phase 1, for the majority of partnerships, the link between activities and results reported and specific contribution of the programmes is plausible to a large extent, as activities provide a direct, to a large extent self-explanatory link with the reported results. Qualitative data published in IATI often contains information about linked activities, whilst the annual reports in a few cases provide the narrative on how this was achieved. Specific project contributions differ in terms of support provided and intensity of the support. The TPM spot checks confirm the contributions of programme activities to the reported results but also show that contextual factors and other actors play a role, with the partnership programmes specifically contributing to increased capacity in specific focus areas, on specific topics (e.g. gender lens) etc.

With regard to the higher level indicators subject to Phase 2, in most cases the reported results and outcomes can be traced to interventions implemented by the partnerships as reflected in the specific ToCs. In two cases however the reported outcomes seem to more the result of the specific activities of one of the consortium partners, and not so much of a chain of activities as depicted in the partnership ToC pathways. Plausibility of contribution, the extent to which the activities have resulted in the outcomes, differed, from evident to less straightforward with other actors/ factors playing a role. This was however not always reflected in reporting made in the MTR.

4.1.4 RQ4 Downward accountability

There is an increasing attention for downward accountability to end-rightsholders in line with the feminist approach to monitoring and evaluation. All partnerships are sensitised to the feminist MEL principles, namely participation, inclusiveness, shifting power, intersectionality, representation, and flexibility in data collection and reporting, but it is however not always clear yet how rightsholders are to participate in the MEL systems.

Although with various differences, often due to the status of implementation of the different programmes and set up of feminist approach, but also to the number of activities involving certain communities, rightsholders in these partnerships are indeed involved in the process of change and data collection. However, it appears that they are most involved in the learning part that is assured through participatory techniques (e.g. 'write shops' where rightsholders and partners write their stories of change and outcome harvesting) and regular meetings and not so much in co-design or co-management.

In the majority of partnerships, in-country partners, themselves have not reflected much in their monitoring systems on downward accountability to end rightsholders, with few concrete mechanisms to report to and communicate with rightsholders. Similar rightsholders are in most cases not directly involved in monitoring and are not much aware of MEL activities. Partners generally do share data informally with rightsholders.

Nevertheless, partnerships are perceived as transparent and there are mechanisms in place that contribute to downward accountability, mainly in the form of feedback opportunities at activity level such as evaluation forms and complaint mechanism. Next some partnerships/ partners have designed more elaborate mechanisms, including annual reflection workshops and advisory bodies.

4.2 Overall conclusions

Generally speaking (with a few outliers), the partnerships seem to take M&E seriously, and are willing to commit time and efforts to provide reliable and valid information. Some explanatory factors are the fact that there are quite some lead partners and other partners with substantial MEL experience next to a strong donor presence, with quite some exchanges between the MFA and the partnerships. There is of course room for improvement in certain aspects, such as digitalisation, or better understanding of differences between outputs and outcomes, but these are normal challenges especially in programmes focused on capacity building, human rights, behavioural changes and other “intangibles”. Contextualisation of indicators, specifically in the difficult Lebanese context with regard to policy change is another, more critical aspect, for improvement of the MEL systems. Furthermore one could also point to the need for greater downward accountability towards 3rd tier partners and constituencies, although this has been set in process with partners developing more feminist MEL approaches. Lead partners could also better use the M&E capacities of in-country (grassroot) partners and involve them in M&E to a greater extent, not in terms of burdening 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). This would better align with the feminist principles of building trust among partners and with rights holders on reporting particularly in terms of sharing and managing knowledge, accountability to rights holders and awareness of power dynamics between stakeholders.

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 result framework that to suit all contexts is necessarily broadly defined. Adaptation is allowed and encouraged, but it takes time and efforts on behalf of the partnership leads, as well as the other (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 (not always 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, but it is not clear if it is always useful for the partnerships own learning and also not always for MFA’s learning as the selection of indicators is left free, limiting the picture provided.

