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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

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AWEN	Albanian Women's Empowerment Network
AWGSP	Association for Women and Girls with Social Problems
BIRN	Balkans Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN)
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CLGW	Counselling Line for Girls and Women
CRM	Coordinating Referral Mechanisms for Domestic Violence
CSO	Civil Society Organization
GADC	Gender Alliance for Development Centre
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GREVIO	Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
RBM	Results-Based Management
SEK	Swedish Krona
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations' Development Programme
WFE	Woman Forum Elbasan
WtW	Woman to Woman

## Preface

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This evaluation was contracted by the Embassy of Sweden in Albania through the Sida Framework Agreement for Evaluation Services. The Evaluation Team consisted of Henrik Alffram, Visare Gorani and Mirela Jonuzaj. The Final Report was quality assured by Susan Tamondong, whose work was independent of the evaluation team. Evelina Eriksson provided project management support.

## Executive summary

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The Swedish Embassy in Albania has engaged FCG Sweden to evaluate the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency's (Sida) support to Albanian Women's Empowerment Network (AWEN) from 2019 until March 2022.

The objective of the evaluation is to assess AWEN's intervention *Protection and promotion of women rights in Albania* and to provide recommendations as an input to upcoming discussions on future support to women rights defender in Albania. Sida supports the intervention with roughly SEK 17 million over four years (2019-2022), following a one-year extension.

AWEN aims for an "increased role and contribution of women civil society organizations for the protection, promotion, and respect of women human rights in Albania." Relating to this goal are three outcomes:

- Outcome 1: "Increasingly protected and promoted women's human rights through improvement and implementation of policies and legal framework at national and local level."
- Outcome 2: "AWEN and members have strengthened institutional/organizational capacities by becoming more democratic, accountable, independent, sustainable, and capable to promote and protect women human rights."
- Outcome 3: "Vulnerable groups of girls and women, especially gender-based violence and trafficking survivors are protected and empowered."

The Evaluation Team assesses that AWEN's focus on gender equality and gender-based violence (GBV) is highly relevant from a needs perspective. AWEN's programme is also well in line with the Albanian government's stated priorities. AWEN is by many recognized as an actor that contributes to shaping women's rights priorities, in particular in relation to GBV. Overall, its strategic approach also remains relevant.

Coordination and creation of synergies is a key rationale for AWEN's existence. The design and intervention of AWEN's programme has closely considered the priorities and work of its members. Informants see AWEN as an organization that coordinates its work well with other actors concerned with women's rights. During the programme period, AWEN has continued to expand its geographic and thematic focus. With the expansion follows a risk that it is diluting its resources and the expertise it has on issues of GBV.

AWEN has been an active and influential advocacy actor concerning gender equality and has contributed to legal and other public policy changes in this area. It has contributed to strengthening the advocacy action of its members as well as of other civil society organizations concerned with women's rights. The members, through their cooperation and interaction with local authorities and other government actors, have also contributed to increased duty bearer capacity, especially on issues of domestic violence. In terms of awareness raising, AWEN has implemented and supported a range of activities around the country. AWEN and its members assume these activities will contribute to changed attitudes and behaviours, but there is little available information to determine the results of the efforts made to date.

## Evaluation of Sida's Support to AWEN

There is broad agreement that AWEN has managed its sub granting role well. The supported member organizations have offered much appreciated assistance and protection to a growing number of survivors of GBV seeking their support. For many of the survivors, the programme has been of value for addressing issues of security, lack of opportunity and choice, power and voice, and material resources.

AWEN has contributed to strengthening the member organizations' internal governance and their working methods. The efforts needed to further strengthen the organizations' internal democracy are, however, likely to be high. Even though AWEN has facilitated the member organizations' exposure to different strategic approaches to working with gender equality, there is a fairly high degree of methodological similarities. Many of the member organizations have chosen similar ways to tackle the problem of GBV and assist victims. It may be relevant for AWEN to try alternative approaches to encourage methodology development.

AWEN has a well-developed intervention logic. It provides clear guidance for its work. AWEN also has an effective and ambitious system in place for following up its work and the work of its partners. However, the system provides AWEN with limited information of relevance for capturing outcome level results and for helping to understand how it best attains results. Even though AWEN applies a human rights based approach (HRBA) and commits to paying particular attention to vulnerable groups and to intersectionality, its M&E system does not provide solid data about which groups that are reached by its activities and how they affect them.

AWEN could benefit from an increase in human resources devoted to communications and advocacy, and to development of projects and proposals. If it maintains a significant capacity development role, it could also benefit from having more staff time dedicated to assist partners with methodology development. It might be relevant for AWEN to reduce its reliance on external expertise in favour of enhanced in-house capacity.

AWEN operates with a sound level of efficiency. Its individual cost levels are reasonable, and AWEN has largely implemented its budget as planned. The organization could, however, strengthen its ability to compare costs across member organizations, set up guidelines on how to deal with members that may be under-performing. There are either significant salary differences between the member organizations or challenges in how members calculate and present salaries in budgets and financial reports.

The individual level changes that AWEN is contributing to are, by their very nature, characterized by high degree of sustainability. They are not dependent on AWEN's continued operations. The legal and other public policy changes that AWEN has contributed to can be reversed but are, in most cases, as well-established as public policies can be. As for the sustainability of AWEN as an organization, there is a need for AWEN and its members to start a discussion on how the members can contribute to AWEN and what long-term role the network should play in a context where its basic operations may not be funded by foreign donors.

AWEN is perceived as a transparent organization. There is nevertheless room for both AWEN and its members to improve their performance in terms of transparency and accountability. Information about the finances and performance of the organizations is not easily accessible. There are no well-developed whistle-blower functions.

## Evaluation of Sida's Support to AWEN

The evaluation makes 13 recommendations to Embassy of Sweden in Tirana. They are explained in Section 6 of this report and concern the need to encourage AWEN to: (1) continue discussions with members on AWEN's overall identity and focus, (2) exercise caution in expanding its thematic focus, (3) explore how members should contribute to AWEN, (4) strengthen its governance system, (5) continue to advocate for the State to fulfil responsibilities, (6) strengthen in-house capacity, (7) develop a simple, focused and relevant results assessment framework, (8) document the programme's effects on vulnerable groups, (9) assess the effectiveness of awareness raising work , (10) further enhance transparency, (11) assess and compare member organizations' costs, (12) develop policy on responses to situations in which a member is under-performing, (13) develop a (joint) whistle-blower mechanism(s).



# 1 Introduction

The Embassy of Sweden in Albania has engaged FCG Sweden, represented by Henrik Alffram, Mirela Jonuzaj and Visare Gorani to evaluate the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency's (Sida) support to the Albanian Women's Empowerment Network (AWEN). This report presents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the evaluation.

## 1.1 Purpose and objectives

The evaluation should serve as an input to upcoming discussions about the support to women rights organisations in Albania under Sweden's new strategy for reform cooperation with the Western Balkans and Turkey 2021-2027. The primary intended user of the evaluation is the Embassy of Sweden in Tirana.

The objective of the evaluation is to assess AWEN's intervention *Protection and promotion of women rights in Albania* and to "formulate recommendations as an input to upcoming discussions concerning the preparation for continued support to women rights defenders."<sup>1</sup> Sida supports the intervention with roughly SEK 17 million over four years (2019-2022).<sup>2</sup> The evaluation covers the period 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2022.

## 1.2 Evaluation criteria and questions

To meet its purpose, the evaluation has assessed the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, and sustainability, as well as "Other issues" focusing on poverty reduction, transparency, and accountability of the intervention.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) lists thirteen evaluation questions (EQ) that it categorizes under these criteria. During the Inception Phase, the Embassy of Sweden and the Evaluation Team agreed on some minor adjustments to these questions. The table below presents the evaluation question and shows how they relate to the evaluation criteria.

Table 1: Evaluation criteria and evaluation questions

Criteria	EQ as suggested by ET
Relevance	1. To what extent has the programme addressed relevant needs in the current country context? Have new, more relevant needs emerged? If so, to what extent has the intervention addressed them?
	2. How relevant is the programme to its target groups? How relevant is the intervention for addressing needs and opportunities for women rights defenders in Albania? <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sida (2022), Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of Sida Support to Albanian Women Empowerment Network 2019-2022.

<sup>2</sup> Its initial time frame was 1 January 2019 - 31 December 2021. The duration has subsequently been extended to 31 December 2022.

<sup>3</sup> In the Evaluation Team's presentation of findings (section 4 of this report), evaluation questions 1 and 2 have been combined into one question.

## Evaluation of Sida's Support to AWEN

	3. To what extent has the intervention contributed to shaping women's rights priorities in Albania?
Coherence	4. To what extent has the intervention's design and implementation considered the work of other actors working in the same area? How well does the intervention fit with other Sida funded interventions addressing similar challenges, including interventions implemented by AWEN members?
	5. To what extent has AWEN coordinated effectively and created synergies in its work?
Effectiveness	6. To what extent has the intervention attained, or is expected to attain, its outcome level results. Are there any differential results across groups?
	7. Has the M&E system delivered robust and useful information that could be used to assess progress towards outcomes and contribute to learning?
Impact	8. To what extent has the intervention generated, or is expected to generate, significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, high-level effects?
Efficiency	9. To what extent has the intervention delivered, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way?
	10. Is the AWEN management team adequately resourced to enable the achievement of desired outcomes?
Sustainability	11. To what extent will the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue?
Other issues	12. Has the intervention contributed to poverty reduction? Which dimensions of poverty were addressed by the intervention?
	13. Has the intervention been implemented in a transparent fashion? Are there accountability mechanisms in the intervention? How do they work at the level of member organisations of AWEN?

### 1.3 Structure of the report

Following this introduction, the report presents the methodological aspects of the evaluation in section 2. Section 3 contains a description of AWEN, and section 4 presents the evaluation's findings relating to the evaluation criteria and evaluation questions. Section 5 contains the Evaluation Team's conclusions and section 6 its recommendations. Annex 1-4 includes the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the assignment, evaluation matrix, survey questions, a list of documentation reviewed, and a list of people consulted.

## 2 Methodology

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### 2.1 Overall approach

The Evaluation Team has applied an evaluation approach that is utilisation-focused and participatory. There has been close interaction with key evaluation stakeholders to capture their perspectives and experiences. We have involved the Embassy of Sweden and AWEN during the main stages of the evaluation process.

The evaluation was characterized by a politically informed approach through which the relevance, effectiveness, and impact of AWEN's work were assessed given prevailing political economy constraints. The Evaluation Team also applied a human rights and gender responsive approach, which inspired everything from team composition to formulation of interview questions and the lens applied for analysis, presentation of evaluation findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Generally, the object of the evaluation and the Team's participatory and utilisation-focused approach helped orient the evaluation in a gender responsive direction.

### 2.2 Data collection and analysis

Data was collected through a review of available documentation, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and a survey targeting human rights defender organizations. The desk review formed the start of the data collection process. It was structured around the evaluation criteria and contributed to answer the evaluation questions and focus and frame key informant interviews. The review was primarily based on documents obtained from the Embassy, AWEN and AWEN's members. Annex 4 includes a list of reviewed documents.

#### Interviews and focus group discussions

Following a mapping of actors with knowledge of AWEN and its operations, the Evaluation Team identified a purposeful heterogeneous sample of interviewees on the basis of input provided by both the Embassy and AWEN. The methodology also allowed for chain-referral sampling. Apart from interviews focusing on the organizational development aspects the evaluation, all interviews were semi-structured and adapted to the respondent's expected area of experience and knowledge. The interviews aimed at capturing the interviewees' most significant experiences, reflections, and ideas. The informants were interviewed based on voluntary participation. In total, 56 key informants were consulted in Tirana, Elbasan, Vlora, Shkoder and online. Most interviews were carried out in-real-life. All people consulted are listed in Annex 5.

In Elbasan, Vlora and Shkoder, the Evaluation Team also had focus group discussions with survivors of domestic violence who had received assistance from AWEN members. In total, 13 persons attended these discussions.

#### Survey

The Evaluation Team sent out an electronic survey to 64 human rights defender organizations in Albania identified by AWEN in connection with a recent survey carried out by the organization. The survey consisted of ten closed questions aiming at gauging the respondents' perception of AWEN's relevance,

coherence, effectiveness, and transparency (see Annex 3). Thirty-nine responses were received, giving a response rate of 61 percent.

### Process of analysis and developing conclusions

The Evaluation Team has applied an intuitive approach to data analysis, drawing on the Team member's contemplation, experiences and understanding of the context. Our analysis also included elements of an intersubjective approach through which the Evaluation Team engaged AWEN in verification of findings and conclusions.

The Evaluation Team did not treat data analysis as an activity distinct from data collection. Rather, analysis of collected data was an ongoing activity conducted in parallel with the desk review, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and survey work. The ongoing analysis informed the data collection and helped ensure that it remained relevant for addressing the evaluation questions.

Triangulation was key to ensuring the reliability and validity of findings. We triangulated among the methods of gathering data, sources, and stakeholder perspectives, and across evaluation team members. The Evaluation Team had separate online debriefing/verification sessions with the Embassy of Sweden and AWEN at the end of the data collection phase of the evaluation.

