

One UN Programme in Albania

Gender Scorecard

UNCT Performance Indicators for Gender Equality
and Women's Empowerment

Narrative Report

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ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

CCA	Common Country Assessment
CEB	United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
DEOFP	Department of Equal Opportunities and Family Policies
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GTG	Gender Theme Group
HOA	Head of Agency
HQ	Headquarter
ILO	International Labour Organisation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoLSAEO	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
MSWY	Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OC	Outcome Coordinator
PoC	Programme of Cooperation
PWD	People With Disabilities
RBM	Results-Based Management
RC	Resident Coordinator
RCA	Results and Competency Assessment
ROAR	Results Oriented Annual Report
SC	Score Card
SWAP	System-Wide Action Plan for the implementation of the UN CEB policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
WHO	World Health Organisation

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1. BACKGROUND

The United Nations (UN) Gender Scorecard is a globally standardized assessment of the effectiveness of UN country level gender mainstreaming processes developed by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG). It enables the UN system to assess how well gender equality has been mainstreamed through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) cycle, and allows for comparison and learning between and from countries that have undergone the Gender Scorecard exercise. The tool is designed to capture adherence to generally adopted UN norms for gender equality and does so by assessing performance of specific UN Country Teams as a whole, rather than the achievements of any one agency. By focusing on UN system-wide coordination of gender mainstreaming processes, the tool highlights the growing importance of UN agency collaboration and coordination to achieve common gender equality goals at the country level. The key objectives of the exercise, as outlined in the “United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Performance Indicators for Gender Equality Users’ Guide” (2008), are to:

- Assist the UN to assess the status of gender mainstreaming performance against minimum standards and to stimulate a constructive dialogue within the UNCT about the current status of support for gender equality and women’s empowerment;
- Identify successes and best practices toward fostering gender equality;
- Highlight shortcomings and challenges with achieving gender equality;
- Encourage stakeholder dialogue and deepen understanding of the value of gender equality results; and
- Outline steps to facilitate a more comprehensive mainstreaming approach among UN and partner agencies.

For UNCT Albania, the aspect of assessing inter-agency collaboration and coordination to achieve common gender equality goals at the country level bears particular relevance. In January 2007, Albania was selected as one of the countries around the world to pilot the ‘One UN’ process. The pilot countries agreed to work towards a common UN presence in the country, while capitalizing on the strengths and comparative advantages of the different members of the UN family, focusing on common elements. The goal of the One UN Programme in Albania has been to enhance development results and impact by bringing together the comparative advantages of the UN system within a single strategic programme. The task at hand was to make the UN system more effective and coherent, especially at the country level, to respond to global development, environment and humanitarian challenges, and to increase effectiveness and accountability through better and more harmonized business practices. In the current

four priority areas of UNCT Albania¹, the core principles of gender equality and development of national capacity are envisaged to be upheld and incorporated throughout the implementation of the programme. As a consequence, an assessment of the degree to which this has been achieved within UNCT Albania does not only gauge progress on gender mainstreaming but also sheds light on the success of Delivering As One On Gender as part of the larger 'One UN' process. Since the "goal of the PoC 2012-2016 is to promote sustainable and equitable development, social inclusion and the adherence to international norms and fulfilment of international obligations"², the Gender Scorecard provides a timely opportunity for analyzing and understanding in how far UNCT Albania has mobilised common elements and increased its effectiveness in integrating women's rights and gender equality commitments into its operations.

The Gender Scorecard document, below was finalized in March 2014 in preparation for the UNCT's Programme of Cooperation (2012-2016) Mid Term Review process, thus it reviewed the original POC and its implementation. The timing meant that findings were fed into the Mid Term Review process and informed the UNCT and Outcome Coordinators in the establishment of revised Outcomes, Outputs, associated indicators and decisions on management structures. The Mid Term Review was completed in May 2014, thus the Gender Scorecard does not reflect these changes.

¹ (i) Governance and Rule of Law; (ii) Economy and Environment; (iii) Regional and Local Development; (iv) Inclusive Social Policy.

² GoA and UN Programme of Cooperation Document, 2012-2016.

METHODOLOGY

The UNCT “Gender Scorecard” is one of three system-wide accountability mechanisms being introduced in the UN. It is a methodology that aims at measuring gender equality in UN programming processes across eight dimensions. The application of the approach was initiated with UNCT Albania in 2012³, in order to assess the degree to which UNCT Albania adheres to gender mainstreaming at the institutional level and, consequently, to the promotion of gender equality and women’s human rights in UNCT’s operations in the country.

Desk study

The essential document containing and describing UNCT Albania’s activities is the Programme of Cooperation (PoC) 2012-2016. Consequently, in the initial 2012 desk-study, the PoC had served as the central subject for analysis. The assessment included all eight Scorecard Dimensions, reflecting the UNCT planning cycle. Work undertaken in 2012 consisted of an in-depth desk-based analysis of the four PoC outcomes, 41 outputs, 129 indicators, 417 deliverables from respective output work-plans for the year 2012, various supplementary records, and meetings with the then-UN Women Country Representative. In accordance with the criteria prescribed in the Scorecard, a numerical ranking was assigned to each of the indicators. Average scores in each Dimension were calculated by the sum of individual indicator scores divided by the total number of indicators in each Dimension. After the initial desk-study, the Scorecard process came to a standstill.

The Scorecard process was resumed in November 2013 as a result of explicit demand on the part of UNCT to complete the performance monitoring activity. Scorecard activities undertaken during the time period 18th November 2012 to 12th March 2013 recommenced at exactly the point where the process had been stalled. Findings obtained in 2012 were validated and further enriched by the consultation of recent UNCT documents and the findings obtained through interviews with UNCT representatives (see below). Resulting insights and recommendations directly fed into the Mid-Term Review (MTR) process of the PoC. Preliminary findings and conclusions were shared with the UNCT in January 2014 and the final draft presented to the RC in a consultative meeting in March 2014, subsequently finalised by UN Women for endorsement by GTG and UNCT.

Interviews with UNCT representatives

The areas where UNCT Albania’s performance on gender equality requires improvement are relatively clear and well captured by the Scorecard Dimensions. However, what remains less clear is how required change is to be brought about, and where UNCT representatives themselves identify concrete entry points for gender mainstreaming. In order to move beyond the normative level of general scores and to facilitate a deeper understanding of these questions, a questionnaire for interviews with Heads of

³ Based on a preliminary, earlier draft prepared by the consultant Vesna Ciprus in 2011.

Agencies and PoC Outcome Coordinators was developed. The questionnaire combined two strands of investigation. As per the Scorecard methodology, the overarching structure of interviews followed the eight Scorecard Dimensions. In addition, it was deemed useful and also timely to specifically address those aspects which in the initial desk study in 2012 had been identified as obstacles to gender mainstreaming within UNCT Albania. A sample of such a questionnaire is provided in Annex D. Questions sought to capture UN representatives' nuanced self-assessment of gender performance as well as situated suggestions for improving UNCT's effectiveness in supporting gender equality. Interview partners were asked to make a rating on a scale from 1 (no, missing), 2 (to limited degree), 3 (fairly), 4 (largely, in most cases, on most aspects), to 5 (entirely, fully in place, operational). Some question could be simply answered by either Yes or No. Interviews lasted for approximately 1.5 hours and were jointly conducted by the consultant and either one of the UN Women representatives David Saunders (Representative) or Estela Bulku (Head of Programme).

Respondents were encouraged to elaborate on any specific aspect they considered relevant, and to provide additional explanations. In these conversations, interview partners individually self-assessed performance on gender equality, resulting in a deeper and differentiated understanding of overall Scorecard findings. Furthermore, respondents considered institutional dynamics, identified specific challenges, and pointed out concrete entry points which might have been missed by the general scoring. Careful attention was paid to interview partners' individual standpoints on gender mainstreaming and UNCT dynamics, since this portrays the environment in which institutional change takes (or will not take) place. The interviews aimed at eliciting suggestions and recommendations for further action and improvement, to be fed directly into the upcoming PoC Mid-Term Review process and ongoing, shared work by the UNCT. Thus it seeks full UNCT engagement and ownership of ensuing gender mainstreaming activities.