Indicators SCS 5 and higher are to include Tier 1 and Tier 2 organisations only, whilst for quite some partnerships this information is perceived as not meaningful as the main work is with Tier 3 organisations and the distinction between the Tiers is also not that clear and often depends on whether the in-country leads are Tier 1 or Tier 2 organisations. Also, for some partnerships there is not even a country programme, so the consolidation of indicators which happens in headquarters yields even more abstract information, far from the field experiences and not providing any learning possibilities at country level.

As for the higher level indicators a key point would be the key focus on 'legal' change which is difficult to achieve in the Lebanese context.

4.3 Recommendations

Without pretending to provide exhaustive answers to the above question, the following recommendations can be addressed to the various stakeholders on the basis of the research findings and subsequent discussions with implementing partners .

Recommendations to MFA

- MFA should provide more clear guidance to partnerships on the importance to operationalise concepts such as “strengthened capacities”, “enhanced representation” or “correct information (SRHR), as well as “advocacy initiatives” and “creating space”; 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. Specifically for SCS 3, the IATI guidance is found “complex” and ‘vague’, and what is meant for “creating space” and “agenda setting” could be better framed in the IATI guidelines;
- 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 to avoid that outcome measurement is replaced by output measurement (e.g. participation in the programme equalled to 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 on how to balance M&E efforts and continuous learning with efficient time management. A compromise could be that IOB criteria should be applied to evaluations, not continuous monitoring allowing for more Southern leadership of these processes. In addition the MFA should continue to foster exchanges on good M&E practices among partners, including the partners’ own M&E practices, beyond the measurement of indicators, such as the Partos programme;
- Reporting requirements for SCS5, SCS7 and SCS8, differ, whilst the last has an annual reach, the focus of the first two indicators is on unique CSOs. The qualitative actual (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 often lacks information about further improvements. MFA should clarify the importance of the qualitative element in the use of basket and other indicators, as in partnerships such importance does not seem not always to have trickled down to country level. At the same time, MFA should report back to partnerships its own analysis of the quantitative and qualitative information collected in IATI, in a spirit of downward accountability.
- MFA should ensure a clear M&E guidance for reporting, including for the MTR is developed at the start of the a next programme, to ensure Partnerships can develop good internal guidelines and have sufficient preparation time for MTR etc.

Recommendations to partnership lead organisations

- Partnership leads should develop clear definitions and guidance on the MFA indicators to support contextualisation, data collection, comparability and learning.
- The development of intermediary steps and milestones towards SCS 1 and SCS 2 (going beyond creating space) would be required to capture what has been achieved. Such information should be reported also in IATI as qualitative data. Considering that political context of Lebanon has been the same for some years, data collection and reporting would be required to record intermediary achievements
- Partnership lead organisations should better integrate M&E efforts for learning and for accountability, connecting learning opportunities at multiple levels. In particular, MFA indicators, properly understood also in their qualitative nature - and embedded in the partnerships results framework – could be used to guide reflection and learning also at country level, complementing the 2nd Tier organisations' own MEL systems. All this to avoid that reporting on MFA indicators becomes a mere “compliance matter” while learning, when it happens, is totally disconnected from the results framework.
- Partnership lead organisations should stimulate exchange between their in-country partners on good M&E practices, similar to how exchange about project implementation is frequently ongoing. The M&E good practices of 2nd Tier organisations should be disseminated on a wider scale when replicable, and fed into the global level M&E system.
- It is important that all partners continue developing and keep up-to-date security measures, in all concerned fields, from safeguarding of privacy of right defenders to security of data storage. Partnership lead organisations should provide internal guidance (and support/ training) to further this process.
- As part of the feminist approach to MEL, partnership lead organisations should strengthen it as a learning journey involving not only in-country, Tier 2 and Tier 3 partners, but also end rightsholders as inclusion of rights holders (as possible and seeking not to add too much burden on partners or rights holders themselves), at different levels of the MEL process is a feminist MEL principle. This would include follow up on Feminist MEL including training of the partnerships' staff on (feminist) reporting, with a focus on building trust among partners and with rights holders on reporting correct and precise data/information and evaluating change (from a feminist perspective) and learning.
- Partnership lead organisations should encourage country partners to improve downward accountability towards their constituencies and target groups, and also provide the related support (as well as resources, if possible).
- 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;
- Partnerships should ensure that sufficient resources are made available to develop and implement MEL systems, particularly for new countries.