A draft version of the present evaluation report was quality assured by an independent expert before FCG Sweden shared it with the Embassy of Sweden and AWEN for comments. The Evaluation Team took the comments received into account when finalizing the report.

### 2.3 Limitations

Considering that several thousand people approach AWEN's member organizations for assistance annually, the sample of interviewed survivors of domestic violence is small and not necessarily representative. By necessity, the victims were identified by the AWEN member organizations and interviewed within their premises. Although children have also received assistance from the member organizations, the Evaluation Team did not interview any children. The evaluation report does not include a section on lessons learned as the evaluation has not identified general conclusions that are likely to have a potential for application and use beyond the evaluated intervention.

### 3 Evaluation object

With the support of Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation and Sida, AWEN was established in 2009 as an initiative of eight non-governmental organizations concerned with women's rights. The idea was to strengthen cooperation among women rights organizations in Albania, ensure increased impact and generally empower the feminist movement.

The object of the evaluation is AWEN's intervention "Protection and promotion of women rights in Albania", which Sida supports over the period 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2022.<sup>4</sup> As stated in the ToR, even though the modality of support is project support, Sida supports core activities and core costs of AWEN and its members, and the intervention is designed following the Strategic Plan of AWEN 2019-2021 and Strategic Plan 2022-2027.

The intervention should ultimately contribute to Women human rights being increasingly protected, promoted and respected in Albania. More specifically, its objective is "increased role and contribution of women civil society organizations for the protection, promotion, and respect of women human rights in Albania."

Relating to this objective are three high level outcomes:<sup>5</sup>

- Outcome 1: Increasingly protected and promoted women's human rights through improvement and implementation of policies and legal framework at national and local level.
- Outcome 2: AWEN and members have strengthened institutional/ organizational capacities by becoming more democratic, accountable, independent, sustainable, and capable to promote and protect women human rights.
- Outcome 3: Vulnerable groups of girls and women, especially gender-based violence and trafficking survivors are protected and empowered.

In implementing the project, AWEN works closely with its member organizations. Roughly 70 percent of the funds AWEN receives from Sida is channelled to other women's rights organizations, primarily those that are members of AWEN. Since its establishment the membership has increased to comprise the following ten organizations:

Table 1: AWEN members

	CSO Members	Location	Region
1	Argitra Vision	Peshkopi	Diber
2	Association Woman Peace and Security	Durres	Durres
3	Counselling Line for Girls and Women (CLGW)	Tirana	Tirana
4	Gender Alliance for Development Centre (GADC)	Tirana	Tirana
5	Jona	Sarande	Vlora
6	Me, the Woman	Pogradec	Korca
7	Psycho-Social Centre "Vatra	Vlora	Vlora

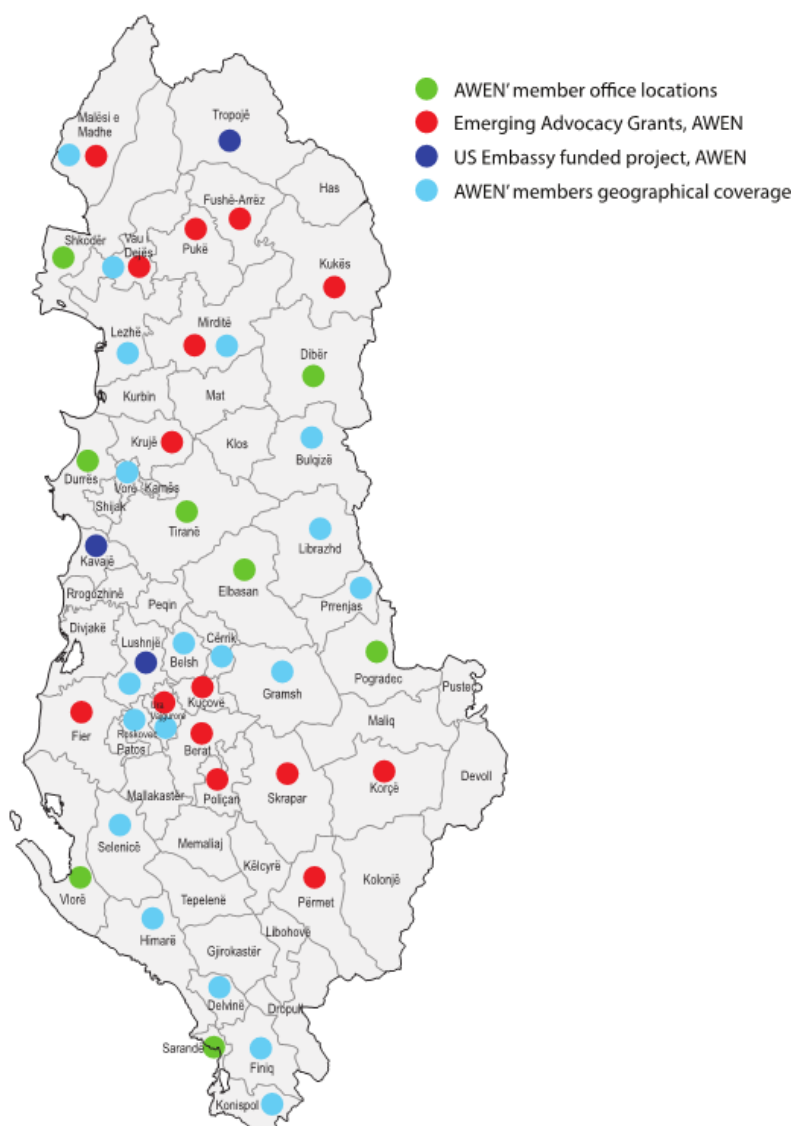
<sup>4</sup> The initial duration of the intervention was 1 January 2019 - 31 December 2021. The time frame for the intervention has subsequently been extended to 31 December 2022

<sup>5</sup> Referred to as outcomes in AWEN's results framework, but to outputs in the ToR for the assignment.

8	Woman to Woman (WtW)	Shkodra	Shkodra
9	Woman Forum Elbasan (WFE)	Elbasan	Elbasan
10	Center for Legal Initiatives	Tirana	Tirana

In addition to the financial support AWEN has provided to its members since its establishment, AWEN introduced in 2019 so called Emerging Advocacy Grants, which non-members can apply for to implement activities focusing on women's participation in policy and decision-making processes. Through these grants AWEN has managed to increase its thematic and geographic outreach. The geographical coverage of AWEN is illustrated in the map below.

### Geographical coverage of AWEN and its member organizations



## 4 Findings

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### 4.1 Relevance

Under the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, the relevance criterion concerns “The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries’, global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.”<sup>6</sup>

#### 4.1.1 To what extent has the programme addressed relevant needs in the current country context and how relevant is the programme to its target groups?

Albania has over the past two decades taken important steps towards increased gender equality and reduced levels of gender-based violence (GBV). Progress has in particular been made in terms of strengthened legislation and other public policies. Nevertheless, Albanian women's rights remain insufficiently protected, promoted, and respected.

There is strong consensus amongst those interviewed by the Evaluation Team that AWEN's focus on gender equality in general and GBV in particular has been and remains highly relevant from a needs perspective. The fact that GBV is a serious, large-scale and pervasive human rights and public health issue is well documented. The recent Position paper by UN in Albania (June 2021) on advancing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in Albania stresses that violence against women “remains one of the most pressing issues in Albanian society, requiring priority attention and action.” According to the UN Women Albania Country Gender Equality Brief 2020, “Violence against women/gender-based violence remains widespread and affects more than 50% of women in Albania.”<sup>7</sup> The European Union Delegation's Gender Action Plan III states that violence against women and girls/gender-based violence is one of the most common forms of violence in Albania.<sup>8</sup>

The earthquake in November 2019 and subsequently COVID-19 are both believed to have led to an increase in GBV, arguably making AWEN's intervention programmes even more relevant. The UN Position paper states: “With the outbreak of COVID 19, gender-based violence has become more and more a ‘shadow pandemic’ that needs to be addressed by policy makers in its entirety and complexity [...] Civil society efforts need support, including those to address the intersecting dimensions of gender-based violence (e.g., based on ethnicity, age, disability, place of residence, etc.).”

AWEN's programme is also well in line with the Albanian government's stated priorities. A National Strategy for Gender Equality, 2021-2030, was approved by the Council of Ministers in 2021. Its goal of

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<sup>6</sup> OECD/DAC Network on Evaluation Criteria (2019)

<sup>7</sup> United Nations Albania (2021)

<sup>8</sup> European Union (2021)

reducing all forms of gender-based and domestic violence will consume the lion's share of the funds needed, but not yet allocated or raised, to implement the strategy.

In addition to the strong support for AWEN's overall thematic focus, interviewees believe that the three primary pillars established at the beginning of AWEN's intervention – (i) advocacy for the implementation of legal frameworks and policy changes, (ii) organisational strengthening of member organizations, and (iii) direct service provision to survivors of GBV – overall remain highly relevant and complimentary. A few interviewees argued, however, that AWEN needs to decide on whether it should primarily be an intermediary funding mechanism, a provider of technical support to its members, an advocacy actor or an implementer of activities.

The direct services to victims of GBV that AWEN's members are providing, –including shelter services, psychosocial services, and legal assistance – should arguably have been provided or funded by the Albanian government.<sup>9</sup> However, initiatives for gender equality and women's rights are generally under-funded. In locations where AWEN members operate, there is insufficient and, in some cases, a complete lack of services for the targeted groups.

As the State is not meeting its obligations as a duty bearer, there is consensus amongst those interviewed that it is relevant for AWEN and its members to provide essential services to victims of GBV. This is particularly important as there are few other actors willing to fund direct service provision in this area. However, interviewees have also stressed that it is essential for AWEN and its members to continue to advocate for the State to live up to its responsibilities.

To its members AWEN is important as it provides them with funding<sup>10</sup>, facilitates learning and supports an exchange of experience between them. Member organizations also see AWEN as an actor that can give them a voice in national forums and initiatives.

AWEN members, especially those based outside of Tirana, also said they regard AWEN as a primary source of information on recent national developments, legal framework changes, and potential funding opportunities. Furthermore, AWEN plays an important role as a coordinator of advocacy efforts and initiatives, as well as an effective advocate in its own right.

The members' delivery of services has been important from an advocacy perspective. Combined with prevention activities and campaigns (awareness-raising, information dissemination, and frontline worker capacity building), the assistance has allowed AWEN to sharpen its advocacy messages and ensure that they are grounded in available evidence and practical experiences. In terms of advocacy, however, several interviewees suggested that other networks may be equally or more significant to some members because of their larger size or thematic focus.

In recent years, the support provided by AWEN to civil society organisations (members and non-members of AWEN) through emerging advocacy grants and joint awareness events has, as mentioned, expanded AWEN's thematic focus and its geographical coverage. While most interviewees support this

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<sup>9</sup> See for instance the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combatting violence against women and domestic violence.

<sup>10</sup> Nine of AWEN's ten member organizations receive funding from AWEN. One organization does not receive financial support as it receives Sida funds channelled through the Olof Palme International Center.



broadened focus, some informants from within the AWEN network have mentioned that it is critical for AWEN to maintain its efforts to combat GBV as its core activity. Their fear is that AWEN, by taking on an overly broad variety of thematic topics, risks diluting its resources and expertise.

To sum up, AWEN and its members are addressing issues of high relevance from a human rights perspective. The programme is highly relevant for its target groups and the strategic approach has overall been sound.

#### **4.1.2 To what extent has the intervention contributed to shaping women's rights priorities in Albania?**

As mentioned above, gender equality and GBV have received increasing attention in Albania. During the current programme period, AWEN and its members have contributed actively to the public discourse on the issue and to legal and other public policy developments. It is an actor that many decision makers consult. Notably, AWEN has since 2018, together with two other civil society organizations (CSO), both AWEN members, served on the National Council for Gender Equality, which is tasked with advising and assisting the Government on issues of gender equality.<sup>11</sup> AWEN has also provided comments and other input on the strategies developed and applied by foreign donors funding a significant share of the gender equality initiatives undertaken by the government and by civil society actors.

The perception of those consulted in connection with this evaluation is that AWEN has contributed to ensure that gender equality and GBV remain high on the agenda of the government as well as of international donors and to ensure that specific short-comings within these areas are paid attention to. While a significant part of AWEN's advocacy work has concerned issues other than GBV, it is primarily in this field that AWEN is recognized as an influential actor amongst interviewees.

A similar picture was provided in the survey of human rights defender organizations. Of these, 58% responded that AWEN to a very high extent had contributed to shaping women's rights priorities relating to domestic & gender-based violence; 47% that it to a very high extent contributed to shaping women's rights priorities relating to socio-economic rights, and 38% that is to a very high extent contributed to shaping priorities relating to representation of women and girls in political life.

## **4.2 Coherence**

Coherence concerns the compatibility of an intervention with other interventions.