Draft UNCT Roadmap for mainstreaming gender equality

Two additional processes of gender mainstreaming at organisational level were incorporated into the results of the UNCT Albania Scorecard: (i) the recommendations of the UNCT Gender Audit which had been conducted by ILO in 2010; and (ii) the System-Wide Action Plan for the implementation of the UN CEB policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women (SWAP). Both approaches are distinguished from the Gender Scorecard regarding methodology, scope, and level of intervention: while ILO's Gender Audit focused on a specific sub-set of One UN Programme, the UN SWAP aims at mainstreaming gender equality at individual UN agency-level. **At the same time, the clear common goal is achieving greater equity outcomes, be it through increasing gender-sensitivity and responsiveness at institutional, programmatic, or implementation level. In the context of Delivering as One, the respective recommendations (ILO Gender Audit) and guidelines (UN SWAP) for gender mainstreaming have a range of implications and are of immediate relevance for the UN Country Team. In view of the PoC Mid-Term Review, it was therefore deemed useful to identify the main areas of complementarity and synergy between Gender Audit, UN SWAP and Gender Scorecard, and to incorporate these aspects into a harmonised (draft) UNCT Roadmap for mainstreaming gender equality. Activities contained in this Roadmap are geared towards supporting UNCT's aim to increasingly Deliver *On Gender As One*.**

Structure of the report

The report is divided into five parts. Chapter Three starts with an overview on General Findings and describes findings of the assessment for each of the Scorecard Dimensions. In this part, results of the Gender Scorecard Dimensions are compared and validated with insights obtained through individual interviews with the Resident Coordinator, Heads of Agencies, members of the Gender Theme Group, and Outcome Coordinators. Chapter Four contains the main general recommendations, while specific recommendations for the Mid-Term Review are provided separately in Chapter Five. This section also includes the PoC Results Framework Review Check-List. Annexes contain the sample questionnaire and supporting documentation, while the Gender Scorecard Matrix and the draft UNCT Roadmap for mainstreaming gender equality are provided as individual documents.

“Agencies are bound by their own corporate procedures. But our work cannot be separated by individual agencies. You have to come together and collaborate naturally. The MTR is a great opportunity. In a sense, it is not just PoC we need to revise, but UNCT’s whole presence and existence.” (VG, OC)

“We focus too much on process. In the end, people are so tired of the process and they are just happy that it is over. But what we see is that in the end, and after all the cutting and trimming, documents have lost their gender dimension. We really need to stick to the commitment to gender until the end. With gender, you need to stay alert all the time.” (EL, OC)

2. GENERAL FINDINGS

The overall average score for all UNCT Albania Dimensions is 2.9.⁴ As is evident from Table 1, improvement is required in the majority of dimensions. The average rating obtained through the series of validation interviews with Heads of Agencies, Gender Theme Group members, and Outcome Coordinators is 3.1, which is ten percentage points higher than the overall Scorecard score. This detailed self-assessment revealed that within one sub-dimension, individual responses vary to a great extent. On a scale between 1 and 5, respondents' ratings of their agency's or outcomes' gender performance turned out to be scattered across the full range of possible ratings. While in general, the rating obtained from Interviews confirms the Scorecard result, the diversity in individual assessments of one issue suggests the need for further investigation.

Scorecard Dimension	SC sub-dimension scores	SC average score (2.9)	average Interview rating (3.1)
1 Planning (use of gender data and evidence)	3+4+3+4+3	3.4	3.1
2 Programming	4+n.a.+5+3+5	4.25	3.3
3 Partnerships	2+3+3	2.7	3.1
4 Capacities	2+3+3	2.7	3.0
5 Decision-making	n.a.+3	3.0	2.8
6 Budgeting	3+3	3.0	n.a.
7 Monitoring and evaluation	3	3.0	3.3
8 Quality control and accountability	1	1	n.a.

Table 1: Average Scorecard scores and Interview ratings of UNCT Albania.

UNCT Albania is characterized by a high degree of variability on a number of levels. Overall, there is great variability in how Agencies work. For example, UNDP implements projects, UNICEF focuses on advice at the structural level, ILO is a non-resident Agency. As a result, and for several reasons, there is no uniformity regarding process, the nature of inputs, and the level of discussion. Clearly, aiming at a uniform approach, i.e. mainstreaming gender across UNCT and 'Delivering as One' on gender, within a framework that is characterized by non-uniformity poses a clear challenge. An approach that fits UNDP does not necessarily fit UNICEF. A further challenge is how to address and integrate Agencies like ILO and WHO which are physically remote and have a stronger connection with their headquarters than

⁴ In general, follow up and improvement is required in all Dimensions. Detailed evidence for scores is provided in a separate document, the UN Gender Scorecard Matrix – see Annex A.

with UNCT Albania. These facts need to be carefully kept in mind when engaging in institutional reform processes and change.

In addition to variability, there is also discrepancy and disconnect. The most striking disconnect was identified between the weak articulation of gender concerns in the PoC on the one hand, and actual gender sensitivity and implementation on the other. Furthermore, a high degree of variability concerning gender capacity and gender sensitivity was identified between different UN agencies. Thirdly, there is discrepancy between agency-specific procedures regarding reporting and monitoring on gender equality which varies widely across UNCT.

General findings are summarised in the paragraphs below. Subsequent sections of the report contain Dimension-specific findings, recommendations, and proposed follow-up action for improvement.

- In the majority of interviews, respondents attested to the fact that the original PoC has many flaws and is a weak programming document. While this was considered to “reflect the weaknesses of UNCT at that time”, the PoC was also referred to as having been “the best possible compromise” at the time of its completion (2011). The need for revision was voiced repeatedly, and the opportunity for doing so as part of the upcoming Mid-Term Review process was highly welcomed and also deemed necessary. In the future, PoC Outcomes were recommended to be scrutinized for their gender equality and gender mainstreaming content. Prior to finalisation of the revised PoC, UN Women was suggested to engage in quality control.
- There is high degree of variability between different UN agencies regarding gender capacity, gender-sensitivity and gender-responsiveness, as well as in the degree to which gender accountability is monitored. While it became apparent that often, the weak articulation and reflection of gender equality issues within PoC does not necessarily reflect reality, some outputs/agencies significantly lag behind in the addressing and mainstreaming of gender equality goals.
- Several interview partners explicitly appreciated the possibility of sharing thoughts, being listened to, and having been provided with the opportunity to reflect on gender mainstreaming issues at a higher, intellectual, and strategic level. Apparently, there is a felt need for creating a space for joint critical reflection on strategic issues related to gender equality and institutional change.
- Non-resident Agencies have limited contact with other UNCT members and particularly limited exposure to the ongoing and dynamic discussions on gender mainstreaming within UNCT Albania. However, they are actively involved agencies collaborating on outcomes which address highly gender-sensitive areas including economic development, labour market governance, trade, and SME development.
- Agency-specific procedural instructions - including those for gender mainstreaming - are decided by HQs, and can be a powerful way of increasing the degree of an agency’s gender capacity,

sensitivity and responsiveness, as clearly evidenced by the recent innovations within UNDP. The provision of technical support, input, and clear instructions on procedure on the part of an individual agency's HQ clearly represents an enabling (or, in their absence, an inhibiting) factor for gender mainstreaming within UNCT.

- The role and mandate of Outcome Coordinators is not clearly defined and requires reconsideration. Some Outcome Coordinators felt they had been “parachuted” into this rather lifeless position. Furthermore, while theoretically in a position to do so, Outcome Coordinators do not have the mandate to play a role in coordinating or overseeing the pursuit of gender equality goals within PoC Outcomes.

DIMENSION ONE - GENDER DATA & ANALYSIS FOR PLANNING

The initial desk-review had identified lack of engendered baseline indicators in the PoC, suggesting limited evidence-based analysis of gender inequalities prior to planning. For the moment, there is no strategic paper (e.g. Common Country Assessment or similar) that would build the basis for programming, and the PoC draws weakly on situational analyses. The average score of 3.4 reflects the limited extent to which gender data and evidence were produced and used, which was also confirmed in the majority of interviews. Disaggregation does not yet occur automatically and on a routine basis, and the power of gender-sensitive indicators still needs to be fully understood and utilised. In some areas, predominantly environment, but also on socio-economic development issues related to Roma, people with disabilities (PWDs), and school drop-outs, unavailability of administrative data in general poses a problem. In those areas where gender products are available, the sharing of such products across compartments does not yet happen and needs to be increased. Similarly, the creation of deliberate inter-linkages between agencies that generate gender products, and those that do not but would make good use of them, requires strengthening.

→ Establish an inventory of existing gender studies and gender-sensitive documents that were produced with UNCT support and make them accessible for all UNCT agencies. The content of such recent body of evidence is strongly recommended to nourish area- and sector-specific gender mainstreaming, and to also inform UNCT's planning and programming.

At the same time, over the past two years, there has been a clear tendency to increasingly engage in coherent sex-disaggregation, and a stronger general push for producing gender data is evident. This was seen by respondents as a result of strong internal advocacy, notably by UN Women, a spill-over of agency-specific gender practice as part of the One-UN process, demand by development partners, and a gradual maturing of governmental capacity. Yet, for the moment, the increase in gender data is evident primarily on the level of manifestations.

→ More analytic work is needed on gender-sensitive data analysis and interpretation. This includes investigation of the reasons WHY a problem exists, including its root causes, and of the particular forces that drive gender inequality.

In response to existing gaps, UNCT recently embarked on the drafting of several Strategic Background Papers. In this activity, gender equality concerns were addressed already at the very start of the process, which in turn triggered an overdue discussion on UNCT's position on gender equality and gender mainstreaming in different sectors. (See also Dimension Five - Strategic Decision-Making, see below).

DIMENSION TWO - PROGRAMMING

The UNCT scores 4.25 on programming, exceeding the minimum standard level. The score reflects the fact that some Outputs, particularly those implemented in joint collaboration between UN agencies are very strong on gender equality. At the same time, the majority of original PoC Outputs lack coherent use of, and reference to, sex-disaggregated data, national gender policy (NSGE-GBV-DV), CEDAW, and do not yet engage in gender mainstreaming with governmental counterparts. As such, the PoC does not exceed minimum, which is confirmed by the average interview rating of 3.3.