Recommendations to partner organisations in Lebanon

- In-country partner organisations should take the initiative to propose their consortium leaders suggestions on how to embed MFA and partnership indicators to better fit them into their programme and activities and 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 as much as possible objective norms and criteria for assessing capacity strengthening. At the moment there is 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 towards 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 on 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 M&E 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 M&E 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 keep up-to-date security measures, in all concerned fields, from safeguarding of privacy of right defenders to security of data storage. The national context guides in applying do not 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 1st Tier organisations (phase 1 and again in phase 2)

	Organisation	Position/function	Partnership	DQA / TPM
1	Hivos	Dep. Global Program Manager	Free to be me	DQA (General MEL-system)
2	Rutgers	MEL Lead Coordinator	Generation G*	DQA (General MEL-system)
3	Plan International DCI Netherlands	PMEL Lead Programme manager	She Leads	DQA (General MEL-system)
4	Mama Cash UAF CREA	MEL Consortium Coordinator MEL coordinator Mamacash Mel Lead UAF MEL Lead CREA Programme Officer Mena Mama Cash Programme Officers Lebanon CREA	Count me in!	DQA (General MEL-system), TPM
5	Pax for Peace	Policy Advisor PMEL Programme Manager SCS Policy Advisor PMEL (2x)	Strengthening Civil Courage	DQA (General MEL-system)
6	CREA	MEL Coordinator and Programme manager	Our Voices, Our future*	DQA (General MEL-system)
7	Kvinna Till Kvinna	MEL Lead / Regional Coordinator	Fem PAWER	DQA (General MEL-system)
8	Gender@Work and JASS	Senior Programme Manager Consortium Coordinator Mel lead	Power up	DQA (General MEL-system)
9	Hivos	Global DMEL Coordinator	We lead	DQA (General MEL-system)
10	Oxfam	MEL Coordinator (2x)	Masarouna	DQA (General MEL-system)
11	AWDF	Programme coordinator Project coordinator & temporary MEL coordinator MEL staff	Leading from the South	DQA (General MEL-system)

* No second interview was needed in phase 2

In-country organisations:

Partnership	Organisations interviewed phase 1	Organisations interviewed phase 2
Free to be me	1 organisation	1 organisation
Generation G	1 organisation	1 organisation
She Leads	6 organisations 3 FGDs	5 organisations 1 FGD
Count me in!	1 organisation 1 FGD	No response from POs
Strengthening Civil Courage	3 organisations 1 FGD	5 organisations
Our Voices, Our future	-	-
Fem PAWER	4 organisations 2 FGDs	2 organisations

Partnership	Organisations interviewed phase 1	Organisations interviewed phase 2
Power up	1 organisation 1 FGD	1 organisation 1 FGD
We lead	3 organisations	2 organisations
Masarouna	2 organisations	3 organisations
Leading from the South	2 organisations	2 organisations

Other interviews and FGDs

#	Partnership	Respondents
Phase 1		
1	TPM 1	Women participants, Business Owners Youth Volunteers, rightsholders
2	TPM 2	Young women volunteers, CBO Youth Council Representative Young Girls
3	TPM 3	Women Rightsholders from grassroots organisations
4	TPM 4	Activists youth group
5	TPM 5	Domestic Workers
6	All	RNE policy officer
Phase 2		
7	TPM 1	Young Girls
8	TPM 2	Women rightsholders from grassroots organisations
9	TPM 3 and 4	CSO, service provider
10	All	RNE policy officer