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<sup>11</sup> Its role is to "lead, define and develop state policies on gender equality as well as to coordinate, implement, monitor and evaluate policies and measures for preventing and combatting all forms of violence covered by the Istanbul Convention." (Ministria e Shendetesise dhe Mbrojtjes Sociale (2021))

**4.2.1 To what extent has the intervention's design and implementation considered the work of other actors working in the same area? How well does the intervention fit with other Sida funded interventions addressing similar challenges, including interventions implemented by AWEN members?**

In the development of AWEN's new Strategic Plan, 2022-2027, members were consulted, and a participatory approach was utilised to affirm the overall strategy and its outcomes. Taking into account the mandates and priorities of the member organizations, violence against women, economic empowerment of women, and political participation of women remain the main topic areas of the organization.

The ability of AWEN to directly consider the priorities of other actors in their planning is challenged by the fact that the Strategic Plan needs to reflect the well-established mandates of the members. Nevertheless, 66 percent of the respondents to the Evaluation Team's survey thought that AWEN to a high extent was coordinating its work effectively with other organizations concerned with women's rights. No respondents answered that they did so to a low extent.

AWEN's work and Strategic Plan relate to key international strategies and processes. AWEN has contributed to the implementation of the EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) II, including its priorities of "Ensuring girls' and women's physical and psychological integrity" and "Promoting the economic and social rights/empowerment of girls and women." In addition, AWEN has contributed to implementation of GAP III, including its commitment to fight "against gender-based violence and promote the economic, social and political empowerment of women and girls." AWEN also relates to Sustainable Development Goal 5: "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls." Of its different targets, the target of "eliminating all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres" is particularly relevant.

When it comes to development of new projects and proposals, AWEN is striving to ensure a consultative process in relation to its members. To avoid competing with its own members, AWEN's practice is to consult with the members prior to submitting any funding applications. According to AWEN staff, there have been times when AWEN has refrained from submitting proposals because a member has intended to apply for the same funds.

The Evaluation Team is not aware of any major concerns regarding the process in which the intervention funded by Sida was designed. On the contrary, the member organizations generally appear to feel a high degree of ownership over the programme, as well as over AWEN as a whole.

In addition to AWEN, Sida funds several other interventions focusing on gender equality. These include for instance the UN Joint Programme to End Violence Against Women in Albania (UNDP, UN Women and UNFPA), the UN Women-led projects on transformative financing for gender equality and more transparent, inclusive, and accountable governance in the Western Balkans, and the joint UN project on gender-sensitive post-earthquake recovery and reconstruction. As far as the Evaluation Team has been able to determine, there appears to be no significant thematic overlap between these interventions and the support to AWEN.

The fact that Sida is a major donor in fields of gender equality and GBV means, however, that both AWEN and its members end up receiving Sida-funding through different organizations and programmes. Sida recognizes that this is not ideal from an aid-effectiveness perspective, but imposing restrictions on AWEN and its members when it comes to responding to calls for proposals for which Sida provides funding is not seen as reasonable or desirable.

Overall, the AWEN operations are characterized by a high degree of consultation both in relation to their design and implementation. The Sida supported programme considers the work and focus of its members and there is little negative overlap with other Sida-funded interventions.

### **4.2.2 To what extent has AWEN coordinated effectively and created synergies in its work?**

Coordination and facilitation of cooperation is at the very core of what AWEN is doing. First, AWEN supports cooperation amongst its member organizations. It facilitates exchanges of experiences and learning amongst them, particularly through the network meetings which are held twice a year. It also coordinates and facilitates joint advocacy messages and awareness raising initiatives. Keeping the network together as an effective tool for joint action and coordination is itself an important achievement.

Second, AWEN interacts and cooperates with other human rights defender organizations in Albania. It has facilitated its members' interactions with such organizations. This cooperation serves to promote stronger relationships, increased advocacy power, less duplication of work and efforts, and potentially to opening up for new ways of working. AWEN has also played an important role in terms of strengthening the capacity of other civil society organizations on issues of GBV. One example is the training on women's rights and GBV that AWEN has given to journalists at the Balkans Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN).

It is particularly noteworthy that AWEN has effectively sought out and collaborated with new actors who have emerged and become stronger in recent years, such as the Shota magazine, feminist collectives, LGBTI groups, media investigative groups and many more. According to those interviewed, AWEN has helped to connect these groups with its member organisations, who in turn have demonstrated their willingness and ability to engage effectively with them, and both support them and learn from them. This has amongst other things helped LGBTI groups with awareness raising activities outside of Tirana and facilitated demonstrations against GBV in different parts of the country. The Emerging Advocacy Grants, as well as other small funds that AWEN sub-grants<sup>12</sup>, have been important for enabling AWEN to establish, expand, and strengthen relationships with a broader range of women's rights groups. Some observers noted, however, that there is need to do much more to strengthen the interaction between formal CSOs, such as AWEN, and the informal feminist groups and their activists.

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<sup>12</sup> These other sub-grants are not funded by Sida.

Third, AWEN interacts and works with several international actors, including other women's rights organizations and donors concerned with gender equality. It also provides opportunities for its members to take part in international activities, including trainings and conferences.

Fourth, AWEN and its members have developed well-functioning relationships with government actors both at the national and local levels. These relationships have been valuable as a means of coordinating activities and support to victims, and of facilitating advocacy.

In summary, AWEN has coordination and creation of synergies as a key rationale for its very existence. It has not only facilitated coordination amongst its members, but also amongst several other non-government and government actors. How this contributes to results is further reflected on in Section 4.3. The challenges of maintaining a coordinating role in case of reduced financial support is discussed in Section 4.5.

### 4.3 Effectiveness

Effectiveness concerns the extent to which an intervention has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and results.

#### 4.3.1 To what extent has the intervention attained, or is expected to attain, its outcome level results. Are there any differential results across groups?

##### 4.3.1.1 Improved and implemented policies and legal framework for protection and promotion of women human rights.

Interviewees see AWEN as an influential and important actor in the development of laws and public policies of relevance from a gender equality perspective. AWEN is also recognized for its contribution to public discussions on gender equality and for monitoring of public policy implementation. In the Evaluation Team's survey of human rights defender organizations, 57 percent of the respondents were of the view that AWEN contributes to a high extent to strengthening of laws and other public policies concerning women's rights. Only 5% responded that it contributes to a low extent.

A significant part of AWEN's advocacy-related work has focused on GBV. This work has been underpinned by Albania's commitments to implement the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, the so-called Istanbul Convention, which entered into force in 2013.<sup>13</sup> However, AWEN has also made important contributions to public policy development and the monitoring of public policy implementation relating to equal participation and representation of women in the political sphere and gender equality more generally. Major contributions in recent years have included changes in the Electoral Code regarding equal representation in municipal election lists and on municipal councils, and development of the National Registry of Sex Offenders for which 22 000 supporting signatures were collected in an initiative led by

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<sup>13</sup> Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, <https://rm.coe.int/eng-mapping-support-services/16809981db>,

AWEN, CLWG and GADC. AWEN and its members have carried out some significant research relating to GBV, but there is little evidence of the research findings being systematically used to strengthen advocacy and influence public policy.

As mentioned, AWEN has since 2018 been a member of the National Council on Gender Equality. It has monitored the implementation of the Albanian National Strategy and Action Plan for Gender Equality 2016 – 2020, with particular focus on the goal of reducing gender-based and domestic violence, and has provided input to the development of the National Strategy for Gender Development 2021-2030. It has also submitted comments to the Law Commission of Parliament on a range of issues, including the Referral Mechanism for domestic violence cases, the draft Law on Social Assistance, the Law on Promotion of Employment and the draft Law on Public Procurement. AWEN and its members have furthermore monitored the implementation of the National Action Plan and local action plans as per the UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security.

AWEN's advocacy related activities help the member organizations to coordinate their advocacy messages and to amplify their voices. Amongst those organizations that are based outside of Tirana, AWEN is also appreciated for giving them a voice in the capital.

On several occasions, AWEN has assisted CSOs outside of the network, including in a consultation process which resulted in an assessment of, and recommendations on, the work of the State Police in protecting victims of violence. AWEN has also collaborated with non-member organizations and actors in several demonstrations concerning a range of women's rights issues and has contributed to strengthening their networks within the women's rights and human rights communities. AWEN's outreach to the broader women's rights and feminist community has, as noted, been further strengthened through the Emerging Advocacy Grants, which are short-term grants of a maximum of Euro 4 000 that since 2020 are provided exclusively to non-member organizations. According to interviews, these grants contributed to a more vibrant civil society through increased visibility and cooperation among member organizations and other human rights actors. They have helped AWEN broaden its networks as well as its thematic focus and has included initiatives focusing on the Roma and Egyptian communities and on young people.

In 2021, AWEN was invited by the Committee of Parties of the Istanbul Convention to present its opinion on the Albanian state report concerning fulfilment of GREVIO (Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence) recommendations. In line with AWEN's suggestions the Committee recommended the Albanian government to establish bodies responsible for the coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies in the area of violence against women, and to provide stable and sustainable funding for CSOs supporting victims of violence against women. AWEN has also helped donors and international organizations in their research and strategy development, including in the development of the EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III. On many occasions, AWEN has used open letters to express its concerns, including on revictimization of domestic violence survivors in the media.

Interviewees repeatedly mentioned AWEN's positive contributions at the local level. The members have among other things contributed to the development of Municipal Social Plans for a coordinated community response against domestic violence. A key factor behind these contributions was often the

fruitful cooperation AWEN members have with other local actors, such as the local Coordinating Referral Mechanisms for Domestic Violence (CRM) and its members.<sup>14</sup>

However, interviewees highlighted the challenges faced by the CRMs, including their lack of human and financial resources. As a result, there remains a very high degree of dependence on AWEN's member organizations and other CSOs for providing basic psychosocial and legal services to victims of domestic violence. AWEN and its members have encouraged the government to ensure that sufficient funds are allocated for these services. Nevertheless, the CSO-provided services are still primarily funded by foreign donors.

Informants noted the important role that AWEN's members play in terms of capacity development and awareness-raising on issues of gender equality and domestic violence, especially where CRMs are still weak and communities remain conservative. The initiatives taken include both one-off activities and involvement in more sustained campaigns, such as the annual 16 Days of Activism against GBV. While it is widely assumed that these initiatives are important for changing attitudes and practices, no structured efforts have been made by AWEN or its members to determine to what extent they contribute to such changes.

The issue of AWEN's identity was raised in many of the evaluation Team's interviews. Several member organisations, mainly outside of Tirana are in favour of AWEN maintaining its "traditional" role as a service provider and expressed scepticism about opening the organization to new members and initiatives. It was argued that increased internal competition for funding amongst the members may lead to conflicts that can harm the networks and its effectiveness. Those in favour of opening up the networks believe that a more open and larger network can lead to increased outreach to communities in remote and less developed areas and to stronger protection and promotion of women's rights in those places.

All in all, there is ample evidence that AWEN has been an active and influential advocacy actor. Through coordination and support it has managed to strengthen the advocacy actions of its members as well as non-members. AWEN has also effectively contributed to various awareness raising activities and campaigns. These may have contributed to a shift in attitudes, but the extent to which they have done so is largely unknown.

#### 4.3.1.2 AWEN and members have strengthened organizational capacities by becoming more democratic, accountable, independent, sustainable and capable to promote and protect women human rights.

The organizational capacity development objective was included in AWEN's programme in response to identified needs during the strategic planning process AWEN carried out in November 2018. It also directly linked to a recommendation in a 2018 Sida commissioned evaluation of civil society

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<sup>14</sup> CRM is a multidisciplinary team of community professionals tasked with responding to the need of survivors of domestic violence and to take legal action to hold those responsible for domestic violence to account. The CRMs may comprise representatives of the police, judiciary, prosecution department, regional social services directorate, regional employment directorate, regional health directorate, regional education directorate, health centres, CSOs and social administrators.

organizations in Albania, which stated that AWEN and other Embassy supported CSOs should continue their efforts “to improve accountability, internal democracy, and governance of their partner CSOs; and to foster stronger ties with respective support bases of the partner CSOs.”<sup>15</sup>

The outcome formulation indicates that AWEN has clear ambitions to strengthening the organizations in terms of internal good governance – including democracy and accountability – as well as in terms of capacity to promote and protect women's rights. AWEN allocated roughly 5 percent of its total budget to attain the outcome. According to its proposal to Sida, it would do so not only by focusing on strengthening organizational capacity but also through a focus on professional growth of staff.

In 2019, AWEN commissioned a baseline study which provided recommendations relating to the member organizations' governance, management, organizational culture and staff needs.<sup>16</sup> Based on the baseline study findings, AWEN developed an individual action plan for each member. AWEN subsequently funded coaching sessions and other assistance to implement the plans.

The baseline study showed that the member organizations' governance structures are properly laid out in the organization's statutes, but that there is a general need for the organizations to strengthen their boards and for them to “properly carry out governance roles and responsibilities...”

AWEN itself operates since its establishment as an independent organization with a democratic governance structure in which a General Assembly made up of representatives from the member organizations make up the organization's highest decision-making body, responsible for electing the board of directors. During the period under review, there has only been one board meeting per year.

Some of the member organizations have the same governance structure as AWEN. Others have no membership and no General Assembly, but a self-appointed board of directors as its highest decision-making body. According to interviews, the boards are not always working as intended. The baseline study noted a need for the organizations to strengthen their boards and for the boards to better engage in the organizations' governance. While AWEN has not commissioned a study to follow up on the progress made since the baseline was prepared, data collected by the Evaluation Team indicate that the progress made in strengthening the member organizations' democratic structures, transparency and accountability is limited. Some organizations have seen leadership transitions, but there is no clear indication that AWEN has contributed to these transitions.