Since the last elections in June 2013 and the resulting downsizing (by 30%) and restructuring of the administration, Albania's gender machinery is in place but weak. As of March 2014, eight ministries had identified Gender Focal Points (not Gender Equality Employees), and the National Council for Gender Equality met, emphasising the importance of Gender Focal points. However strong and strategic partnerships for gender mainstreaming need to be re-established, given the changes in ministry staff.

The Coherence Fund Guidelines, which prescribe gender issues to be addressed in the narrative of proposals, were largely considered a token conditionality and were not enforced. Respondents were unanimous that the mix of output-orientation and superficial conditionality were not conducive to screening for compliance with gender mainstreaming. Reference to gender equality at the planning level is not necessarily followed through in implementation, also in part a result of the limited degree to which implementation and outcomes are scrutinised for their gender-sensitivity and impact on gender inequality. Gender (e)quality control has to be imbedded in additional, and more effective, ways.

➔ The "Gender Hook" was suggested to be anchored at the individual Agency level, as is the case in UNDP through the application of the gender marker. Compliance with gender equality criteria was proposed to go beyond mere articulation in the narrative and to include the clear obligation to coherently integrate gender equality goals and considerations throughout the project cycle (proposal drafting, defining of targets and indicators, logframe formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, interaction in partnerships). Moreover, the group in charge of the selection process should be a forum that reviews proposals on a more substantial level and also engages in more substantial discussions on gender equality.

➔ Regarding the pre-selection process, respondents suggested that the degree to which gender equality consideration and articulation are required in proposals submitted for funding should be made clear. Only proposals that meet these explicit gender criteria should be rewarded. The ensuing profound and coherent articulation of gender equality would impact on the worthiness with regard to funding but would also have a positive effect on performance later-on. As a consequence, the focus for addressing gender equality contents and considerations was suggested to be on the level of performance. Rather

than remaining an add-on, gender quality would thereby turn into a real quality criterion for funding, as well as during implementation.

“We need to be pushed to do it [=gender mainstreaming] step by step and systematically. We need a mechanism that tells us up-front: this is how you will be judged on gender.” (EN, OC)

Support for national action and capacity development on women’s empowerment and gender equality remains limited and is highly clustered. Support has been primarily provided by UN Women, and is emerging in UNDP, UNICEF, and IOM; it is largely missing from crucial areas of UNCT involvement such as Economic Development, Local and Regional Governance, Agriculture, and Rural Development.

DIMENSION THREE - PARTNERSHIPS

The 2.3 score in the partnership dimension reflects constraints in UNCT’s partnerships with NGOs and women’s groups, and primarily highlights challenges encountered in the relation with the national gender/women’s machinery. UNCT partnerships with the national gender machinery had been sought (under the previous government) and included various governmental bodies, notably the former Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities; Gender Equality Employees; the National Council on Gender; the Albanian State Police; the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Interior, and Ministry of Justice. The former Directorate for Equal Opportunities and Family Policies (DEOFP) within the former Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MoLSAEO) was included in consultations during the programming phase of the PoC 2012-2016. DEOFP was extensively consulted as a co-chair of specific Output Working Groups in which MoLSAEO was involved as a co-implementing partner and had signed the respective Annual Work Plans.

The last elections in June 2013 have resulted in the downsizing, re-structuring and re-organisation of the administration, with the concomitant initiation of thorough reform in a range of sectors. Albania’s gender machinery is in place but weak, which is reflected by a relatively low score for sub-dimension 3a). As of March 2014, ministries had identified eight Gender Focal Points (not Gender Equality Employees), and the National Council for Gender Equality is met. Special attention will have to be paid to re-establishing strong and strategic partnerships for gender mainstreaming. Current reform and downsizing processes within the public administration require joint action on the part of UNCT and the identification of new ways of engagement in order to move ahead on Albania’s gender equality agenda.

→ Under the current circumstances, UNCT is strongly recommended to engage in concerted, joint UNCT advocacy on compliance with Albanian Gender Equality Law and CEDAW regarding the obligation to firmly anchor gender structures and expertise within Albania’s system of governance with the aim to ensure gender justice and accountability to women and men citizens.

“Gender equality needs to be particularly articulated in all areas where we work with and support the government. Reference to gender equality needs to be there in all strategies and documents,

because this will affect the future: if it is there, it is easier to implement, to reflect in budgets, and to develop targeted responses". (AR, OC)

UNCT engages in partnerships with women's/gender NGOs which are predominantly based in the capital city, Tirana. The clear emphasis is on implementation and less on joint planning. Partially, this is related to the fact that women's/gender NGOs have not yet matured to assume the role of partners in consultative processes.⁵ There are also other NGOs who do not necessarily or explicitly focus on women's issues, but have a strong history of involvement in human rights, child, and human trafficking issues. These NGOs usually have a sound degree of gender-sensitivity but rarely engage in gender advocacy and are also less familiar with strategic action on the empowerment of women.

Vulnerable women and girls (as well as men and boys) from marginalised groups are identified and targeted by UNCT, although some outcome areas are more proactive than others, and gaps exist in the identification of subgroups. However, even when they are explicitly targeted in implementation, vulnerable women and girls remain weakly involved in planning and monitoring across all outcome areas. In general, partnerships at community level, with professional associations, and with local government councils are invariably male-dominated, and the representation and involvement of women in general remains a challenge. Since it is primarily local structures that need to start truly listening to (vulnerable, excluded) women, stronger gender-sensitivity in collaborations with such bodies is required.

→ Develop a systemic approach to gender-sensitive planning, monitoring and evaluation that is locally situated, empowering, and serves as good practice for including women, and particularly vulnerable/excluded women and girls (as well as men and boys) in these collaborative processes.

DIMENSION FOUR - UNCT GENDER CAPACITIES

With an average score of 2.7, UNCT capacities to mainstream gender emerge as an area requiring attention. The Gender Theme Group consists of excellent experts committed to gender equality and has clear Terms of Reference. However, GTG's effectiveness in mainstreaming gender and in achieving respective reform goals within UNCT (including in the implementation of the PoC) appears to have been limited so far. The GTG has not been fully operationalised and does not have command over any budget.

→ The GTG was suggested to play a more active role related to capacity development of UNCT staff, for example by organising thematic initiatives and awareness days, and in supporting gender advocacy within UNCT. One clear opportunity for inter-agency strategic joint action and strong GTG involvement is the upcoming Mid-Term Review (see section 5). Furthermore, the draft UNCT Roadmap for

⁵ Factors inhibiting the maturing process include the tendency of assigning NGOs the primary role of service providers, NGOs' limited capacity to engage at the analytic and strategic level, shortage of funds, conservative approaches to leadership, and a strong sense of competition and distrust. As a consequence, support for a maturing process would have to be provided on the basis of taking multiple factors into careful consideration.

mainstreaming gender equality (see Annex B) proposes a range of actions in which the GTG is envisaged to play a central role.

Official UN commitment is outstanding, and there is commendable work on gender equality as well as strong gender expertise within UNCT. However, commitment and expertise are unevenly distributed across and within UN agencies. According to a recent training report, in general, gender expertise is relatively low and highly compartmentalised.⁶ Periodical self-assessment of internal gender capacity occurs within some agencies (as part of staff performance assessment, or via the RCA tool in the case of UNDP), and once a year in the framework of a UNCT-wide initiative. Still, as confirmed in interviews, gaps and training needs remain. In particular, hands-on technical guidance on mainstreaming gender, and coaching on the engendering of specific programmes would significantly enable a more coherent contribution to gender equality in Albania. Effectiveness of such capacity development would be reflected by a gradual and genuine increase in UNCT's gender-sensitive decisions and gender-responsive work over time. Furthermore, clear incentives for staff are required, e.g. in the form of gender work being explicitly recognized in individual performance evaluations.

“If you want to impact positively on women and men and support gender equality, you need to understand the issue” (NK, RBD AC)

→ There is broad agreement that periodic, technical presentations delivered by top experts on specific gender issues would help increasing overall UNCT knowledge on gender equality. Such capacity development would have to particularly address atypical issues which go beyond the “usual women's topics” (i.e. those related to women's reproductive roles) and are of relevance for Albania, e.g. gender & land rights; gender & agriculture in transition economies of the Western Balkans; gender & climate change/disaster preparedness; gender & livestock; gender & energy efficiency; gender & specific value chains; gender & labour market governance, etc.

→ Gender expertise is clearly required in non-Gender-Outputs and in those Outputs that do not target women or address women's issues upfront but impact the female and male population in differentiated ways. Respectively required in-house gender awareness, skills and capacities were reported to be low and require strengthening.

→ For in-house learning and capacity development, three approaches were suggested: (i) agencies should take the initiative in requesting gender expertise from HQ for particular issues; (ii) conduct topic-specific trans-organisational short gender training sessions once every other month in order to remain open and inclusive (versus restricted and agency-confined), and to establish common gender knowledge as well as language; and (iii) whenever an agency hosts a high-level gender expert well-versed on a particular topic, tool, approach or methodology, such opportunity should be taken for organising a joint presentation within UNCT. The “Engaging Men and Boys” Workshop organised in December 2013 attracted a diverse range of participants and was brought forward as a positive and highly enriching example.