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 ¹⁹						Data analysis methods
		DQA	TPM	DR	ES	IP	IES	FGD	PS	
<p>1. How have the different partnerships organised their systems for monitoring results?</p> <p>Are there any systems in place to safeguard against biased results reporting? If so, how does it function?</p> <p>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"> M&E manual or established M&E policy; Result Frameworks and linkages between selected indicators at partnership level with SCS level and thematic frameworks, including indicator reference sheets; M&E data collection systems (data flow diagrams) implemented by the SCS partnerships; 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. 	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"> Result Frameworks and linkages between selected output and outcome indicators at partnership level with SCS level and thematic frameworks Data flow diagrams for selected output and outcome indicators; Scores on the quality aspects of the data collection, in particular reliability and precision; Extent to which reported results are validated in the TPM spot checks 	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Data flow diagram Analysis of quality aspects of data collection. Comparative Analysis of reported results and spot checks

¹⁹ 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 ¹⁹						Data analysis methods
		DQA	TPM	DR	ES	IP	IES	FGD	PS	
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"> Result Frameworks and linkages between indicators at partnership level with SCS level and thematic frameworks, including indicator reference sheets; Linkages between outputs of activities with outcomes in the Result Frameworks; Scores on the quality aspects of the data collection (data validity, reliability, timeliness, precision and integrity) for selected indicators. Extent to which reported results are validated in the TPM spot checks 	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"> Established reporting/communication to people involved/reached by the project/ constituencies (e.g. website publications, focused on informing) and inclusivity thereof Established feedback and validation mechanisms or meetings with target groups (focused on learning and consulting and follow up) Participation of target group/ constituencies in MEL processes/evaluations. 	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	Data flow diagram
<i>Phase II - 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"> Extent to which recommendations from phase I have been implemented or are still valid. Extent to which MEL systems have improved between phase I and phase II. 	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 M&E system.

Quality aspect	Key question	Sub-question (s) (# DQA template)
Overall M&E System	What is the adequacy and quality of partnership/ partners overall M&E systems?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent do partners have adequate systems and capacity to report progress against key indicators? Do the M&E systems of the partners produce high-quality data that can support management and generate programme learning? Does the M&E system supports the MEL strategy of the Partnership/ programme

Quality aspect	Key question	Sub-question (s) (# DQA template)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent is downward accountability part of the monitoring systems of the partnerships? How is downward accountability organised and who is involved? (overall score)
Validity	Does the data clearly and adequately represent the intended result?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the indicator(s) clearly defined (i.e. with appropriate meta-data)? To what extent is (are) the ToC indicators (which is (are) mapped to the MFA indicator) valid indicators (according to the MFA indicator definitions)? (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"> Are the indicators definition and data collection and analysis methods documented? Has the data been collected through a consistent process (i.e. tools and methods are not changed over time)? (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"> 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”? (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"> 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)? 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? 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? (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"> Are data collected as per the agreed frequency and timeline? Are the data supplied frequently enough for management's needs? (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&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"> describing the implementation process and extent of progress, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies (see also Table 1 in 2.1.44); ...explaining the advocacy process towards implementation, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies. <p>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.</p> <p>Indicator codes & disaggregation This indicator is disaggregated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laws; Governmental policies; Private sector company policies; By-laws; International agreements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CS011 # of laws for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement; SCS012 # of governmental policies for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement; SCS013 # of private sector company policies for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement; SCS014 # of by-laws for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement; SCS015 # of international agreements for sustainable and inclusive development that are better implemented as a result of CSO engagement;
2	SCS2 # of laws, policies blocked, adopted, improved for	Number of concrete and significant changes in laws or	Explain how, as a result of CSO L&A activities, governments, private sector and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCS021 # of laws blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
	sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement.	policies as a result of CSO engagement.	<p>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"> ...describing the content of law, policy, attitude and norm changes ...explaining the advocacy process towards changes, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies. (see also the table in 2.1.4) <p>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.</p>	<p>development as a result of CSO engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCS022 # of governmental policies blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement SCS023 # of private sector company policies blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement SCS024 # of by-laws blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement SCS025 # of international agreements blocked, adopted, improved for sustainable and inclusive development as a result of CSO engagement
H	H Changes in (inter)national laws, policies, norms and practices leading to decrease of barriers to SRHR and HIV/AIDS services	N/A	<p>For this indicator please report on changes in international resolutions such as Commission on Population and Development (CPD), Commission on the status of Women (CSW), High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), 3rd Committee and HRC; that where brought about with contribution of your program. At (sub)national this could entail changes in for instance health laws & policies, SRH policy, a reproductive health bill, the curriculum, HIV/aids policy, termination of pregnancy act/abortion act, relevant local by-laws incl. on Child, Early and Forced Marriage (CEFM), Female Genital Mutilation (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"> SRH015 # of laws blocked, adopted, improved leading to decrease of barriers to SRHR and HIV/AIDS services SRH016 # of governmental policies blocked, adopted, improved leading to decrease of barriers to SRHR and HIV/AIDS services SRH017 # of private sector company policies blocked, adopted, improved leading to decrease of barriers to SRHR and HIV/AIDS services SRH018 # of by-laws blocked, adopted, improved for leading to decrease of barriers to SRHR and HIV/AIDS services SRH019 # of international agreements blocked, adopted, improved leading to decrease of barriers to SRHR and HIV/AIDS services