However, AWEN's support has in many organizations contributed to a more collaborative, participatory, and democratic staff culture. Interviewees state for instance that AWEN's financial support to the development of Strategic Plans, provided also during the previous phase of cooperation with Sida, have been of importance for ensuring that staff members have a say in setting priorities and the development of strategies. It has provided them with a greater sense of ownership of the organization and its work. Already in the 2019 baseline study, it was noted that most member organizations had “established an organizational culture that promotes participation and inclusion” and that there was a very high degree

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<sup>15</sup> Ljungman et al. (2018)

<sup>16</sup> Albanian National Training & Technical Assistance Resource Center (2019)

of staff satisfaction with internal decision-making and internal communication. It was also noted that there was a very high correlation between strategic goals and the work of the organizations.

In addition to focusing on strengthening the democracy, accountability, and independence aspects of the organizations, AWEN has focused on the capability aspect of the outcome. It has thus aimed at strengthening the organizations' capacities to promote and protect women's human rights. In implementing its capacity development support AWEN has relied on training and coaching from external experts, network meetings, visits to partners, exchange visits between members, and support to attendance at regional and international events. Many of these activities were implemented as planned despite the Covid-19 pandemic, but some activities had to be cancelled or exchanged for online events.

The mix of strategies applied appears to be well considered and appropriate, and interviewed participants see the activities as well managed and valuable. Many of the strategies were implemented already during the previous phase of the programme and were then considered by both AWEN and its external evaluators to have important value. However, many of the organizational development achievements that can be reached without changing the structure and current functioning of the member organizations have now been attained. Further changes will be more challenging to achieve. Already in the 2018 evaluation was noted that most members had developed their strategies, put in place Results-Based Management (RBM) monitoring and evaluation systems, increased the number of participating stakeholders and diversified their funding base.<sup>17</sup>

Most interviewees argue that AWEN's efforts at exposing the member organizations to new and alternative ways of working and to learn from experiences in Albania as well as internationally are important. However, to identify specifically how trainings and attendance at conferences have influenced operations in Albania is difficult. As mentioned, AWEN's members still show a fairly high degree of methodological conformity in the implementation of core activities. The baseline study found that the organizational leaders were risk averse and that there was limited appetite for innovation. The study recommended the member organizations "to reach out to a wider range of partner organizations or international networks in order to exchange experiences and benefit from successful organizations" including in the area of "thematic training for service provision organizations."

In summary, AWEN has during the current programme period contributed more to the development of a consultative culture amongst staff in the member organizations than to enhanced democratic structures and accountability. The organization has offered a variety of much appreciated activities aiming at exposing individuals and organization to new ways of way of working. However, judging from the methodological similarities and fairly consistent practices of many members it seems as if these may have had quite limited influence on the members' ways of operating. Many of the achievements to which AWEN has contributed were largely attained prior to the current programme period.

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<sup>17</sup> Ljungman et al. (2018)



#### 4.3.1.3 Protection and empowerment of vulnerable groups of girls and women, with a special focus on gender based violence and trafficking survivors.

This outcome focuses on AWEN's direct financial support to its members. Many of these provide a combination of services to victims of GBV, community-based prevention and awareness programmes, as well as duty-bearer capacity building, and advocacy initiatives, to protect and enhance women's rights.

A 2019 evaluation by Metaj and Myftiu found that AWEN's grant management capacity was well developed. It stated: "Interviews with AWEN and member CSOs provide evidence of well-established and transparent grant award procedures, as well as consolidated monitoring and reporting procedures."<sup>18</sup> The Evaluation Team's interviews confirm this picture. The Team's review of the member organizations reports also show that they generally have well-developed capacities to report on activities and achievements. When needed, AWEN has also assisted the members with narrative as well as financial reporting.

According to AWEN's and the member organization's own reports, the number of people directly benefitting from the services provided (accommodation, rehabilitation, re-integration, legal aid, social and psychological counselling, economic empowerment) has increased in recent years. In 2019, 1,700 women and girl victims of GBV were with AWEN's support assisted with direct services. In 2020, the number of people assisted during the year increased to 2,490 and in 2021 to 5,660. Between 2019 and 2021 there was thus an increase with more than 230 percent. There was also an increase in the number of cases accommodated in AWEN members' emergency shelters, from 38 cases managed during 2020 to 111 cases managed in 2021.

AWEN's reporting does not provide any in-depth reflections on why there have been such dramatic increases. It could be related to a rise in domestic violence during the pandemic or to an increase in victim and community preparedness to report violence and avail the services of members. It may also be related to an increase in the capacity of members to assist a larger share of those in need. According to some interviews, the CRM's and the CSO's only have capacity to assist a small minority of those in need. The Evaluation Team has not been able to determine if the increase in number of people assisted has affected the quality of the services provided.

However, survivors of GBV consulted by the Evaluation Team regarded the psychosocial counselling, legal assistance relating to issues such as protection orders and divorce, as well as the vocational training and financial and administrative assistance provided as very valuable. Interviewed female survivors who have utilized the shelter services regard these, unsurprisingly, as the members' most important assistance. One survivor told the Evaluation Team:

Through shelter support and day to day counselling by these very dedicated professionals, I have better confidence in myself [...] I have now clear plans for my future development and empowerment [...]. I am attending a vocational course [...]

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<sup>18</sup> Metaj & Myftiu (2019)

and very soon will aim at starting my own business [...] years ago this was only a dream now it's a reality and I can do it.

Awareness campaigns conducted by AWEN, its members and other actors, have helped spread information on current legislation, access to services and domestic violence reporting systems. Social media has also proven to be an important tool for informing the public about the available services, as well as where and how to safely report on GBV. As is often the case with awareness raising campaigns, as mentioned above, there is, however, little knowledge about the extent to which the efforts have contributed to changed attitudes and behaviours. While it is reasonable to assume that they have an effect, it is also well known that it is difficult to influence attitudes and behaviours and that concerted long terms efforts are required.

Most of the awareness raising activities supported by AWEN are one-off activities. There are some attempts at promoting empowerment through group-based behaviour change or empowerment interventions. In the organizations visited by the Evaluation Team, counselling support was, however, given on a one-on-one basis. There was little or no use of group-therapy interventions and few efforts at otherwise linking individuals with others who have similar experiences, which arguably can be an effective empowerment strategy.<sup>19</sup> In other contexts, collective action and community-based dialogue have proven valuable for addressing the problem of GBV.<sup>20</sup>

The direct services provided by AWEN's members are primarily used by adult female victims of domestic violence. Woman to Woman in Shkoder is also providing counselling to male domestic violence perpetrators. In 2020 counselling was provided to 60 men and in 2021 to 102 men. Some member organizations have been able to reach particularly vulnerable groups, such as the Egyptian and Roma communities.

In summary, AWEN and its members have provided assistance and protection to a growing number of survivors of GBV and trafficking in persons. According to interviews, the assistance has been essential for the health and well-being of many victims. In the member organizations visited by the Evaluation Team, the approach applied has been more focused on assisting individual victims than on empowering them through a more group-based approach.

#### **4.3.2 Has the M&E system delivered robust and useful information that could be used to assess progress towards outcomes and contribute to learning?**

AWEN's results framework includes an overall objective, a programme objective and three distinct outcomes to which well-defined outputs are linked. Overall, the framework provides sound operational guidance.

To assess progress towards programme objective, outcomes and outputs, AWEN has developed around 60 indicators. The data required to follow up these indicators is diligently collected and progress in

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<sup>19</sup> Fellin, Lisa C et al (2019). Empowering young people who experienced domestic violence and abuse: The development of a group therapy intervention. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 2019, Vol. 24(1)

<sup>20</sup> Sida (2015), Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Violence: Expressions and Strategies

relation to the indicators is reported on in the annual reports submitted to Sida. However, the value of many of these indicators is limited for programme follow-up and learning. Often, indicators designed to assess changed behaviours are simply verified by data on whether or not planned activities have been implemented. This means that the indicator does not provide AWEN with information about the results of its work.

When the data collected go beyond counting of activities, they often focus on things such as number of areas of expertise added, number of ideas received, number of issues tackled, and number of reports produced. While it may be relevant for AWEN to keep track of this type of information, the results should not be confused with an indication of AWEN's effectiveness. After all, a contribution to one major change may be much more valuable than contributions to many less important changes.

In some cases, the indicators show that significant change has occurred, but AWEN's reports offer no information about how this change has occurred. While the results assessment framework for instance shows an impressive increase in the number of organizations that produce and publish annual reports (from 4 at the start of the project to 11 in 2021) the significance of this increase would be easier to understand if the narrative report provided further information and for instance had some reflection on the quality of the reports produced and explained what role AWEN has had in this change.

An indication of the challenges AWEN has with its RBM system is that many indicators do not make up an integral part of AWEN's narrative reporting. They are instead reported on separately and the relevance and importance of the information they provide is not reflected on and discussed. In other words, the indicators do not provide the data necessary for a report that reflects on attainment of outcome level results. This does not mean, however, that AWEN's reports lack information about AWEN's contributions to outcome level changes, but it does question whether it is meaningful and efficient for AWEN to collect data relating to all its indicators.

The Evaluation Team has not assessed the RBM systems of all the member organizations, but the service delivery nature of much of what is carried out by many members means that their reporting is, to a high extent, logically focused on the number of people they have assisted, rather than broader societal changes they may have contributed to.

Several member organizations provide disaggregated data showing the extent to which they manage to reach various vulnerable groups. In some cases, it is also clear that they do so to a fairly high extent. WFE reported for instance that 24% of those who received free legal aid in 2021 were from the Roma or Egyptian communities. Some of AWEN's annual reports provide limited information about the degree to which groups such as ethnic minorities benefit from the programme. However, it is not consistently collecting and reporting on disaggregated data relating to factors such as ethnicity, gender, age and place of residence for beneficiaries of core activities such as victims' support and outreach.

Overall, AWEN's intervention logic is well designed, but its approach to assessing progress towards its results can be improved. While its results assessment framework offer information about the degree to which activities are implemented as planned, it does not provide much information about what change these activities contribute to. To the extent that AWEN reports on attainment of outcome level results, the information is not obtained from a follow up of its indicators.

## 4.4 Impact

Impact concerns the extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.

### 4.4.1 To what extent has the intervention generated, or is expected to generate, significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, high-level effects?

Three years is a short time for assessing impact. However, we have seen from the assessment of effectiveness that AWEN has contributed to several structural changes, i.e., changes in legislation and other public policies, that are of direct relevance from a gender equality perspective. Even though there is a wide gulf between the law in the books and its actual implementation these changes can nevertheless be regarded as higher-level effects. They are necessary conditions for the Albanian authorities to fulfil their responsibilities as duty bearers. According to interviewees, the capacity of government authorities at both national and local level has also increased in recent years, partly as a result of their interaction with AWEN and its members.

At the individual level, the programme has clearly had significant impact. Thousands of victims of domestic violence have received psychosocial counselling and hundreds of victims have received legal assistance relating to protection orders, divorce and similar matters. Several hundred persons have used the shelters managed by the member organizations. The Evaluation Team has only talked to a fraction of those assisted, but those who attended the focus groups organized by the Evaluation Team testified to the importance of the programme for their own survivals.

We have not come across any unintended negative effects of the intervention. Some may argue that the fact that the member organizations are taking over responsibilities of the State contributes to the State and its authorities absconding from the responsibility of providing assistance to victims of domestic violence. However, there are as noted above no indications that the State in the near future will be prepared to take over or fund the services provided by the member CSOs. However, to ensure that they do not contribute to any negative unintended effects it is essential that the CSOs continue to advocate for increased national and local government engagement and funding.

## 4.5 Efficiency

Efficiency concerns the extent to which an intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.

#### **4.5.1 To what extent has the intervention delivered, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way?**

Efficiency assessments typically aim at measuring outputs in relation to inputs and require that benefits are measured in monetary terms or in some other metric measurements. To assess costs for individual activities such as psychological counselling, legal counselling and running of shelters and their related outputs is, however, complicated as different organizations have different ways of counting and reporting on what they provide. While some organizations count and report, for instance, on the number of cases worked on or the number of individuals assisted, others report on the number of counselling sessions provided. This means that the overall costs for outputs attained by AWEN is not available and that costs per output cannot be compared for most of the member organizations.

A couple of organizations provide, however, information that makes it possible to calculate costs (or at least personnel costs) per counselling sessions. The direct costs are in these cases below Euro 10 per session. The organizations also provide information about specific costs, fees for consultants, fees for venues, travel and accommodation. A review of budgets and financial reports indicate that the amounts allocated for these types of expenses are reasonable. They also show that there are no major differences between the member organizations. Accommodation costs range, for instance, from Euro 25 to 30 per night and the amounts allocated for food or per-diem are moderate and similar across the organizations. External consultants, experts, trainers, and facilitators are paid between Euro 70 and 150 per day.