⁶ Ruiz Abril, M. E. (2012). Gender workshops for technical staff of the EU delegation & UN team in Albania, 12th, 13th, & 14th of December 2012. Workshops' Memoire. UN Women: Tirana.

→ On-the-job coaching in each programme was suggested as an effective means of increasing gender skills with UNCT. Areas where gaps and coaching needs were identified include: gender-sensitive identification of the sub-groups within defined target groups; data analysis and interpretation (including the analysis of dynamics and root causes, and the identification of forces that drive in/equality, exclusion and vulnerability); identification of adequate proxies for impact monitoring; accessing, considering and incorporating knowledge and data from other sectors; systemic analysis; contextual frame-thinking; reflection on practice; gender mainstreaming; and ways of imbedding gender accountability and its harmonisation with procedural issues and requirements.

Responses related to a joint UNCT roster of gender experts were mixed. In theory, the availability of such a roster was considered positive, since agencies report to face serious bottlenecks regarding experts that combine subject matter expertise with profound gender skills (e.g. gender & livestock, gender & climate change, gender & particular health issues, etc.). However, in practice, the careful and diligent management of such a joint roster was considered beyond the available human and time resources, and therefore unrealistic.

→ Increase inter-agency communication and exchange (including primarily agencies' GFPs, the Gender Theme Group, and UN Women) with the aim to enable cross-referrals between agencies and tap e.g. UN Women's rich data base on gender products.

In general, the role, position and mandate of Gender Focal Points within Agencies deserve reconsideration. While strong and positive examples exist (e.g. UNFPA), GFPs were frequently found to be overburdened ("They dump everything on gender on you") and to not always have efficient backing by their HQ or Regional Office. In these cases, GFPs would require meaningful, coherent and more continuous institutional support for assuming their role of technical gender advisers. In some smaller agencies (i.e. WHO), there is no staff with the designated role of GFP.

DIMENSION FIVE - STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING ON GENDER

Overall, within UNCT, 'gender' has become a legitimate issue. It was repeatedly reported to be more often and more strategically discussed than a year ago. While several reasons may have contributed to this development, at least three aspects can be highlighted: (i) the articulate and top-level support for gender equality and gender mainstreaming by the Resident Coordinator and by strategically positioned Heads of Agencies of UN Women, UNFPA, and UNDP; (ii) UN Women's relentless gender advocacy; and (iii) the introduction of UNDP's obligatory and coherently applied gender monitoring tools, the gender marker and requirements in the Results Oriented Annual Report (ROAR).⁷

In particular, there has been a sharp increase in strategic discussions on gender equality over the past couple of months. Usually, such discussion is initiated by Heads of Agencies. Occasionally, highly active GFPs bring up critical issues in their role as national sensors and receivers, and strategic and "hot" issues

⁷ UNDP's Results Oriented Annual Report (ROAR) includes "please specify the gender results specifying the evidence base for the change in gender equality and the status of women." (p. 12).

are subsequently taken up by the Resident Coordinator and/or Heads of Agencies, and presented to the RBM Advisory Board for decision. Recent strategic discussions addressed issues of governance, gender-responsive budgeting, justice and rule of law, environmental resilience of communities, and the need to harmonise the Child Protection Unit approach with the Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence (both of which are supported by UNCT albeit through different agencies). Furthermore, increased strategic discussions on gender equality within UNCT triggered the drafting of four Thematic Background Papers - which explicitly address gender equality - in December 2013. Within UNICEF, strategic discussion on gender was elicited during the agency's Annual Management Planning Process in March 2012 and March 2013. Gender equality is also a strategic aspect of UNDP's Vision document for 2014, and prominently features in UNFPA's Strategic Plan and the Regional Programme for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. In the case of WHO, strategic discussion on gender is initiated via the 2020 Health Strategy Europe, prepared by the WHO HQ.

At the same time, engaging in strategic discussion on gender issues is not yet common practiced within Outcomes, and thematic discussions on gender are not uniformly imbedded in agencies' project management. While some agencies (as well as individuals) lag behind in joining in the practice of critical reflection and strategizing on gender, there is strong top-level commitment to encouraging and strengthening strategic thinking on gender across UNCT, including among national coordinators.

One critical result of recent strategic discussions on gender is the decision to assign UN Women with the task of ensuring that gender equality will be coherently addressed in the revised PoC and across UNCT. Since the increase in strategic decisions related to gender issues is a rather recent development, how (and the degree to which) these decisions have been followed through will have to be assessed at a later moment.

DIMENSION SIX - BUDGET

The 3.0 score reflects the finding that overall, UNCT Albania expenditures for gender equality, gender mainstreaming, women's empowerment, and women's human rights are not being tracked, and no systems exists that would allow for such UNCT-wide tracking.⁸

At agency-level, UN Women's expenditures are entirely devoted to gender equality; IOM and UNFPA track gender expenditures; and UNDP's gender marker and ROAR system allow the calculation of the agency's allocations for gender equality. During interviews, some agencies provided rough estimates for allocations supporting gender equality and women's rights. In the absence of any set target, these vary between 12% (WHO), 25% (UNFPA), and 40% (IOM). Initial work on reviewing the gender responsiveness of UNICEF's budget was reported to have been undertaken by external gender experts in previous years, but the approach and activity were not pursued.

⁸ According to the rough estimate by the RC, the share of UNCT Albania expenditures for gender equality is approximately 7.9% (or 1.5 Mio US\$ out of UNCT's overall annual budget of 19 Mio US\$).

With the exception of UN Women, whose budget is entirely devoted to gender equality, gender mainstreaming, women's empowerment, and women's human rights, gender benchmarking is currently being introduced only within UNDP. UNDP's Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017 foresees a financial benchmark of a minimum 15% of the agency's resources to be allocated for gender equality and women's empowerment. Being a recent innovation, the concrete mechanism of how this will be operationalised at the country level and across outcomes/outputs is currently work in progress. At corporate entity-level, UNDP has also embarked on initial projections on the link between estimated resources and concrete gender outcomes, to which individual UNDP programmes at country level contribute. Furthermore, UNDP's Flexible Trust Fund for Gender Equality foresees to mobilise non-core resources for UN joint programmes on gender equality and women's empowerment. Taken together, UNDP is currently in the process of taking several bold steps to establish clear linkages between financial resources and gender equality outcomes.

Within the UNCT work-plan, different agencies commit to specific work on gender equality and they also engage in joint funding. Yet, specific budgets for strengthening UNCT support to gender programming are mobilised exclusively by UN Women (for example the Gender Scorecard). In addition, support to the National Women's Machinery has been provided by UN Women and UNDP, the requirement for allocating specific budgets for institutional capacity development on mainstreaming gender is not yet foreseen in UNCT's work-plan. This aspect clearly requires reconsideration, so agencies can increasingly and effectively commit to gender mainstreaming with their respective governmental counterparts. Such allocation is particularly relevant in the current context of re-configuration of the administration and in light of the need to place gender equality high on the new agenda. Furthermore, support for scrutinising governmental budgets for their equity outcomes and contribution to gender equality is still considered the exclusive realm of UN Women. Gender and socially responsive budgets have not yet been taken up as an essential efficiency and accountability tool by agencies other than UN Women.

DIMENSION SEVEN - MONITORING & EVALUATION

The monitoring and evaluation dimension scores 3.0 and clearly requires improvement. As described in more detail in the Scorecard Matrix, there is limited formulation of gender-sensitive indicators in the PoC, which poses an obstacle to the respective monitoring of gender-related results. Gender-related results are monitored at agency-level by UNDP and UN Women, and are envisaged to become an essential part of implementing WHO's Health Strategy 2020. At the initial stage of PoC, a separate Gender Monitoring Matrix was drafted to complement the PoC Results Matrix.⁹ This tailor-made tool used Albania's National Set of Harmonised Gender Indicators as point of reference and was envisaged to enable the monitoring of gender-related results across UNCT. However, the tool remained a draft and has not been applied. Overall, gender monitoring was considered to be weak. A further obstacle to joint gender monitoring is the variability in structure, reporting, definition of results (intermediary and

⁹ UN Women (2011). Gender Framework of the One UN Country Programme (draft for comments dated 2011/08/29).

overall), and indicators among UNCT agencies, in addition to the apparent incongruence between agency-specific procedure and the PoC Monitoring & Evaluation framework. For the moment, the UNCT Performance Indicators for Gender Equality Scorecards exercise is the only existing joint UNCT gender monitoring activity. Within UNCT, there is broad general consensus on the requirement for improved gender monitoring. Results of such monitoring were suggested to be increasingly used for providing a business case for gender equality, including in UNCT's Annual Progress Reports. Higher levels of scrutiny in monitoring in general would increase overall demand for engaging in gender monitoring, particularly in the PoC 'non-gender' outputs. Appropriate approach and tool still need to be identified and agreed upon.