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
WRGE 1.1	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	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&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"> ...describing the content of law, policy, attitude and norm changes ...explaining the advocacy process towards changes, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies <p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WRG001 # of laws blocked, adopted or improved to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private life; WRG002 # of governmental policies & strategies blocked, adopted or improved to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private life; 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; WRG004 # of by-laws blocked, adopted or improved to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private life WRG005 # of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private life;
WRGE 2.1	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.	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&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"> ...describing the content of law, policy, attitude and norm changes ...explaining the advocacy process towards changes, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies <p>From a learning perspective, please also consider explaining cases where L&A activities did not result in the desired</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 WRG013 # of governmental policies & 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 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;

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
			change, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for bringing about change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WRG015 # of by-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; WRG016 # of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's voice, agency, leadership, and representative
WRGE 3.1	WRGE 3.1. # of laws, policies and strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship	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&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"> • ...describing the content of law, policy, attitude and norm changes • ...explaining the advocacy process towards changes, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies <p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WRG023 # of laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship; • WRG024 # of governmental policies & strategies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship; • WRG025 # of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship;; • WRG026 # of by-laws blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship; • WRG027 # of international agreements blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship;
WRGE 4.1	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	Number of concrete and significant changes in laws or policies as a result of CSO engagement.	Explain how, as a result of CSO L&A activities, governments, private sector and societal groups change their laws and policies, to support sustainability and (gender)inclusiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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; • WRG035 # of governmental policies & strategies blocked, adopted or improved to

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
	women's and girls' rights in crisis and (post)-conflict situations.		<p>In answering this question it helps to consider...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...describing the content of law, policy, attitude and norm changes ...explaining the advocacy process towards changes, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful strategies <p>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.</p>	<p>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;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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;;
3	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.	<p>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.</p> <p>In answering this question it helps to consider...</p> <p>...explaining how CSO involvement changes decision making processes and policy discussions of targeted government, private sector and societal actors</p> <p>...explaining how and what frames introduced by CSOs are taken up by targeted actors, for instance by the media, in policy documents and in official speeches ...explaining how and what CSO issues reach the agenda of targeted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 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 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

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
			government, private sector and societal actors	
WRGE 1.2	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	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	WRGE 2.2 # 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 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	CSO's succeeding in creating space for their demands and 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.	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 3.2	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	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;	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	Disaggregated by women-led, youth-led or other and formal/ informal CSOs

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
	the debate and/or movement building (link SCS3)	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.	to play a transformative, and/or where other actors (not CSOs) were more important for this.	
WRGE 4.2	# 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)	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	SCS4 # of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs, for, by or with their membership/constituency	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	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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. SCS041 # of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs, for, by or with their membership/constituency SCS042 # of advocacy initiatives carried out by CSOs, for, by or with their