As for salaries, the differences appear to be more significant. For 2021 budgeted salaries for a full-time position range from about Euro 400 to 1,670 for a project manager/coordinator, Euro 360 to 1,210 for a finance officer, 370 to 775 for a psychologist/counsellor, and 430 to 800 for a lawyer. The specific responsibilities associated with a position may vary from one organization to the other. While the cost of living may also be higher in a place like Tirana than in other parts of the country, judging from the organizations' own budgets the highest salaries are not paid by the Tirana based organizations.

In comparison with what other similar CSOs are paying their staff, most members pay salaries that are reasonable and competitive. One or two organizations pay according to their budgets fairly low salaries while others pay comparatively high salaries for some position holders. AWEN claims, however, that the members' budgeted salaries do not reflect actual salaries, and that actual salaries are generally lower than those budgeted. AWEN's salaries are in line with those of its better paying member organizations and are reasonable in relation to other CSOs of a similar nature.

As for AWEN and its members' ability to implement the programme and its components in a timely manner, interview and the partner organizations narrative and financial reports show that activities are to a high extent implemented as planned and finances spent in accordance with budget. The reports from AWEN and its partners do not indicate to what extent the members are able to assist those who request their assistance.

AWEN sub-grants to nine of its partner organizations. Following an agreement with the Embassy, GADC receives no financial support from AWEN as it receives Sida-support channelled through the Olof Palme International Center. The nine members receive between Euro 25,000 and 35,000 annually. Thus, there is no strong link between the support received and the organizations' performance or efficiency. In the long run it is not unthinkable that there are organizations that for one reason or the other may fail to

deliver in a satisfactory manner. AWEN has no clear guidelines on how to deal with such a situation and no criteria for when weak performance should result in funding and cooperation agreements being affected.

AWEN is requiring its partners to report in English. Even though the organizations have the capacity to do so, it would presumably be more efficient to allow reports to be written in Albanian for those organizations who prefer to do so.

To sum up, AWEN has overall a reasonable cost level and its programme has largely been implemented as intended despite complications caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. AWEN could, however, strengthen its capacity to follow up on the efficiency aspects of the programme.

#### **4.5.2 Is the AWEN management team adequately resourced to enable the achievement of desired outcomes?**

At the time of writing, AWEN has five full time staff and two part time staff based in Tirana. Amongst these are a programme manager that is fully funded by Sida, and a finance manager and a programme assistant that is partially paid for by Sida. The Executive Director is engaged 50% of the time for the Sida project. During 2020, Sida also paid part of the salaries/or additional salaries due to extra workload for three staff members working on a special earthquake related support. As AWEN has no core funding, the organization is dependent on project support that is often of a short-term nature. Thus, staff have little job-security and the overall staffing situation tend to vary over time.

There is broad agreement amongst interviewees that AWEN's Sida funded programme is well managed. AWEN is commended for effectively keeping the network together, getting the member organizations to support each other and act jointly, managing the sub-granting aspect and ensuring that the programme is followed-up and properly reported on.

As noted above AWEN has also been successful in its advocacy-related work and has managed to engage constructively with non-member organizations and actors concerned with women's rights. Most AWEN staff members have very specific project related tasks. Advocacy and outreach related duties that are difficult to plan tend to often fall on the director, who has a very broad set of responsibilities.

For the member organizations, AWEN's capacity to raise and sub-grant substantial funding is essential. Even though AWEN manages to supplement the support from Sida with several smaller project grants, it has not managed to raise larger core grants. A few interviewees stressed that AWEN needs to strengthen its fundraising capacity and that it should focus its efforts on raising larger funds that it can channel to the members.

AWEN staff recognize that the organization lacks sufficient inhouse communications capacity and could benefit from a communications officer with the required skills and experience to promote the work of the members organizations, spread their findings and knowledge and assist in shaping fundraising and advocacy messages and carrying out advocacy campaigns. AWEN's limitations in terms of communication was noted already in the 2019 evaluation, which stated: "Overall it is noticed that

communication, PR and visibility is performed by technical staff, whereas in the case of AWEN this needs to be developed specifically as an important element of its advocacy efforts.”

In terms of capacity building of the partner organizations, AWEN often relies on external expertise. This is partly an effect of AWEN not having the appropriate in-house capacity and partly an effect of AWEN staff not having the time needed to devote sufficient time to the issue in questions. This means, for instance, that AWEN in many areas has not developed its own support and training materials.

## 4.6 Sustainability

Sustainability concerns the extent to which the net benefits of an intervention continue, or are likely to continue.

### 4.6.1 To what extent will the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue?

As discussed under Effectiveness, AWEN and its members have provided direct assistance to victims of domestic violence, for instance in the form of shelters, psychosocial counselling and legal advice and assistance. The benefits of this support will remain with those who have received it and will not depend on a continuation of the intervention.

In terms of the awareness raising work of AWEN and its members, there is, as mentioned, little available information about its effects and impact. Thus, there is even less knowledge about the sustainability of any gains made.

Changes in legislation and other public policies that have been contributed to can always be reversed. However, the processes required to make such changes, in particular changes in legislation, is characterized by a level of complexity and slowness and the results attained can therefore be regarded as characterized by a reasonable degree of sustainability.

The degree to which AWEN's member organizations are dependent on funding from AWEN, and ultimately Sida, varies from one organization to the other. Several of the member organizations have managed to diversify their funding situation in recent years and some of them have also increased their annual income. Thus, the organizations are in most cases not entirely dependent AWEN's funding and are likely to continue part of their core activities even without this support. A continuous challenge for them is, however, that the number of funding sources is limited and that they in effect compete with each other for the funds available. A few receive some limited financial support, including for the running of shelters, from their local governments. However, all organizations remain heavily dependent on international donors.

As for AWEN itself, the 2018 evaluation noted that over 86 percent of its funding came from Sida between 2016 and 2018. This share has been reduced in recent years. In 2021, 63 percent of AWEN total budget came from Sida. Of the funds received from Sida, nearly 70 percent is sub-granted to member organizations and other CSOs. If this amount is not included in a calculation concerning AWEN's total budget, Sida's share of AWEN's income is about 50 percent. While this remains an important share,

AWEN had in 2021 eleven other donors that contributed between Euro 2,000 and 47,000.<sup>21</sup> Currently, the members organizations do not contribute financially or in-kind to AWEN's operations. While such contributions could help ensure AWEN's long term operations, there appears to have been little in-depth discussions on how this could be organized.

In summary, many of the achievements to which AWEN has contributed will remain regardless of whether there will be a new phase of the Sida programme or not. AWEN itself, however, would have to dramatically change its operations if Sida's support would end and not be replaced with other funding.

## 4.7 Other issues

### 4.7.1 Has the intervention contributed to poverty reduction? Which dimensions of poverty were addressed by the intervention?

Women's poverty in Albania is connected to factors such as employment, age, gender, geography, ethnicity, and education. Societal norms, traditions and expectations coupled with limited public investments in social services, education, and employment-opportunities, adversely affect the position of women within the family as well as society, more broadly. Most women can be considered multidimensionally poor as they lack economic resources and basic security, as well as the power and opportunity to change their situation.

Poverty fuels gender-based violence in many ways. It interrupts opportunities for education and employment. In addition, victims of GBV are more prone to experiencing poverty and sexual exploitation at an early age. Children, especially girls who are exposed to domestic violence are less likely to receive an education and for this reason they are poor in several dimensions.

Judging from interviews, almost all individuals that AWEN and its partners support are from poor families. They often have poor health, lack of education and inadequate living standards. Typically, they have little say in family decisions. By providing women with information about their rights, as well as assisting and referring them to vocational education training and, in some cases, facilitating employment, AWEN contributes to poverty reduction.

The following statements from two domestic violence survivors that the Evaluation Team met with, illustrate how AWEN's members have contributed to address several dimensions of poverty:

The organization's door is the first door that I have knocked on [...] I was shattered, I had no wish to live [...] The staff not only opened the door and their hearts, but they healed my soul, they encouraged me to find a job, to sustain myself and my daughters and gave me the strength to walk with my head up high and not be afraid of challenges, and to never accept violence.

I was beaten every day [...] I was afraid that if I die, who will look after my children...then a friend told me to contact the centre [...] they helped me with the

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<sup>21</sup> Two of the projects concerned funds that are channelled through AWEN to different beneficiaries. Three of the projects are regional, where AWEN is implementing partner for Albania.



legal procedures, I didn't have any money, they paid all the expenses, they helped me to find a job. Now I feel strong and able to watch over my children [...] my children go to school, and I know that I will give them a better future.

All interviewees, whether local stakeholders, AWEN network members, or civic activists, acknowledge AWEN's assisting and sometimes empowering role. One interviewee referred to it as "the voice of forgotten, disempowered and disadvantaged women."

#### **4.7.2 Has the intervention been implemented in a transparent fashion? Are there accountability mechanisms in the intervention? How do they work at the level of the member organisations of AWEN?**

In general, interviewees and survey respondents regard AWEN as a transparent and accountable organization. Of the survey respondents, no one thought that AWEN worked with a low degree of transparency. On the contrary, a clear majority, 68 percent, responded that they found AWEN to be a very transparency organization.

Some key informants were critical, however, and expressed a need for AWEN to improve its transparency by updating its website and providing more thorough information about the results attained by AWEN and its member organizations. The Evaluation Team found that neither AWEN's website nor its Facebook and Instagram pages are updated regularly and that it is mainly information and photos of various activities that are published. Annual narrative and financial reports and audit reports have not been regularly published. Regarding the auditing process, it can be noted, however, that AWEN has openly advertised for auditors.

The calls for proposals relating to the Emerging Advocacy Grants have been appropriately advertised and the number of applications received has vastly exceeded the number of grants handed out. The process for selecting which proposals that should be supported has involved an AWEN team of three (the director, programme manager and project assistant). The Evaluation Team has not heard of any concerns or complaints about the process. However, the Evaluation Team notes that AWEN, as stated in the call, did not inform unsuccessful applicants as to why their proposals were not funded.

As for AWEN's member organizations, the 2018 evaluation found that four of AWEN's ten members had boards with members elected by an annual general assembly. The remaining organizations are registered as non-profit centres rather than as associations and therefore operate without a membership with ultimate decision-making authority through a general assembly. However, also these organizations have in accordance with their statutes a board of directors responsible for providing strategic guidance and oversight. The degree to which the boards are able to do so varies somewhat from one organization to the other.

A NIRAS 2018 evaluation of Swedish Civil Society Support in Albania scanned the web presence of 44 CSOs benefitting from Swedish support, including AWEN and nine of its members. The evaluation found that about ten percent of the CSO at the time published their annual or financial reports on the web. In the AWEN group, two organizations, 20 percent, published their annual reports. Audit reports were also published by two organizations.

When the Evaluation Team similarly scanned the web presence of AWEN's members in April 2022, one of the ten member organization had their 2019 annual report published on the website and none had posted their 2020 or 2021 annual narrative reports and only one had the audit report available on the website. The latest annual report from AWEN itself that is published on the web is from 2019.

The 2018 evaluation also looked at whether the organizations published the names of their board members of the web. Only two from the AWEN group did this. As of April 2022, the Evaluation Team did not find any information about the boards on any of the member organizations websites. None of the members had their statutes published.

Neither AWEN nor its members have a whistle blower function advertised on their websites. Apart from helping to ensure that cases of corruption or mismanagement are properly handled, and that the anonymity of the whistle blower can be ensured, such a function can help to further strengthen AWEN's credibility and increase public trust in the organization.

To sum up, AWEN is generally perceived as a transparent organization. Both AWEN and its members could, however, make essential information about their organizations and their operations more easily accessible to outsiders. They could also ensure a higher degree of accountability by establishing effective whistle blower mechanisms.

## 5 Conclusions

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The 2018 evaluation of Sida supported civil society organizations in Albania found regarding AWEN that:

The transition from a donor-instituted informal network to a respected and credible national CSO that is able to allocate resources amongst the members; build capacity; and mobilise not just members, but larger coalitions for specific causes, such as in the case of the National Strategy on Gender Equality; is a formidable achievement.

Since 2018, AWEN has managed to consolidate its achievements and remains a credible national CSO that contributes importantly to the struggle for gender equality and effectively assists its members and other civil society partners.

AWEN's focus on gender equality in general, and GBV in particular, is highly relevant from a needs perspective. AWEN's programme is also well in line with the Albanian government's stated priorities. The organization is recognized by many as an actor that contributes to shaping women's rights priorities, particularly in relation to GBV. Overall, its strategic approach also remains relevant.

Coordination and creation of synergies is a key rationale for AWEN's existence. The design and intervention of AWEN's programme has closely considered the priorities and the work of its members. AWEN is also seen as coordinating its work well with other actors concerned with women's rights. During the programme period, AWEN has continued to expand its geographic and thematic focus. With the expansion follows a risk that it is diluting its resources and the expertise it has on issues of GBV.

AWEN has been an active and influential advocacy actor concerning gender equality and has contributed to legal and other public policy changes in this area. It has also helped strengthen the advocacy action of its members as well as other CSOs concerned with women's rights. The members, through their cooperation and interaction with local authorities and other government actors, have also contributed to increased duty bearer capacity, especially on issues of domestic violence. In terms of awareness raising, AWEN has implemented and supported a range of activities around the country. It is widely assumed that these activities will lead to changed attitudes and behaviours, but there is little available information to determine the actual results of the efforts made.