→ Across PoC, synchronise gender programming, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of all expected results that are gender related. As a precondition, this requires (i) the existence of engendered strategic background documents; (ii) the articulation of clear gender criteria for Outcomes and Outputs; (iii) the establishment and application of gender indicators; and (iv) gender expertise on Results-Based Management.

→ Sustain the systematic push for following through with gender at the level of project steering and reporting: projects/activities need to prove how gender inequality is taken into account, what has been undertaken in order to contribute to increasing gender equality, and what the gender-related results of such action are.

→ Reconsider the technical feasibility of applying a Gender Monitoring Matrix to PoC similar to the one drafted in 2011. Based on this decision, develop a system that ensures that progress on increasing gender equality as a result of UNCT's support is consistently tracked.

“We need to significantly strengthen the connection between what we measure and what we want to achieve. We are currently measuring the easy stuff. We need to carefully select and introduce specific elements that serve as proxies through which we can identify progress and measure real change over time.” (DS, HoA)

DIMENSION EIGHT - GENDER QUALITY CONTROL & ACCOUNTABILITY

The low score in this Dimension (1) indicates the need for greater attention to gender equality in processes that aim at ensuring quality and accountability. Quality reviews of the results framework were conducted by the former RBM team and external reviews including by the Regional Directors Team. Unfortunately the CCA and POC quality review templates and Readers' Group comments could not be located. Gender accountability should be increased by the introduction of mechanisms and specific action at two levels: (i) within the individual project-based environment; and (ii) within the larger UNCT context. For example, annual work plans do not pass gender equality control by either GFPs (since GFPs are strictly agency specific), or Outcome Coordinators (who do not have such a mandate or position in relation to the different agencies contributing to a specific Outcome).

- Reconsider the specific mandate and tasks of GFPs and OCs in relation to their role in gender (e)quality control and assurance.
- Introduce a specific mechanism that capitalised on UN Women' role and expertise as strategic partner in gender (e)quality assurance across UNCT.

"I am accountable to the women of this country." (ZTB, RC)

DRAFT

3. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

0 - Capitalise on UNCT's efforts towards coherent gender mainstreaming, its rich gender knowledge base, capacities and expertise, and increasingly flag these as a clear comparative advantage

Human rights treaties and the body of UN Conventions, including those that explicitly pertain to women's human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment, are the basis of engagement of the UN system.¹⁰ Unlike in bilateral partnerships, the UN system can offer insights arrived from a multitude of experiences, research and analysis of best practice in promoting women's rights and their equal standing in society across different sectors, political systems or economic situations. The unique potential of UNCTs is to help in the coherent design of systems and responses which promote equality between women and men, are in full compliance with internationally adopted gender equality principles, and take a multi-sectorial approach. In particular, UNCTs, including their agencies' regional groupings, bodies or inter-agency task teams are strategically positioned to mobilise and provide region-specific gender expertise and solutions related to improving the situation of women under the circumstances arising from the overall transition over the last twenty years in South East Europe. With Albania having graduated to an Upper-middle Income Country and on the path to accession to the European Community, many European partners rely on the European Commission and its apparatus and Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) to provide needed support. However, while utterly important for the future growth and stability of the country, women's human rights and equality between women and men are not a priority nor acknowledged as a stand-alone goal for EU member states. Currently, UNCT agencies are the only development partners in the country engaging on issues of women's rights, gender equality and women's empowerment at the systemic and normative level. However, the effectiveness of UNCT as a whole to capitalise on this comparative advantage in promoting and achieving gender equality rests on UNCT's internal ability to coherently integrate gender equality concerns in its operations, harmonise its gender approaches, make use of its rich gender resources, and engage in concerted and intensified action.

1 - Prioritise gender mainstreaming in the PoC Mid-Term Review process – and beyond

The PoC MTR offers UNCT Albania a critical opportunity for moving forward decisively and concertedly on gender mainstreaming during the remaining phase of PoC implementation 2014-2016, and beyond. There is urgent need for achieving an informed and genuine consensus on gender equality in the PoC. The required common denominator for all agencies and outcomes is recommended to consist of:

¹⁰ Cairo Programme (1994); Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (1995); Beijing Platform for Action (1995); UNSCR 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013) and 2122 (2013); MDGs;

- explicit commitment to gender mainstreaming among all agencies and at all levels;
- support for the implementation of national gender legislation and policy in all sectors and at all levels of engagement;
- support for the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated and sub-group specific data, and application of the national set of harmonised gender indicators;
- strengthening of Government’s gender mainstreaming capacities by all agencies, in all sectors, and regarding all development/governance issues;
- support for re-establishing and strengthening the National Gender Machinery, i.e. gender structures in all ministries and in decentralised local structures (LGUs).

Throughout the process, in-house sectoral specialists with gender expertise are required to be integral part of each Working Group; Working Groups are to be provided with clear guidelines for gender mainstreaming in the PoC, including planning tools and checklists. An example of such an MTR-specific gender mainstreaming checklist is provided in Section 5 – Recommendations for the Mid-Term Review.

Timing:	The timing is dedicated by the larger PoC planning, and especially the Mid-Term Review process. All steps are integral part of UNCT’s overall process of gender mainstreaming.
Responsibility:	RCO to oversee; HOA to operationalise; UN Women and GTG to provide technical support; UN Women tasked with gender (e)quality control
Cost:	Primarily in-house; consultancy costs for UNCT Performance Indicators for Gender Equality Scorecard and for external specialists to fill gaps in those areas where in-house resources are lacking and technical support cannot be garnered from agencies’ Regional Offices, HQs and GFPs therein.

2 - Prioritise gender mainstreaming in all programmes and partnerships

Within Outcomes, UNCT agencies contribute to a larger goal by working in coordination with partner agencies. In principle, this coordination enables the addressing of gender equality issues by the concomitant involvement of a broad range of stakeholders. Within UNCT Albania, this pattern is most evident from the so-called ‘gender outputs’ (Outputs 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.2.5, 4.1.5, and 4.4.1). At the same time, from the majority of outcomes (the ‘non-gender outputs’), is also evident that UNCT does not yet make full use of its potential to operationalise gender equality commitments through inter-agency collaboration. This in turn impacts on the degree to which UNCT operationalises gender equality and women’s empowerment commitments in its collaboration with partners, including its primary counterpart, the Government of Albania. In light of the current consolidation processes of Albania’s new government, the re-composition and re-staffing of Albania’s administration, and the revision of a wide range of Albania’s policy documents, it is imperative that UNCT focuses and transmits its commitment to gender equality in a coherent and unified way. Gender equality results can be realized across agencies, if gender mainstreaming is reflected in the substance of UNCT programmes, articulated as guiding principle, and promoted in UNCT’s partnerships and collaborations.

- Establish an internal screening process (gender review) of programme drafts against clear gender criteria, so required adjustments can be made at an early stage. In order to avoid the often-observed dilution of gender equality along the drafting process, establish quality control of final versions which checks compliance with gender criteria.
- Ensure that annual reviews mandate thorough assessment of gender-specific results.
- In collaborations with duty bearers, support the development of counterpart's gender capacities to mainstream gender equality, implement national gender legislation and policy, and operate in compliance with CEDAW. This refers to all sectors and at all levels of engagement.
- In partnerships and collaborations at community level, and with associations and local government councils, develop local capacities to foster gender equality, social responsiveness, and women's empowerment across all areas and sectors.

Timing: Timing is dedicated by programme-specific planning processes

Responsibility: RC to engage in advocacy with partners and counterparts; HOAs and National Coordinators to ensure adherence to gender equality goals and principles in collaborations; UNCT PR Department to disseminate and transmit clear gender equality messages to the public; UNCT Review Forum to undertake gender assessment of programme drafts; UN Women and GTG to draft clear gender advocacy messages; GTG to provide support for strengthening internal gender capacities on thematic issues that arise during gender assessment processes

Resources: In-house resources

3 -Strengthen gender capacities across UNCT agencies

A concerted effort is needed to increase overall internal UNCT knowledge on gender equality and gender mainstreaming skills by institutionalising UNCT gender capacity development. Such capacity development would have to increasingly include atypical issues beyond the usual "women's" topics which are of relevance for Albania e.g. gender & land rights; gender & agriculture in transition economies of the Western Balkans; gender & climate change/disaster preparedness; gender & livestock; gender & energy efficiency, gender & specific value chains; gender & labour market governance, etc. Due to the cross-sectoral content of respective events, a range of individuals across agencies would be attracted, increasing inter-agency communication, collaboration and exchange.