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
		be a distinct set of actions we a pre-set objective as qualified in the comment field.	important for this. In answering this question it helps to consider... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...explaining the process of activation ...explaining the process of mobilisation ...explaining the process of political participation ...describing different types of advocacy strategies employed 	membership/constituency at sub-national level
5	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. <p>In answering this question it helps to consider...</p> <p>...explaining what different types of capacities different types of CSOs need for performing different political roles and implementing advocacy strategies</p> <p>...explaining how this is context-specific and tailors to the needs of CSOs and their constituencies ...explaining the process of capacity building, what approach works and what doesn't</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young people. Women led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by women Women & youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young women Other SCS051 # of women led CSOs with increased L&A capacities SCS052 # of youth led CSOs with increased L&A capacities SCS053 # of other CSOs (not youth or women led) with increased L&A capacities SCS054 # of CSOs which are both women and youth led with increased L&A capacities
SRHR J	J # of communities, CSOs and advocacy networks with increased lobby & advocacy capacities	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.	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>In answering this question it helps to consider...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...explaining what different types of capacities different types of CSOs 	SRHR indicator J is linked to SCS basket indicator 5 and follows the same disaggregation for CSOs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young people. Women led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by women Women & youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young women

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
			<p>need for performing different political roles and implementing advocacy strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...explaining how this is context-specific and tailors to the needs of CSOs and their constituencies ...explaining the process of capacity building, what approach works and what doesn't 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other <p>with two additional sub-indicators for - communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - advocacy networks. SRH021 # of women led CSOs with increased L&A capacities SRH022 # of youth led CSOs with increased L&A capacities SRH023 # of CSOs (not youth or women led) with increased L&A capacities SRH024 # of CSOs which are both women and youth led with increased L&A capacities SRH025 # of communities with increased L&A capacities SRH026 # of advocacy networks with increased L&A capacities
WRGE 5.2.1	# of organizations with strengthened capacity to advance women's rights and gender equality (link SCS5)	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	# of CSOs included in SPs programmes	# of civil society partners included in the programme. This indicator 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	Describe and reflect on your partner portfolio. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What types of partners are involved? What is the level of their involvement in programme development, design, implementation and evaluation? 	This indicator will be disaggregated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young people. Women led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by women Women & youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young women Other SCS061 # of women led CSOs included in SPs programmes

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
		<p>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"> SCS062 # of youth led CSOs included in SPs programmes SCS063 # of CSOs (not youth or women led) included in SPs programmes SCS064 # of CSOs which are both women and youth led included in SPs programmes
7	# of CSOs that have enhanced representation of constituencies	<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 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.</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"> Youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young people. Women led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by women Women & youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young women Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCS071 # women led of CSOs that have enhanced representation of constituencies. SCS072 # youth led of CSOs that have enhanced representation of constituencies. SCS073 # of CSOs (not youth or women led) that have enhanced representation of constituencies. SCS074 # of CSOs which are both women & youth led that have enhanced representation of constituencies.
8	# of CSOs using a Gender and Social Inclusion lens during	<p>The indicator appears as a binary indicator. An organization</p>	<p>There are a number of ways to use gender and social inclusion lenses both for</p>	<p>This indicator will be disaggregated by:</p>

#	Indicator	Quantitative measurement	Qualitative measurement	Indicator codes & disaggregation
	all phases of the programming cycle with specific attention to youth.	either has an ambition to use these lenses or not.	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 implementation or program development (which is reflected upon as part of the qualitative assessment of the use of the lenses).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young people. Women led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by women Women & youth led: a CSO that is predominantly governed and staffed by young women Other SCS081 # of women led CSOs using a Gender and Social Inclusion lens during all phases of the programming cycle with specific attention to youth. SCS082 # of youth led CSOs using a Gender and Social Inclusion lens during all phases of the programming cycle with specific attention to youth. 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. SCS084 # of CSOs, which are both women & youth led using a Gender and Social Inclusion lens during all phases of the programming cycle with specific attention to youth.