There is broad agreement that AWEN has managed its sub-granting role well. The supported member organizations have offered much appreciated assisted and protection to a growing number of victims of GBV seeking their support. Many of these have been affected by multidimensional poverty and the programme has been of value for addressing issues of security and lack of opportunity, voice and resources.

AWEN has carried out relevant and much appreciated activities to strengthen the democracy, independence, sustainability and capacity of the member organizations. Apart from AWEN, there are very few actors assisting the member organizations on these issues. However, the expectations on how much AWEN can contribute to a democratic structure and culture, as well as to independence and accountability must be realistic. The important contributions AWEN has so far made towards strengthened governance practices have arguably concerned "lower hanging fruits". Achieving further

reforms may be more challenging. As for AWEN itself, it appears that the Board of Directors is not meeting as frequently as normally required for a board to provide effective strategic guidance and oversight.

AWEN has, during the current and previous programme periods, assisted its members with the development of Strategic Plans. These plans have given the members strategic direction and provided staff and board members opportunities to influence the focus of the organizations. In the future the members should be able to manage the strategic planning process themselves, without receiving earmarked funding.

AWEN has facilitated the member organizations' exposure to different strategic approaches to working with gender equality in general and GBV in particular. However, there is a fairly high degree of methodological similarities in how many of the member organizations have chosen to tackle GBV and assist its victims. As there are some quite different approaches to addressing domestic violence in other parts of the world, selected exchanges, and internships with organizations outside of the Western Balkans and Europe could be relevant to pursue.

AWEN's intervention logic is well designed and provides clear guidance for its work. AWEN also has an effective and ambitious system in place for following up the work of its partners. However, the results assessment system provides AWEN with limited information of relevance for capturing outcome level results and for helping to understand how it best attains results. Even though AWEN applies a HRBA and is committed to paying particular attention to vulnerable groups and to intersectionality, its M&E system is not designed to provide solid data about which groups that are reached by its activities and how different groups are affected by them.

AWEN could benefit from an increase in human resources devoted to communications and advocacy, and to development of programmes and proposals. If it maintains a significant capacity development role it could also benefit from having more staff time dedicated to assist partners with methodology development. Generally, it might be relevant for AWEN to reduce its reliance on external expertise in favour of enhanced in-house capacity.

Generally, AWEN operates with a high degree of efficiency. Its individual cost levels are reasonable, and the programme has largely been implemented as planned. The organization could, however, strengthen its ability to compare costs across member organizations, set up guidelines on how to deal with members that may be under-performing. Judging from their budgets and financial reports, there are significant salary differences between the member organizations. These differences appear to be larger than can reasonably be explained by differences in responsibilities and differences in costs of living. However, AWEN claims that the members' salary calculations presented in budgets do not represent actual salaries, and that actual salaries are lower than those presented in budgets. If budgets and financial reports do not accurately reflect how salaries are calculated, this is a concern.

The individual level changes that AWEN is contributing to are by their very nature characterized by a high degree of sustainability. The legal and public other policy changes attained can of course be reversed, but they are in most cases as well established as such policies can be. As for the sustainability of AWEN as an organization, there is a need for AWEN and its members to initiate a discussion on how the members can contribute to AWEN and what long-term role AWEN should play in a context where its basic operations may not be funded by foreign donors. There are some different views amongst members as to AWEN's overall identity and focus.

AWEN is generally perceived as a transparent organization. There is, nevertheless, room for both AWEN and its members to improve their performance in terms of transparency and accountability. There is little easily accessible information about the performance and finances of the organizations.

There are no well-developed whistle-blower functions. While it is generally good practice for an organization to have such a function in place for reporting and investigation of corruption and other malpractices, it is particularly important for organizations working on issues of human rights and for organizations working with vulnerable groups. It might be efficient for AWEN and its members to develop or engage such a mechanism jointly.

## 6 Recommendations

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This section sets out 13 recommendations directed at the Swedish Embassy in Tirana.<sup>22</sup>

The Embassy of Sweden should encourage AWEN to:

### 1. Continue discussions on AWEN's identity

The Embassy of Sweden should encourage AWEN to continue discussions with its members as to the overall identity and focus of AWEN. There is a need to reach a stronger consensus on whether AWEN should primarily be an intermediary funding mechanism, a provider of technical support, a think-tank, an awareness raising actor, or an advocacy network.

### 2. Exercise caution in expanding the thematic focus

The Embassy of Sweden should encourage AWEN to ensure that it does not dilute its limited resources and its expertise by broadening its thematic focus too rapidly.

### 3. Explore how members should contribute to AWEN

AWEN should engage its members in a discussion on how the members can contribute to ensure sustainability of AWEN's operations.

### 4. Strengthen the governance system

The Embassy should encourage AWEN to strengthen its own governance system by increasing the frequency of board meetings for the purpose of strengthening the Board of Director's capacity to provide effective strategic guidance and financial oversight.

### 5. Continue to advocate for the State to fulfil responsibilities

The Embassy of Sweden should encourage AWEN to maintain and strengthen its advocacy efforts to ensure that the Albanian State fulfils its obligations of assisting victims of GBV, including through financing of shelters and support to psychosocial services. The Embassy of Sweden, in coordination with other international actors, should use its political dialogue with the Albanian government to support AWEN's advocacy efforts and encourage the government to ensure that it fulfils its responsibilities.

### 6. Strengthen in-house capacity

The Embassy of Sweden should encourage AWEN to consider whether it may be effective and efficient to reduce its reliance on external expertise and use the resources saved to instead strengthen its in-house capacity in areas such as development of programmes and proposals, communications and advocacy, and development and assessment of new methodologies for addressing GBV.

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<sup>22</sup> The recommendations are not divided into short-term, mid-term and long-term as suggested in the ToR, as all of them benefit from action being taken as soon as possible and it is expected that the Embassy may have to continue raising the concerned issue before the desired change is achieved.

**7. Develop a simple, focused and relevant results assessment framework**

The Embassy of Sweden should encourage AWEN to develop a simple, focused and relevant results assessment framework for its future operations. AWEN should carefully consider whether its performance indicators help it understand if it is reaching its goals and if it is doing the right thing. The Embassy should encourage AWEN to ensure that the burden of collecting the information needed for the results assessment framework is reasonable in relation to its contribution to learning and assessment of progress.

**8. Document the programme's effects on vulnerable groups**

The Embassy of Sweden should encourage AWEN to ensure that the indicators set out in its results assessment framework capture data disaggregated by factors of importance for understanding the degree to which the organization reaches vulnerable groups, including the Roma and Egyptian communities, and contributes to empowerment and poverty alleviation.

**9. Assess effectiveness of awareness raising work**

The Embassy of Sweden should encourage AWEN and its member to develop and implement a methodology for determining whether their awareness raising activities contribute to changing attitudes regarding gender equality and GBV. AWEN should explore possibilities of developing and implementing the methodology jointly with other groups focusing on awareness raising and changing attitudes. AWEN should consider taking the lead in such an effort and the Embassy of Sweden should encourage all relevant actors to take part.

**10. Further enhance transparency**

The Embassy of Sweden should encourage AWEN to further enhance the transparency of its operations. AWEN should make its narrative progress reports, financial reports, and audit reports available to the general public, including by publishing the reports on its website.

**11. Assess and compare member organizations' costs**

The Embassy of Sweden should encourage AWEN to regularly compare the cost levels of its member organizations and, in particular, assess salary differences. AWEN should use the information obtained when following up the cost-effectiveness of individual members and the programme as a whole.

**12. Develop policy on responses to situations in which a member is under-performing**

The Embassy of Sweden should encourage AWEN to develop a policy on how to handle situations in which member organizations that benefit from grants are not performing as effectively or efficiently as expected.

**13. Develop a (joint) whistle-blower mechanism(s)**

AWEN and its members should ensure that they have a whistle-blower mechanism. They should consider sharing such a mechanism and develop it jointly.

## Annex 1: Terms of Reference



### Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of Sida Support to Albanian Women Empowerment Network 2019-2022.

Date: 17 January 2022

#### 1. General information

##### 1.1 Introduction

Albania has achieved important progress in establishing relevant institutional and policy frameworks for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment, in line with international, regional, and national gender equality standards and obligations.

Albania scores high in almost all international indexes of gender equality and has made visible progress in several areas especially in women political participation. However, this picture of a progressive country does not reflect the everyday reality of women and girls. The gender indexes show that the progress in women's formal representation in politics and the high number of female students in tertiary education are in striking contrast with women's lack of essential productive resources.

The official statistical data reaffirm the fact that violence against women and girls in Albania is widespread and still a serious human rights violation. One in two Albanian women have experienced one or more forms of violence during their lifetime and the levels of violence's acceptance are high. The legislative framework has gaps, institutional response mechanism face challenges to improve and strengthen inter-institutional co-operation in preventing and handling violence against women cases.

Women rights organisations have played a critical role in the progress the country has made in achieving gender equality. They have been at the forefront of pushing for legislative changes, empowering girls, and women, challenging social norms, and providing critical services to women and girls survivors of gender-based violence.

Recognising the unique role the women rights organisations play, Sida has supported women organisations in Albania since early 2000 through Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation (until 2014) and in 2015,



Sida represented by the Embassy of Sweden in Tirana has supported directly a network of women organisation known as Albanian Women Empowrment Network/AWEN<sup>23</sup>. Other Sida funded initiatives in gender equality through UN include support to women rights organisations. Strategy for Sweden's reform cooperation with the Western Balkans and Turkey for 2021–2027 launched in October 2021 has a dedicated objective to gender equality “*Better prospects for a gender equal society*” and support to women human rights defenders is mentioned under the indicated activities.

## 1.2 Evaluation object: Intervention to be evaluated

The object of the evaluation is the intervention “Protection and promotion of women rights in Albania” implemented by AWEN. AWEN is a network of 10 women rights organisation working all over Albania. Although the modality of support is project support, this cooperation supports core activities and costs of AWEN and their member organisations and the intervention are designed following the Strategic Plan of AWEN 2019-2021 and Strategic Plan 2022-2027. The initial duration of the intervention was three years (1 January 2018-31 December 2021) and in December 2021, the agreement was extented with one additional year. The total budget of the agreement with AWEN is 17 035 000 SEK. About 70% of the funding is forwarded mainly to member organisations of AWEN (a small fund is open for calls from other organisations/Emerging Advocacy Grants).

The expected impact of this intervention is: “Women human rights are increasingly protected, promoted and respected in Albania”. The project objective aims towards increased role and contribution of women civil society organizations for the protection, promotion, and respect of women human rights in Albania. The intervention has three outputs:

- Output 1: Increasingly protected and promoted women's human rights through improvement and implementation of policies and legal framework at national and local level.
- Output 2: AWEN and members have strengthened institutional/ organizational capacities by becoming more democratic, accountable, independent, sustainable, and capable to promote and protect women human rights.
- Output 3: Vulnerable groups of girls and women, especially gender-based violence and trafficking survivors are protected and empowered.

The theory of change as elaborated in the AWEN proposal to Sida is the following:

*By being active in promoting and protecting the girls' and women's rights, including minorities, in urban and rural areas (output 1), AWEN and its members contribute to the achievement of the project and overall objectives. By enabling AWEN members to carry out projects and initiatives for the protection of women human rights (output 2) through the financial support, AWEN and its members will contribute to the both the project and overall objectives. Achievement of the output 3 (AWEN members are viable and sustainable with the organizational capacity to contribute to the promotion of women rights) will enable the staff of network members to effectively and efficiently manage the specific projects realized through the financial support of AWEN. The organizational and institutional development component will also be instrumental for the successful advocacy and lobbying al local and national level by AWEN as well as its members.*

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<sup>23</sup> History of AWEN and list of members here: <https://awenetwork.org/historia-misioni/?lang=en>

**National level duty bearers are:** Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MHSP), Alliance of Women Deputies; The Ombudsman Office; The Anti-Discrimination Commissioner's Office; Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA); Ministry of Finance (MoF); Audio-Visual Media Authority (AMA), etc.

**Local level duty bearers are:** Municipalities in the areas where AWEN members are active and where emerging advocacy grants are implemented; Police directorates in each municipality; Alliances of Women Councilors in the targeted municipalities; Local media, etc.

**Project partners are:** AWEN members; other women organizations/women groups beneficiary of the Emerging Advocacy Grants; Donor agencies sharing the same goal towards advancement of women human rights in Albania; media outlets/ professionals, etc.

**Project Beneficiaries/Right Holders are:** Vulnerable girls and women (especially GBV and trafficking survivors) benefitting from the projects implemented by AWEN members; Girls and women and Albanian public in general; Perpetrators of gender-based violence (men and boys) benefitting from rehabilitation services; Young girls and boys targeted through advocacy/ awareness raising interventions on intimate partner violence among youth.

AWEN and a few member organisations have received Sida support through other sources mainly through UN Women.