Gender capacity development also entails on-the-job coaching to build staff capacities for hands-on application in planning, programming, monitoring, and evaluation processes. Areas include: gender sensitive identification of subgroups within target groups; data analysis and interpretation (including analysis of dynamics and root causes, and identification of forces that drive in/equality exclusion and vulnerability); identification of adequate proxies for impact monitoring; consideration and incorporation of knowledge and data from other sectors; systemic analysis; contextual frame-thinking; reflection on practice; ways of imbedding gender accountability and its harmonisation with agency-specific

procedural issues and requirements. UNCT representatives suggested the following approaches for in-house learning and increasing gender capacity:

- agencies to take the initiative in requesting gender expertise from HQ for particular issues;
- Operationalise the Gender Theme Group¹¹ (revision/updating of the GTG's ToR, preparation of annual work plan, quarterly meetings);
- organising topic-specific trans-organisational short gender training sessions in order to remain open and inclusive (versus restricted and agency-confined), and to establish common gender knowledge as well as language. Such sessions were proposed to be organised every other month according to a clearly defined list of topics and schedule, compiled by the GTG in collaboration with HoA, GFPs and UN Women;
- making maximum use of agencies' contracted gender experts at the time of their fielding in Albania; organising joint presentations for UNCT on a particular topic, tool, approach or methodology of interest;
- Increasing UNCT's knowledge base on gender by enabling inter-agency access to and sharing of gender outputs, studies, research, analyses, publications, etc. (UNCT gender resource data base)
- Tapping the existing gender expert data bases of UN Women, UNDP and UNFPA through agencies' pro-active request for cross-referrals.

Timing: Immediate and ongoing

Responsibility: RC to oversee; HOAs to provide information on training needs as well as on opportunities arising within agencies; GFPs to alert HoA to knowledge gaps; HoA to request technical support from HQ; GTG to plan, coordinate and organise joint gender capacity development sessions and presentations; all agencies to feed into the internal gender data base; UN Women to support the establishment of an internal inventory/data base on gender resources and products

Cost: in-house resources for capacity development activities; operationalization of the GTG requires the allocation of adequate time resources for setting up GTG work-plans, procedures and materials as per the Resource Guide and might benefit from temporary UN consultancy.

4 - Improve UNCT gender/social responsible budget tracking

At global level, UN agencies are increasingly using the gender marker system for tracking agency-specific expenditures towards gender equality programming, in line with UN CEB policy on Gender Equality and

¹¹ Operationalisation rests on the step-wise modification, adaptation and application of the "Resource Guide for Gender Theme Groups" to the specific context of UNCT Albania; and GTG's effective engagement in follow-up activities identified in the Scorecard, the Recommendations for the MTR process, and in the draft UNCT Roadmap for mainstreaming gender equality goals (Annex D).

the Empowerment of Women. UN Women's budget is entirely devoted to gender equality goals. Among the other UNCT agencies, IOM and UNFPA budgets are tracked, and UNDP is about to adopt gender responsive budget tracking. In the future, available data at agency-level may be compiled at UNCT level to offer an indicative picture of system-wide gender equality expenditures. In theory, financial allocations dedicated to gender equality could also be assessed at the level of Outputs. Based on the rationale that 'gender outputs' are devoted to achieving gender equality goals, expenditures in these outputs might serve as a rough means for estimating country level expenditures for gender equality. However, this approach does neither capture nor track the extent to which gender equality is mainstreamed also in other Outputs. In addition, such an approach bears the danger of reifying the artificial and counterproductive distinction between gender-sensitive 'gender outputs' versus gender-oblivious mainstream outputs, and as a result does not necessarily contribute to increasing budgetary gender accountability across PoC.

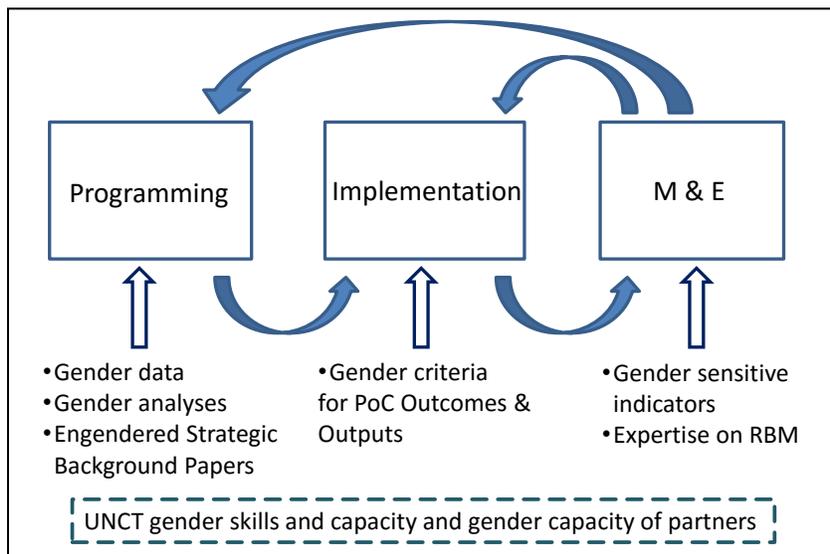
In the absence of a UN system-wide gender marker, full-fledged tracking across UNCT cannot be undertaken. As a first step, UNCT Albania is suggested to initiate internal strategic discussion on budgetary gender accountability as one aspect of gender mainstreaming. This would be followed by promoting the tracking of agency-specific expenditures, and institutional support to individual agencies adopting the respective mechanisms and procedures. Internal activities are envisaged to be concomitantly mirrored by UNCT's concerted provision of training, coaching and technical support to governmental counterparts for increasing budgetary gender accountability and establishing gender responsive budget management (GRB). Respective plans for future UNCT engagement in GRB should be an integral aspect of the Mid-Term Review and reflected in the revised PoC.

Timing:	2014 onwards, MTR
Responsibility:	RC to initiate strategic discussion and monitor follow-up; RC and HOAs to agree on an approach towards internal budgetary gender accountability; UN Women to deliver internal capacity development measure on gender responsive budget management; MTR Working Groups to specifically address GRB in revised PoC; HOAs to adopt GRB in their agency's cooperation with governmental counterparts;
Cost:	In-house resources; consultancy costs will be required for external specialists to conduct GRB trainings

5 - Harmonise gender programming, implementation, and the monitoring & evaluation of gender-related expected results

Given UNCT's high degree of internal variability in gender capacities, gender practice, as well as procedures, the mainstreaming of engendered practice requires the development of harmonised and concerted approaches. Gender sensitivity and responsiveness need to be imbedded within programming, implementation and M&E across UNCT, while at the same time rendering adherence to agency-specific requirements possible. As depicted below, a harmonised approach to gender mainstreaming requires the existence of engendered strategic background documents; the articulation

of clear gender criteria for all Outcomes and Outputs; the establishment and application of gender indicators; and gender expertise on RBM.



Within this framework, responsibility for making the model operational rests with a multitude of individuals, and responsibilities of specific key actors will have to be reconsidered. This includes actions to be undertaken by HoAs; the roles, mandates and functions of specific key actors including the GFPs and OCs; the specific contributions made on the part of the GTG; practical operationalization through the every-day work of National Coordinators; as well as UN Women' role as strategic partner, gender knowledge hub, and key agency for equality assurance. The overall process has a medium-term time frame and requires sustained backing by management and commitment by all staff. Obviously, the overall dynamic, duration and success will be intricately linked to UNCT organisational culture.

- Timing:** From early 2014 onwards, building on momentum generated as a result of the Performance Indicators for Gender Equality Scorecard activity and the MTR. Engendered strategic background papers are currently being drafted. Capacity development, operationalization of the GTG, and increased inter-compartmental sharing of gender data and analyses are covered under #2 - Programmes & Partnerships and #3 - UNCT Gender Capacities
- Responsibility:** RC to oversee; UN Women to coordinate; HoAs to drive and sustain process; GTG members (including in MTR Working Groups) to drive process of continuous gender mainstreaming; national coordinators to firmly anchor approach within programmes; GFPs at agency-level, Regional Office, and HQs to provide technical support;
- Cost:** Primarily in-house; consultancy costs for external technical specialists if not garnered from agencies' HQs; consultancy costs for facilitating assessment of process (2016).

4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE MID-TERM REVIEW (MARCH-APRIL 2014)

For UNCT Albania, the PoC Mid-Term Review represents a unique moment for synthesising and taking concrete action on recent experience, renewed obligations, recommendations obtained from the ILO Gender Audit and the Gender Scorecard, and aspects contained in the UN SWAP. This section captures, in a nut-shell, the main recommendations and translates them into concrete actions to be undertaken by UNCT immediately prior and during the MTR process. It thereby provides guidance for the gradual taking shape of a concerted and coherent approach within UNCT and across PoC in the pursuit of women's human rights, gender equality, gender mainstreaming, and women's empowerment.

4.1. Finalise and endorse the Strategic Background Papers on UNCT's priority areas, in line with the UN's commitments to women's human rights, gender equality, and gender mainstreaming.

Relevant quality criteria:

- Is the gender dimension raised, analysed, interpreted and explained in all Priority areas?
- Is all data provided in a sex-disaggregated manner? Is data disaggregated on the basis of sex adequately analysed and interpreted, and are appropriate recommendations made? Does the gender analysis reveal data gaps? Does the gender analysis address gaps in capacity?
- Do risk and impact analyses adequately take into account the potential differences in impact on women and men within different groups (by age, income, ethnicity, residence, social status, etc.)
- Are the realities of vulnerable groups of women, including women of different ages and in different circumstances (adolescent girls; women and girls in rural areas; elderly women, divorced, widowed, or disabled women; Roma women and girls) taken explicitly into account?
- Is the high prevalence of violence against women/domestic violence taken into account?
- Does the analysis make use of time use studies to reflect the productive and reproductive roles that women and men play?
- Does the analysis consider the different needs of women and men in different groups and examine power relations?
- Does the analysis identify the systemic obstacles that women and girls face at all levels?
- Are recent gender sensitive studies, gender-sensitive documents and good practice produced with UNCT support used to inform each of the Priority areas?
- Where gender equality considerations are not explicitly articulated, are they mainstreamed in a meaningful way in the development challenges and goals?
- Are direct links made between national and UN system-wide commitments to gender equality in the selection of Priority areas? Are existing commitments of the government in relation to girls' and women's human rights and gender equality visibly taken into account in the elaboration of Priority areas?