Annex 4 Data collection tools

Data Quality Assessment (DQA) Template

Background Information:

Programme Name	
Name of Lead Organisation	
Name of Partner Organisation(s)	
Date DQA mission	

Indicators Selected for DQA:

MFA Number and Indicator Title	Project Logframe Indicator (LF) Number and Title

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

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

4. Findings Indicator level (repeat per indicator)

MFA Indicator	Project Logframe Indicator
<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>

Data Flow
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p><i>More specifically, the data flow provides information on the following questions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>From where is data collected (data source) and by whom?</i> <i>Are there any systems in place to monitor unintended effects (positive and negative)?</i> <i>In which format is data collected at the source (paper-based, electronic, others)?</i> <i>When and how often is data collected (timing and frequency)?</i> <i>What aggregation/combination of data from multiple sources is conducted, and at what stage/level in the overall data collection process?</i>

- 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 an M&E element is scored as green, amber or red, are based on whether issues exist 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.

Green (No real issues)	Amber (Some issues requiring attention – but not currently severe)	Red (Serious issues exist requiring immediate attention)	Blue Not applicable
----------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------

Sub-questions	Findings						
<p>1.</p> <p>a. Is the indicator(s) clearly defined (i.e. with appropriate meta-data)?</p> <p>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)?</p>	G		A	✓	R	B	
<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: Meta-data refers to indicator definition, calculation method, indicator type, unit of analysis, disaggregation of data, etc.</i></p>							
<p>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.</p>	G	✓	A		R	B	
<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: Roles and responsibilities refer to assigning (and documenting) responsibilities (within the team) for data collection, data checking, data entry, data analysis, and reporting.</i></p>							
<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>	G	✓	A		R	B	
<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>	G		A		R	B	✓
<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>	G	✓	A		R	B	
<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>	G	✓	A		R	B	
<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 M&E systems of the partners produce high-quality data that can support management and generate programme learning? Do the M&E systems support the MEL strategy?</p>	G		A		R	B	
<p>8. 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?</p>	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: This question focuses on the methodology (method and sampling) and the survey tool used to collect indicator 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: 'Consistent' refers to the method and/or tool which is not changed over time, and applied consistently while collecting data for the indicator.

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 data is collected as per the established frequency and timeline.

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 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.

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	
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>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.</p> <p>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.</p>						
	G	✓	A		R	B	
10. Are there appropriate procedures/tools in place to ensure the security of the collected and analysed data?	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</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
Frequency					
Total No. of Points					
Percentage (%): Total points / 10	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 ²⁰	Key Findings	Recommendations (Including entity to which the recommendation is addressed)

²⁰ Mention 'All indicators' if the findings and recommendations are applicable to all the DQA'ed indicators.

Third Party Monitoring (TPM) Template

Background Information:

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

TPM Mission Information:

TPM Mission Dates and locations:	
-----------------------------------------	--

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.

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

Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Finding:	Conclusion:	Recommendation:

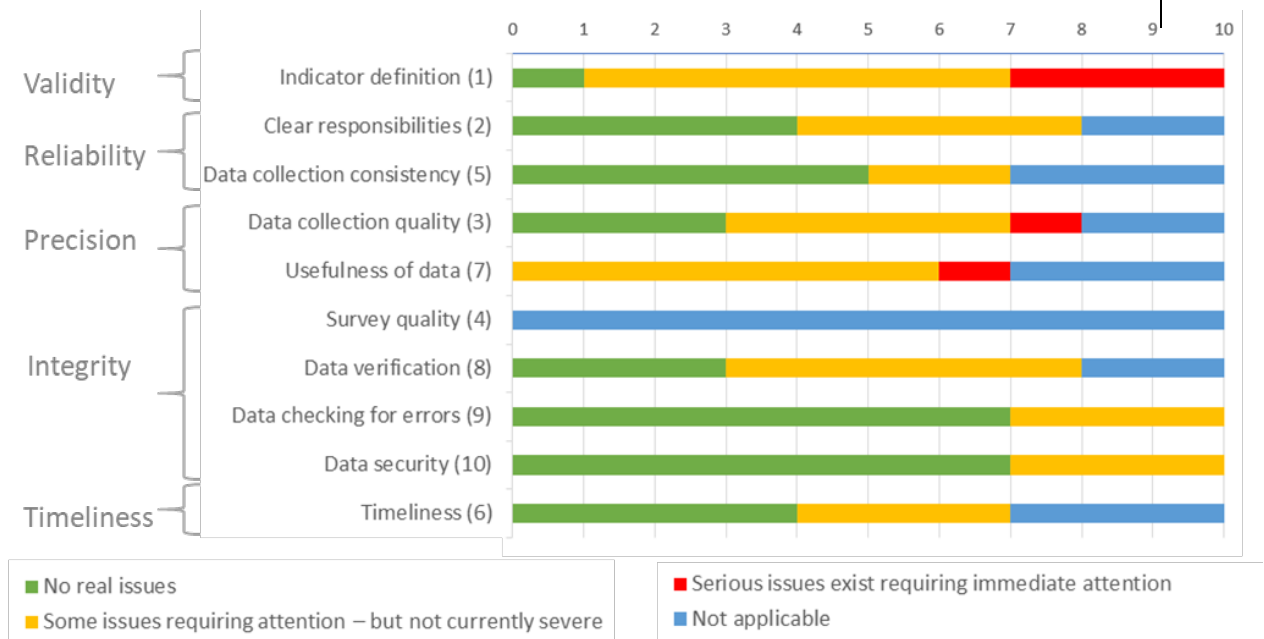
List of Documents Analysed:

List of Stakeholders Interviewed

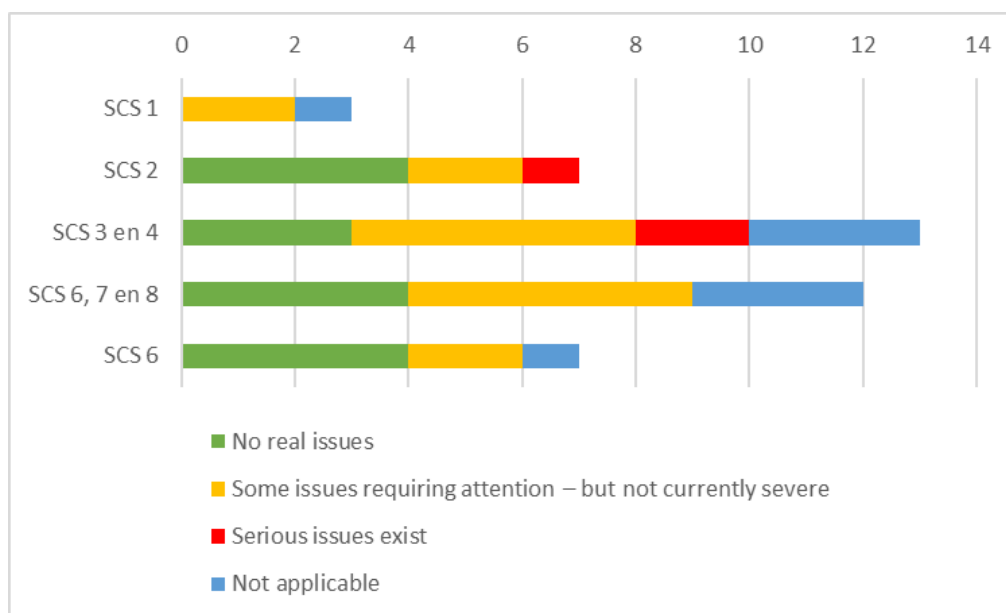
Name:	Position:	Organisation:	Date of Interview:

Name:	Position:	Organisation:	Date of Interview:

Annex 5 – Assessment per quality aspect for phase 1



Annex 6 – Score for validity per SCS indicator



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.



P.O. Box 4175
3006 AD Rotterdam
The Netherlands

Watermanweg 44
3067 GG Rotterdam
The Netherlands

T +31 (0)10 453 88 00
F +31 (0)10 453 07 68
E netherlands@ecorys.com
Registration no. 24316726
W www.ecorys.nl

Sound analysis, inspiring ideas