### 1.3 Evaluation rationale

The intervention will come to an end in 31 December 2022 and the first half of 2022 is a good timing for the Embassy to prepare for the discussion with AWEN on the support beyond 2022. From the start of the direct support to AWEN in 2015, there have been two evaluations of Sida support to AWEN. One was commissioned in 2018 by the Embassy of Sweden in Tirana with the purpose of assessing Sida support to Civil Society in Albania<sup>24</sup>. The intended users included Sida, the partners involved and other donors. The cooperation with AWEN was one of the four subjects of the evaluation. In 2018, AWEN commissioned an evaluation of the intervention supported by Sida and that informed the design of the application to Sida 2019-2021<sup>25</sup>. Considering the long-term support to women rights organisations through AWEN, it is assessed as timely for Embassy to discuss the support to women rights organisations in the context of the operationalization of the new strategy, the needs and opportunities for supporting women human rights defenders in the country and the implementation of Drive for Democracy initiative<sup>26</sup> in the context of Albania.

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<sup>24</sup> See list of documents

<sup>25</sup> See list of documents

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.swedenabroad.se/en/embassies/un-geneva/faq-to-the-embassy/what-is-the-drive-for-democracy/>

## 2. The assignment

### 2.1 Evaluation purpose: Intended use and intended users

The purpose or intended use of the evaluation is to provide Sida with an input to upcoming discussions concerning the support to women rights organisations during the new Strategy. The **primary intended user of the evaluation is Embassy of Sweden in Tirana.**

The evaluation is to be designed, conducted, and reported to meet the needs of the intended user and tenderers shall elaborate in the tender how this will be ensured during the evaluation process.

During the inception phase, the evaluator and the users will agree on who will be responsible for keeping the various stakeholders informed about the evaluation.

### 2.2 Evaluation scope

The evaluation will include the entire period of the intervention to the date of the evaluation mission and if needed, the scope of the evaluation may be further elaborated by the evaluator in the inception report.

### 2.3 Evaluation objective: Criteria and questions

The objective of this evaluation is:

- Evaluate the intervention “Protection and promotion of women rights in Albania” and formulate recommendations as an input to upcoming discussions concerning the preparation for continued support to women rights defenders.

The evaluation questions are:

#### Relevance:

- How has the programme addressed the relevant needs in the country? Have new, more relevant needs emerged and how the intervention has addressed them?
- How relevant is the programme to target groups? How relevant the intervention has been to addressing needs and opportunities for women rights defenders in Albania?
- To what extent the initiative contribute to shaping women's rights priorities in Albania?

#### Coherence: How well does the intervention fit?

- How has the intervention's design and implementation considered the work of other actors working in the same area? How well the intervention fits with other Sida funded interventions addressing similar challenges including interventions implemented by AWEN and members?
- To what extent have AWEN have coordinated effectively and created synergies in their work?

#### Effectiveness:

- To what extent has the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups?

- Have the M&E system delivered robust and useful information that could be used to assess progress towards outcomes and contribute to learning?

**Efficiency:**

- To what extent has the intervention delivered, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way?
- Is the AWEN management team adequately resourced to enable the achievement of desired outcomes?

**Impact:**

To what extent has the project or programme generated, or is expected to generate, significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, high-level effects?

**Sustainability:**

To what extent will the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue?

**Other questions:**

- Has the project contributed to poverty reduction? Which dimensions of poverty were addressed by the project?
- Has the project been implemented in a transparent fashion? Are there accountability mechanisms in the project? How do they work at the level of member organisations of AWEN?

Questions are expected to be developed in the tender by the tenderer and further refined during the inception phase of the evaluation.

## 2.4 Evaluation approach and methods

It is expected that the evaluator describes and justifies an appropriate evaluation approach/methodology and methods for data collection in the tender. The evaluation design, methodology and methods for data collection and analysis are expected to be fully developed and presented in the inception report. Given the situation with Covid-19, innovative and flexible approaches/methodologies and methods for remote data collection should be suggested when appropriate and the risk of doing harm managed.

The evaluator is to suggest an approach/methodology that provides credible answers (evidence) to the evaluation questions. Limitations to the chosen approach/methodology and methods shall be made explicit by the evaluator and the consequences of these limitations discussed in the tender. The evaluator shall to the extent possible, present mitigation measures to address them. A clear distinction is to be made between evaluation approach/methodology and methods.

A *gender-responsive* approach/methodology, methods, tools, and data analysis techniques should be used<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> See for example UNEG United Nations Evaluation Group (2014) Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations <http://uneval.org/document/detail/1616>

Sida's approach to evaluation is *utilization-focused*, which means the evaluator should facilitate the *entire evaluation process* with careful consideration of how everything that is done will affect the use of the evaluation. It is therefore expected that the evaluators, in their tender, present i) how intended users are to participate in and contribute to the evaluation process and ii) methodology and methods for data collection that create space for reflection, discussion and learning between the intended users of the evaluation.

In cases where sensitive or confidential issues are to be addressed in the evaluation, evaluators should ensure an evaluation design that do not put informants and stakeholders at risk during the data collection phase or the dissemination phase.

## 2.5 Organisation of evaluation management

The evaluation is commissioned by the Swedish Embassy in Tirana. The intended user is Embassy of Sweden in Tirana. AWEN has contributed to the ToR and will be provided with an opportunity to comment on the inception report as well as the final report but will not be involved in the management of the evaluation. Hence the commissioner will evaluate tenders, approve the inception report and the final report of the evaluation. The start-up meeting and the debriefing/validation workshop will be held with the commissioner only.

## 2.6 Evaluation quality

All Sida's evaluations shall conform to OECD/DAC's Quality Standards for Development Evaluation<sup>28</sup>. The evaluators shall use the Sida OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation<sup>29</sup> and the OECD/DAC Better Criteria for Better Evaluation<sup>30</sup>. The evaluators shall specify how quality assurance will be handled by them during the evaluation process.

## 2.7 Time schedule and deliverables

It is expected that a time and work plan is presented in the tender and further detailed in the inception report. Given the situation with Covid-19, the time and work plan must allow flexibility in implementation. The evaluation shall be carried out from 4 February 2022 to 30 April 2022. The timing of any field visits, surveys and interviews need to be settled by the evaluator in dialogue with the main stakeholders during the inception phase.

The table below lists key deliverables for the evaluation process. Alternative deadlines for deliverables may be suggested by the consultant and negotiated during the inception phase.

Deliverables	Participants	Deadlines
1. Start-up meetings/virtual meetings.	Embassy representatives: 1) Head of Cooperation; 2) Programme Officer; 3) Intern.	4 February 2022
2. Draft inception report/virtual meeting		Tentative 28 February 2022

<sup>28</sup> OECD/DAC (2010) Quality Standards for Development Evaluation.

<sup>29</sup> Sida OECD/DAC (2014) Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management.

<sup>30</sup> OECD/DAC (2019) Better Criteria for Better Evaluation: Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use.

## Evaluation of Sida's Support to AWEN

3. Inception meeting (comments to be sent before the meeting)	Embassy representatives	Tentative 10 March 2022
4. Data collection, analysis, report writing and quality assurance	Evaluators	March 2022
5. Debriefing/validation workshop (meeting)	Embassy representatives	4 April 2022
6. Draft evaluation report		Tentative 8 April 2022
7. Comments from intended users to evaluators		Tentative 15 April 2022
8. Final evaluation report		30 April 2022

**The inception report** will form the basis for the continued evaluation process and shall be approved by Sida before the evaluation proceeds to implementation. The inception report should be written in English and cover evaluability issues and interpretations of evaluation questions, present the evaluation approach/methodology *including how a utilization-focused and gender-responsive approach will be ensured*, methods for data collection and analysis as well as the full evaluation design, including an *evaluation matrix* and a *stakeholder mapping/analysis*. A clear distinction between the evaluation approach/methodology and methods for data collection shall be made. All limitations to the methodology and methods shall be made explicit and the consequences of these limitations discussed.

A specific time and work plan, including number of hours/working days for each team member, for the remainder of the evaluation should be presented. The time plan shall allow space for reflection and learning between the intended users of the evaluation.

**The final report** shall be written in English and be professionally proofread. The final report should have clear structure and follow the layout format of Sida's template for decentralised evaluations (see Annex C). The executive summary should be maximum 3 pages.

The report shall clearly and in detail describe the evaluation approach/methodology and methods for data collection and analysis and make a clear distinction between the two. The report shall describe how the utilization-focused approach has been implemented i.e. how intended users have participated in and contributed to the evaluation process and how methodology and methods for data collection have created space for reflection, discussion and learning between the intended users. Furthermore, the gender-responsive approach shall be described and reflected in the findings, conclusions, and recommendations along with other identified and relevant cross-cutting issues. Limitations to the methodology and methods and the consequences of these limitations for findings and conclusions shall be described.

Evaluation findings shall flow logically from the data, showing a clear line of evidence to support the conclusions. Conclusions should be substantiated by findings and analysis. Evaluation questions shall be clearly stated and answered in the executive summary and in the conclusions. Recommendations and lessons learned should flow logically from conclusions and be specific, directed to relevant intended users and categorised as a short-term, medium-term, and long-term.

The report should have a maximum of 35 pages excluding annexes. If the methods section is extensive, it could be placed in an annex to the report. Annexes shall always include the Terms of Reference, the Inception Report, the stakeholder mapping/analysis, and the Evaluation Matrix. Lists of key informants/interviewees shall only include personal data if deemed relevant (i.e. when it is contributing to the credibility of the evaluation) based on a case-based assessment by the evaluator and the commissioning unit/embassy. The inclusion of personal data in the report must always be based on a written consent.

The evaluator shall adhere to the Sida OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation<sup>31</sup>.

The evaluator shall, upon approval by Sida/Embassy of the final report, insert the report into Sida's template for decentralised evaluations (see Annex C) and submit it to Nordic Morning (in pdf-format) for publication and release in the Sida publication database. The order is placed by sending the approved report to Nordic Morning ([sida@atta45.se](mailto:sida@atta45.se)), with a copy to the responsible Sida Programme Officer as well as Sida's Evaluation Unit ([evaluation@sida.se](mailto:evaluation@sida.se)). Write "Sida decentralised evaluations" in the email subject field. The following information must always be included in the order to Nordic Morning:

1. The name of the consulting company.
2. The full evaluation title.
3. The invoice reference "ZZ980601".
4. Type of allocation: "sakanslag".
5. Type of order: "digital publicering/publikationsdatabas.

## 2.8 Evaluation team qualification

In addition to the qualifications already stated in the framework agreement for evaluation services, the evaluation team shall include the following competencies: experience in evaluating similar interventions targeting women human rights defenders.

It is highly desirable that the evaluation team includes the following competencies: A good understanding of Gender Equality, Gender Based Violence, and women rights defenders' challenges in the Albanian/regional context.

A CV for each team member shall be included in the call-off response. It should contain a full description of relevant qualifications and professional work experience.

It is important that the competencies of the individual team members are complimentary. It is recommended that a local evaluation consultant is included in the team, as they often have contextual knowledge that is of great value to the evaluation. In addition, and in a situation with Covid-19, the

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<sup>31</sup> Sida OECD/DAC (2014) Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management.

inclusion of local evaluators may also enhance the understanding of feasible ways to conduct the evaluation.

The evaluators must be independent from the evaluation object and evaluated activities and have no stake in the outcome of the evaluation.

Please note that in the tender, the tenderers must propose a team leader that takes part in the evaluation by at least 30% of the total evaluation team time including core team members, specialists and all support functions, but excluding time for the quality assurance expert.

## 2.9 Financial and human resources

The maximum budget amount available for the evaluation is 500 000 SEK.

Invoicing and payment shall be managed according to the following:

After the approval of the final report.

The contact person at Swedish Embassy is Rezarta Katuci ([rezarta.katuci@gov.se](mailto:rezarta.katuci@gov.se)). The contact person should be consulted if any problems arise during the evaluation process.

Relevant Sida documentation will be provided by the responsible Programme Officer at the Swedish Embassy and AWEN will provide additional documentation. Embassy and AWEN will provide suggestions for the stakeholders to be interviewed and provide contact information.

The evaluator will be required to arrange the logistics including any necessary security arrangements.