- Do the analyses pay attention to gender inequality and violations of women’s human rights as a root cause of development challenges?

4.2. UN Women and GTG members to engage in gender equality assurance throughout the MTR process

In line with the Gender Theme Group’s ToR:

- “UN Women was mandated to lead, coordinate and promote *accountability of the United Nations system* on gender equality and women’s empowerment”
- “The UN Country Team, in order to fulfil its commitments to further strengthen the overall performance on gender equality, established the Gender Theme Group to facilitate the *mainstreaming of gender into programming during the implementation, reviews, monitoring and evaluation phases.*”

Responsibility: RC, UN Women, GTG

4.3. Share and endorse the GTG MTR Gender Checklist prior to the MTR (see below)

Responsibility: UN Women, RC, HoA, RBM Advisory Board, GTG

Time-frame: March 2014

4.4. Disseminate the Gender Checklist across UNCT and include it as an integral part of the Tor for the MTR

Responsibility: RC, HoA, GTG

Time-frame: March 2014

4.5. In each Working Group, ensure the existence of gender expertise to support the identification of areas for capacity development on gender mainstreaming with governmental counterparts

Responsibility: GTG, UN Women, Working Groups

4.6. In each Working Group, ensure the existence of gender expertise to support the identification of areas for capacity development on gender responsive budget management with governmental counterparts

Responsibility: GTG, UN Women, Working Groups

4.7. In each Working Group, ensure the existence of gender expertise to support PoC alignment with national gender equality, equal opportunities and women’s empowerment goals (GEL, NSGE-GBV-DV, CEDAW)

Responsibility: GTG, UN Women, Working Groups

4.8. Reconsider the application and revision of the draft Gender Monitoring Matrix (2011) and agree on concerted monitoring of PoC gender results

Responsibility: UN Women, RBM Advisory Board, HoA, GTG, Working Groups

4.9. Collect requests/expressions of interest and need for gender capacity development, and upcoming gender training opportunities (as a result of missions by gender experts or other)

Responsibility: GTG, UN Women, GFPs

4.10. Openly table challenges encountered in integrating gender quality goals and gender accountability mechanisms in each Working Groups as part of the learning process and jointly address and agree on remedial action.

Responsibility: GTG, HoA, Working Groups, Un Women, GFPs

Accompanying and supporting measures:

4.11. Engage in strategic discussion on UN agencies' budgetary gender targets, and UNCT's overall gender target

Responsibility: RC, HoA

Time-frame: from March 2014 onwards

4.12. Develop gender advocacy messages for all priority areas

Responsibility: GTG, UN Women, garnering ideas from MTR Working Groups, GFPs

Time-frame: from March 2014 onwards

4.13. Discuss and agree on modalities and approach for setting up UNCT's gender resource data base

Responsibility: UN Women in collaboration with GTG, HoA

Time-frame: from March 2014 onwards

POC REVIEW GENDER CHECK-LIST

Across UNCT Albania, there is explicit recognition of the need to strengthen gender responsiveness as well as general commitment to engaging in gender mainstreaming. The Mid-Term Review clearly offers one of the opportunities and was also identified by interview partners as a concrete entry point for taking joint action. At the same time, respondents expressed their need for guidance in this process and

suggested the application of concrete gender mainstreaming guidelines in the revision of the PoC. In response, a respective check-list was prepared. Using the relevant Gender Equality Checklist of the Resource Guide for Gender Theme Groups (UNIFEM, 2005) as a basis, it was adapted to UNCT Albania's specific task of addressing gender equality as integral part of the Mid-Term Review process.

1.	MTR Planning	
1.1.	Is the line ministry responsible for women's equality and CEDAW participating in the process?	
1.2	Are representatives of the national women's machinery, GFPs and/or gender experts from other relevant ministries participating in the process?	
1.3	Is the opportunity for input from units responsible for gender equality adequately scheduled, so deadlines can be met?	
1.4	Have all UNCT agencies identified gender mainstreaming as a strategy, and gender equality as an overarching goal, including non-residential/remote agencies?	
1.5	Are representatives of women's groups and external national gender experts involved? How and when?	
1.6	Are gender experts of UN agencies – including UN Women – and from bi-lateral donors involved?	
1.7	Does the MTR reflect the latest CEDAW Concluding Observations that the country has received? Are relevant elements of the NSGE-GBV-DV, other national plans of action related to women and gender equality, and the Law on Gender Equality in Society reflected?	
1.8	Are women's human rights mainstreamed across the MTR process?	
1.9	Does the GTG have clear and specific ToR for engagement in the MTR process?	
1.10	Which mechanisms/indicators are being put in place for monitoring integrated coverage of gender equality in the MTR process?	
2.	Information	
2.1.	Is the gender dimension raised, analysed, interpreted and explained in all Priority areas?	
2.2	Are recent gender sensitive studies, gender-sensitive documents and good practice produced with UNCT support used to inform each of the Priority areas, as well as across outcome formulation and output development?	
2.3	Is all data provided in a sex-disaggregated manner?	
2.4	Does the gender analysis reveal data gaps? Are corresponding measures and plans in place to address these data gaps?	
2.5	Does the gender analysis address gaps in capacity? Are corresponding measures and plans in place to address these capacity gaps?	
2.6	Is data disaggregated on the basis of sex adequately analysed and interpreted, and are appropriate recommendations made?	
2.7	Do risk and impact analyses adequately take into account the potential differences in impact on women and men within different groups (by age, income, ethnicity, residence, social status, etc.)	
3	Analysis	
3.1	Are the realities of vulnerable groups of women, including women of different ages and in different circumstances (adolescent girls; women and girls in rural	

	areas; elderly women' divorced, widowed, or disabled women; Roma women and girls) taken explicitly into account?	
3.2	Is the high prevalence of violence against women/domestic violence taken into account?	
3.3	Are gender-sensitive sector-specific studies and reports being taken into account?	
3.4	Does the analysis make use of time use studies to reflect the productive and reproductive roles that women and men play?	
3.5	Does the analysis consider the different needs of women and men in different groups and examine power relations?	
3.6	Does the analysis identify the systemic obstacles that women and girls face at all levels?	
3.7	Where gender equality considerations are not explicitly articulated, are they mainstreamed in a meaningful way in the development challenges and goals?	
4	Priorities and Results	
4.1	Are direct links made between national and UN system-wide commitments to gender equality in the selection of Priority areas for UNCT/PoC?	
4.2	Are existing commitments of the government in relation to girls' and women's human rights and gender equality visibly taken into account in the elaboration of Priority areas and envisaged outcomes?	
4.3	Do the outcomes pay attention to gender inequality and violations of women's human rights as a root cause of development challenges?	
4.4	Do outcomes and outputs adequately respond to the differential impact of crises on women and men in general and on women and men among vulnerable groups? Are gender and power relations adequately reflected in the coverage of vulnerable and other groups?	
4.5	Has the GTG coordinated with UN Women, and gender expertise in the relevant UN regional offices to seek partnership and advice and ensure mutually reinforcing work on achieving gender equality?	
4.6	In all areas where capacity development for governmental counterparts is foreseen, does this include, as an integral part, support for increasing the knowledge and skills for engaging in gender mainstreaming?	
4.7	In all areas where support for central and local government is foreseen, does this include, as an integral part, measures to engage in gender-responsive governance?	
4.8	In all areas where support for central and local government is foreseen, does this include measures to operationalise and strengthen the national women's/gender machinery?	
4.9	In all areas where support is provided to government for increasing effectiveness of resource allocations: has the need for training, coaching and technical support to governmental counterparts for increasing budgetary gender accountability and for establishing gender and socially responsive budget management been identified as a priority?	
5	Partnerships	
5.1	Where the national unit on women's equality, representatives of women's NGOs, and external gender experts active in the MTR process?	
5.2	Have particular efforts been made that the voices, rights, needs and interests of	

	particular groups of disadvantaged or vulnerable women are taken into consideration and reflected in the MTR process?	
5.3	Have the GTG, UNCT gender focal points, and UN Women been actively involved in the MTR process?	
5.4	Did the GTG and its partners in the national women's machinery, women's NGOs, internal and external gender experts and gender experts of bilateral donors have the opportunity to gain consensus on the comments provided to the UNCT during the MTR process?	
6	Indicators & RBM	
6.1	Are specific gender indicators and targets for monitoring and evaluating the integrated gender equality dimensions of the Country Programme included in the final version and in the sets of commitments?	
6.2	Are specific measures and arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the integrated gender equality dimensions of the Country Programme defined and are responsibilities been explicitly assigned?	
6.3	Which mechanisms are being put in place for the coordinated performance monitoring of gender equality goals in the revised PoC?	
6.4	Which mechanism is put in place that tracks progress on increasing gender quality as a result of revised-PoC implementation/UNCT support?	

ANNEX A - SCORECARD MATRIX

Provided as a separate document.

ANNEX B – UNCT ROADMAP FOR MAINSTREAMING GENDER EQUALITY (DRAFT)

Provided as a separate document

ANNEX C – INDIVIDUALS CONSULTED

Name	Agency	Position	Date	Time
Detlef Palm	UNICEF	HoA	25-Nov	16:00
Vasil Miho	WHO	HoA	09-Dec	10:00
Manuela Bello	UNFPA	HoA	09-Dec	14:30
Vera Gavrilova	UNICEF	OC	09-Dec	16:00
Vladimir Malkaj	UNDP	OC	10-Dec	10:00
David Saunders	UNW	HoA	10-Dec	12:30
Zineb Touimi-Benjelloun	UNCT	RC	13-Dec	10:30
Eno Ngjela	UNDP	OC	16-Dec	15:00
Entela Lako	UNDP	OC	16-Dec	11:00
Teuta Grazhdani	IOM	OC	16-Dec	12:30
Freddy Austli	UNDP	OC	17-Dec	15:00
Nynke Kuperus	UNCT	RBM AB	17-Dec	16:15
Arben Rama	UNDP	OC	18-Dec	15:30
Estela Bulku	UNW	OC	19-Dec	13:00
Yesim Oruc	UNDP	HoA	17-Dec	16:00

ANNEX D – QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEADS OF AGENCIES AND POC OUTCOME COORDINATORS

Questions are based on the dimensions of the UNCT Performance Indicators. They seek to capture a rating and (self)assessment by UN Agencies where we are doing well and not so well, so the UNCT can improve its effectiveness in supporting Gender Equality. In most cases, respondents are asked to make a rating on a scale from 1 (no, missing), 2 (to limited degree), 3 (fairly), 4 (largely, in most cases, on most aspects) to 5 (entirely, fully in place, operational). Some questions can be simply answered by either Yes or No. Respondents are also encouraged to elaborate on specific aspects which they consider relevant, and to provide additional explanations.

1. ANALYSIS: DATA, EVIDENCE AND GENDER EQUALITY

1.1. In how far does planning include an in-depth evidence-based analysis of gender inequality (influence of gender relations, gender roles, status, inequalities and discrimination in legislation and policies, women's and men's different access to and control of resources)?

1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o

1.2. To which degree are the national legal frameworks, women's empowerment, CEDAW Committee concluding comments and specific measures for follow up to CEDAW reports taken into consideration?

1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o

1.3. To which degree is data sex-disaggregated and a specific reason noted for not disaggregating by sex?

1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o

1.4. In how far are critical capacity gaps in promoting gender equality identified?

1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o

1.5. At the level of Outputs and Indicators, gender-sensitive articulation is largely missing from the PoC. How should this be interpreted? What should be done in response to this finding?

2. PROGRAMMING

2.1. To which degree are gender equality goals reflected in annual work plan?

1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o

2.2. In how far are efforts undertaken in mainstreaming gender equality goals in Outputs and across PoC?

1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o

2.3. To which degree is joint UNCT action undertaken on women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming?

1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o

- 2.4. In how far is support for national action on women's empowerment and gender equality provided within Output implementation?
- 1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o
- 2.5. Is capacity development on gender equality and gender mainstreaming provided to governmental counterparts?
- 1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o
- 2.6. In how far do Outcomes/Agencies support monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming in National Policy and Development Plans?
- 1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o
- 2.7. The Coherence Fund Guidelines prescribe gender issues to be addressed in the narrative. What is the experience and actual practice of this provision? Is it effective? Useful?

3. PARTNERSHIPS

- 3.1. To which degree do Activities support the national women's machinery and inter-ministerial coordination for implementing relevant aspects of the National Strategy on Gender Equality, Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence?
- 1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o
- 3.2. Are women and girls from vulnerable and excluded groups identified and involved in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Outputs?
- 1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o
- 3.3. Are Women CS groups and/or CS expert groups focusing on gender equality issues consulted during the development, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Outputs?
- 1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o

4. UNCT CAPACITIES

- 4.1. Is the Gender Theme Group is sufficiently resourced, and are its tasks clearly defined?
- 1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o
- 4.2. Do you think that a joint UNCT roster of gender experts would be a useful resource?
- I agree I do not agree not relevant
- 4.3. Does your Agency periodically undertakes a self-assessment of gender capacity?
- 1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o
- 4.4. Where within the agency is gender capacity located? What is the role of the GFP?
- 4.5. Are there areas within the Agency/the Output where increased gender capacity would be required?
- 4.6. How should this gender capacity be developed?

5. GE & STRATEGIC DECISIONS

5.1. In how far are gender equality and gender mainstreaming strategically discussed?

1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o

5.2. Where is gender equality and gender mainstreaming discussed?

5.3. How often and when is gender equality and gender mainstreaming discussed?

5.4. Who raises the issue/initiates this (strategic) discussion?

5.5. What decisions have recently resulted from such strategic discussion? Are they followed through?

6. BUDGET

6.1. What is your estimation of the share of your annual budget (in %) that is explicitly used for gender mainstreaming and for increasing gender equality?

6.2. Are expenditures for gender equality/mainstreaming/women's empowerment/women's human rights and entitlements tracked internally by your Agency?

6.3. Are there specific allocations/budgets for strengthening your Agency's support for gender equality/women's empowerment?

7. MONITORING & EVALUATION

7.1. Does your Agency/Output engage in gender equality (self/external) evaluation and/or gender audit?

7.2. Is there a mechanism in place that monitors gender-related results, complementing the main M/E matrix?

7.3. Is all monitoring and evaluation data sex-disaggregated?

1 o 2 o 3 o 4 o 5 o

8. QUALITY CONTROL/ACCOUNTABILITY

8.1. The PoC Gender Quality Review Template is in place

Yes o No o o not relevant

8.2. The PoC Gender Quality Review Template is used

Yes o No o o not relevant

ANNEX E – RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

- Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania in partnership with The United Nations. One United Nations Programme Albania, Programme Framework Document 2007-2010.
- Gender mainstreaming in non-gender Outputs 2012-2016 (roles of RBM Advisory Committee and Outcome Coordinator, Guidelines UN Coherence Fund)
- Government of Albania and UNCT (2012). Programme of Cooperation 2012-2016. Progress Report 2012.
- Government of Albania and United Nations (2010). Albania National Report on progress towards achieving MDGs.
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- Government of Albania, United Nations Albania, and Government of Sweden (2012). Programme of Cooperation 2012-2016. Overview of Progress January 2012 – October 2012. Gender Outputs (1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.2.5, 4.1.5, and 4.4.1)
- ILO (2010). Participatory Gender Audit Report - UNCT Albania, Governance Outcome 1 and Basic Services Outcome 3.
- Mid-term Evaluation of the UN Joint Programme on Gender Equality (JPGE).
- Office of the UN Resident Coordinator, Key areas for UN Support – Summary Notes (various ministries)
- Office of the UN Resident Coordinator. Summary Notes “Key Areas for UN Support”.
- RCAR 2012 RCO UN Women Inputs as of 31 December 2012.
- Ruiz Abril, M. E. (2012). Gender workshops for technical staff of the EU delegation & UN team in Albania, 12th, 13th, & 14th of December 2012. Workshops’ Memoire. UN Women: Tirana.
- UN Albania RBM Advisory Committee. Meeting minutes.
- UN Albania. Overview of Progress – Gender Outputs January 2012-October 2012, submitted to the Government of Sweden/SIDA.
- UN Albania. CCPD for Albania interviews.
- UN Coherence Fund Albania 2012-2016.
- UN Coherence Fund Draft Fund Allocation Criteria 2012-2016.
- UN Coherence Fund, Guidelines 2012-2016.
- UN Detailed narrative explanation of each UN agencies’ contribution to the implementation of the gender outputs annual work-plans.
- UN Women (2011). Gender Framework of the One UN Country Programme (draft for comments dated 2011/08/29).
- UN Women (2013). Gender Mainstreaming approaches in development programming: being strategic and achieving results in an evolving development context. Expert Group Meeting Report 30 October 2013.
- UN Women Civil Society Advisory Group Albania. Agenda, Minutes, Members’ List
- UN Women/GWG (2011). Gender Framework One UN Country Programme. Final revised draft for comments.
- UNCT Albania Gender Theme Group - Members List.
- UNCT Albania Gender Theme Group - Terms of Reference.

UNDP (2013). Background Note – Theory of Change for Outcome 4 (draft 15 August 2013).

UNIFEM (2005). Resource Guide for Gender Theme Groups.

United Nations Kenya (2012). Gender Scorecard – UNCT Performance Indicators for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment. Narrative Report prepared by Andrea Lee Essler, PhD.

DRAFT