## 3. Annexes

### Annex A: List of key documentation

- Project application to Sida (2018) including budget and RAF
- Updated application for the extension of the programme (2021)
- Evaluation of Swedish Civil Society Support in Albania, NIRAS, 2018
- Final Evaluation Report "Protection and Promotion of women rights in Albania, 2019

### Annex B: Data sheet on the evaluation object

Information on the evaluation object (i.e. intervention)	
Title of the evaluation object	Support to Albanian Women Empowerment Network 2019-2022
ID no. in PLANit	12748
Dox no./Archive case no.	UM 2019/10275/TIRA
Activity period (if applicable)	1 January 2019- 31 December 2022
Agreed budget (if applicable)	17 035 000 SEK
Main sector	Human Rights and Gender Equality
Name and type of implementing organisation	AWEN
Aid type	Project support



## Evaluation of Sida's Support to AWEN

Swedish strategy	Strategy for Sweden's reform cooperation with the Western Balkans and Turkey for 2021–2027
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<b>Information on the evaluation assignment</b>	
Commissioning unit/Swedish Embassy	Embassy of Sweden in Tirana
Contact person at unit/Swedish Embassy	Rezarta Katuci
Timing of evaluation (mid-term, end-of-programme, ex-post, or other)	(near) End of Programme
ID no. in PLANit (if other than above).	12748

## Annex 2: Evaluation matrix (From IR)

Criteria	EQ (as suggested by ETT)	Sub-questions/issues for inquiry	Data sources
<b>Relevance</b>	To what extent has the programme addressed relevant needs in the current country context? Have new, more relevant needs emerged? If so, to what extent has the intervention addressed them?	<p>What are the primary needs and opportunities in relation to women's rights?</p> <p>To what extent is AWEN focusing on these primary needs and opportunities?</p> <p>To what extent have needs and opportunities changed over the past five year?</p> <p>To what extent has AWEN adapted to changing needs and opportunities, if any, and ensured continued relevance?</p>	Document review to identify needs addressed. Emerging needs, relevance of addressed needs and adaptability determined through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and survey.
	How relevant is the programme to its target groups? How relevant is the intervention for addressing needs and opportunities for women rights defenders in Albania?	<p>How relevant is the intervention for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AWEN's members</li> <li>- Other CSOs working on women's rights</li> <li>- Relevant government authorities</li> </ul>	KIIs and survey.
	To what extent has the intervention contributed to shaping women's rights priorities in Albania?	<p>To what extent has it shaped priorities relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Domestic &amp; Gender-based Violence</li> <li>- Socio-economic rights and participation of women and girls</li> <li>- Property rights of women and girls</li> <li>- Representation of women and girls in political life</li> </ul>	Document review to identify needs addressed. KIIs, document review and survey to determine shaping of priorities.
<b>Coherence</b>	To what extent has the intervention's design and implementation considered the work of other actors working in the same area? How well does	To what extent did AWEN consult with other actors in the design of its strategy?	Document review, KIIs and survey.

### Evaluation of Sida's Support to AWEN

	the intervention fit with other Sida funded interventions addressing similar challenges, including interventions implemented by AWEN members?	To what is AWEN reinforcing, complementing or duplicating the work of other Sida funded interventions focusing on similar issues?  To what extent is AWEN reinforcing, complementing or duplicating the work of its members?	
	To what extent has AWEN coordinated effectively and created synergies in its work?	In implementation of activities and campaigns, to what extent and how effectively does AWEN coordinate and cooperate with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Member organizations;</li> <li>- Other CSOs working in the same field;</li> <li>- Government authorities.</li> </ul>	Document review, KIIs and survey.
<b>Effectiveness</b>	To what extent has the intervention attained, or is expected to attain, its outcome level results. Are there any differential results across groups?	To what extent has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-AWEN increasingly protected and promoted women's human rights through improvement and implementation of policies and legal framework at national and local level. (Outcome 1)</li> <li>-AWEN and members strengthened institutional/organizational capacities by becoming more democratic, accountable, independent, sustainable and capable to promote and protect women human rights. (Outcome 2)</li> <li>-Vulnerable groups of girls and women, especially gender based violence and trafficking survivors are protected and empowered. (Outcome 3)</li> </ul> <p>Which groups have primarily benefitted from progress relating to outcome 1?</p> <p>Which members have particularly benefitted from progress relating to outcome 2?</p>	Document review with a focus on the AWEN's and its members own monitoring data, KIIs and survey.

## Evaluation of Sida's Support to AWEN

		Which vulnerable groups of girls and women have benefitted from progress relating to outcome 3? Which groups have not benefitted?	
	Has the M&E system delivered robust and useful information that could be used to assess progress towards outcomes and contribute to learning?	<p>Has the M&amp;E system been applied as intended?</p> <p>What is the relevance and quality of the data collected?</p> <p>To what extent has the M&amp;E system provided learning and guided implementation of the intervention?</p> <p>When it comes to the focus of the M&amp;E system, are there differences between groups?</p>	Review of AWEN's own monitoring data, monitoring data from member organizations and KIIs.
<b>Impact</b>	To what extent has the intervention generated, or is expected to generate, significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, high-level effects?	<p>Women human rights are increasingly protected, promoted and respected in Albania.</p> <p>What are the intended or unintended high level effects relating to the protection, promotion and respect for women's rights, taking into consideration possible differences between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- local and central level;</li> <li>- thematic focus areas; and</li> <li>- target groups?</li> </ul>	Review of AWEN's own monitoring data and data from KIIs and the literature review.
<b>Efficiency</b>	To what extent has the intervention delivered, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way?	<p>Note: The assessment will not focus on AWEN but on two of its supported member organizations.</p> <p>Is the programme on budget?</p> <p>Have activities been carried out on time?</p> <p>Are management costs reasonable (assessing for instance overall cost for managing the programme, salary levels; office rent)?</p>	KIIs and an assessment of budgets, narrative and financial reporting and workplans. Costs will be compared with those of other organizations.

Evaluation of Sida's Support to AWEN

		Are activities cost-effective (assessing for instance cost per participant in workshops and trainings)?	
	Is the AWEN management team adequately resourced to enable the achievement of desired outcomes?	<p>Has the management team sufficient human resources?</p> <p>Has the management team relevant and sufficient thematic capacity in the field of women's rights?</p> <p>Has the management team sufficient financial management capacity?</p> <p>Has the management team appropriate systems and sufficient capacity for sub-granting?</p> <p>Is there any organisational/skill gap that impedes AWEN's performance?</p> <p>If the team is not adequately resourced, how can it be enabled?</p>	Document review and KIIs.
<b>Sustainability</b>	To what extent will the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue?	<p>To what extent will the net benefits of the intervention continue taking into consideration possible differences between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- local and central level;</li> <li>- thematic focus areas; and</li> <li>- target groups.</li> </ul> <p>What may be the challenges to AWEN's and members sustainability at various levels: individual, organizational and financial?</p> <p>What are the factors that can contribute to increase the intervention's sustainability?</p>	Document review and KIIs.
<b>Other issues</b>	Has the intervention contributed to poverty reduction? Which dimensions	<p>To what extent has the intervention contributed to reduce poverty in the following dimensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resources</li> <li>- Opportunities and choice</li> </ul>	Document review and KIIs.

Evaluation of Sida's Support to AWEN

	<p>of poverty were addressed by the intervention?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Power and voice</li> <li>- Human security</li> </ul>	
	<p>Has the intervention been implemented in a transparent fashion? Are there accountability mechanisms in the intervention? How do they work at the level of member organisations of AWEN?</p>	<p>How well is AWEN's democratic organizational structure perceived to be working in practice?</p> <p>To what extent is the board providing strategic guidance and oversight?</p> <p>To what extent is there effective division of responsibilities and decision-making powers between the board and the secretariat?</p> <p>To what extent do AWEN members perceive that they "own" AWEN and its strategy/programme?</p> <p>To what extent have AWEN's members been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- involved in developing the strategy?</li> <li>- consulted on and involved in implementation of the strategy?</li> <li>- involved in following up/evaluating the strategy?</li> </ul> <p>To what extent is AWEN and its members making information about their operations available to stakeholders and the general public?</p> <p>What mechanisms have AWEN and its members in place to ensure that the views of target groups/end-beneficiaries are considered in project and activity design and implementation?</p> <p>Are there whistle blower mechanisms in place?</p>	<p>Document review and KIIs with focus on AWEN staff members and members organizations.</p>

## Annex 3: Survey questions

Question	Response options
1. Is your organization representing/ defending:	A) The interests and rights of all women in Albania B) The interests and rights of GBV survivors C) The specific interests and rights of minority women D) The specific interests and rights of women with disabilities E) Other
2. Where is your organization based?	A. Tirana B. Other
3. To what extent is the Albanian Women's Empowerment Network's (AWEN) work relevant for civil society organizations working on women's rights?	a) Very large extent b) Large extent c) Moderate extent d) Small extent e) Very small extent d) Don't know
4. To what extent has AWEN contributed to shaping women's rights priorities relating to <i>domestic &amp; gender-based Violence</i> ?	All questions below have the same response options in as Question 3.
5. To what extent has AWEN contributed to shaping women's rights priorities relating to <i>socio-economic rights</i> ?	
6. To what extent has AWEN contributed to shaping women's rights priorities relating to <i>representation of women and girls in political life</i> ?	
7. To what extent is AWEN coordinating its work effectively with other organizations concerned with women's rights?	
8. To what extent has AWEN contributed to strengthening of laws and other public policies concerning women's rights?	
9. To what extent has AWEN contributed to the protection and empowerment of victims of gender-based violence and survivors of human trafficking?	
10 To what extent is AWEN operating in a transparent fashion?	

## Annex 4: Documentation

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Albanian National Training & Technical Assistance Resource Center (2019). Baseline Assessment Report

AWEN (2021), Albania. Project applications from members

AWEN (2021), Albania. Annual reports from members

AWEN (2021). List of Applicants for Emerging Advocacy Grants

AWEN (2021). List of 4 winning projects under Emerging Advocacy Grants

AWEN (2019) Project Proposal AWEN, 2019-2021

AWEN, Project Proposal AWEN, 2022

AWEN, Updated budget AWEN 2022

AWEN (2020). Native report 2019

AWEN (2021). Narrative report 2020

AWEN (2022). Narrative report 2021

AWEN, Activity Plan and Timeline 2022

AWEN, Annex 1, RBM, 2019-2021

AWEN, Annex 2, Staff roles and responsibilities

AWEN, Annex 3, Timeline for implementation

AWEN, Annex 4, Risks and management strategies

AWEN, Annex 5, Detailed Budget AWEN 2019 – \_2021

AWEN, Annual Reporting 2020-Narrative report assessment

AWEN, Public Outreach plan AWEN 2022

AWEN, Strategic plan AWEN 2022-2027

Embassy of Sweden, Albania. Agreement between Embassy and AWEN and two amendments

Embassy of Sweden, Albania. Conclusion on Performance - Assessment of performance 1st Year

Embassy of Sweden, Albania. Completion Memo

Embassy of Sweden, Albania. Experience of Sida direct support to Albanian organisations

European Union (2021). Gender Action Plan III (2021-2023). Country Level Implementation Plan – CLIP Albania

Fellin, Lisa C et al (2019). Empowering young people who experienced domestic violence and abuse: The development of a group therapy intervention. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 2019, Vol. 24(1)

Kocaqi, Monika et al., Albania Country Gender Equality Brief 2020. UN Women 2020



Kuçi Liri (2022), Resisting "the same old story": violence, rape and the urgent need of feminism in Albania. Lefteast

Kvinna till Kvinna (2020). Women's Rights in Western Balkans

Ljungman, Cecilia (2018). Evaluation of Swedish Civil Society Support in Albania, NIRAS Sweden

Ministria E Shendetesise Dhe Mbrojtjes Sociale (2021), National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2030

Ministria E Shendetesise Dhe Mbrojtjes Sociale (2021). Report on the implementation of recommendations addressed to Albania by the Committee of Parties of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention)

Metaj, Elida & Myftio, Alken (2019). Final Evaluation Report. Protection and Promotion of Women's Rihts in Albania. Albanian Women Empowerment Network.

OECD/DAC Network on Evaluation Criteria (2019). Better Criteria for Better Evaluation: Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use.

Sida (2015), Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Violence: Expressions and Strategies

Sida (2017). Dimensions of Poverty: Sida's Conceptual Framework

United Nations (1993), Strategies for Confronting Domestic Violence: A Resource Manual, [https://www.unodc.org/pdf/youthnet/tools\\_strategy\\_english\\_domestic\\_violence.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/pdf/youthnet/tools_strategy_english_domestic_violence.pdf)

United Nations Albania, Advancing gender Equality and the Empowerment of all women and girls in Albania-A position Paper by UN in Albania 2021

## Annex 5: List of people consulted

Name	Position	Organisation	Date of interview
Adena Vangjeli	Project Coordinator	AWEN	24.03.2022 31.03.2022
Afroviti Gusho	Program Coordinator	Me, the Woman Pogradec AWEN member	06.04.2022
Aurela Bozo	Executive Director	Center for Civic and Legal Initiatives AWEN member	31.03.2022
Alba Agolli	Project Manager	UN Women	01.04.2022
Angelina Pistoli	Public Engagement Advisor	US Embassy	31.03.2022
Antonieta Ymeri	Specialist	The Psycho – Social Centre, Vatra Shelter AWEN member	28.03.2022
Atila Uligaj	Project Manager	Woman to Woman Shkoder AWEN member	29.03.2022
Arvina Dibra	Finance Officer	Woman to Woman Shkoder AWEN member	29.03.2022
Bajana Çeveli	Executive director	Gender, Peace and Security, Durres- AWEN member	06.04.2022
Brunilda Dervishaj	Gender focal point	Ministry of Health and Social Protection	30.03.2022
Delina Fico	Board Member	AWEN	25.03.2022
Dhoksi Gjoka	Social Worker	Woman Forum, Elbasan Emergency shelter AWEN member	28.03.2022
Edlira Papavangjeli	Programme Coordinator	UNDP	25.03.2022
Ejnxh Pepa	Project Coordinator	Counseling Line for Women and Girls- AWEN member	25.03.2022
Eleni Jajcari	Executive Director	Me, the woman Pogradec AWEN member	06.04.2022
Elsa Dervishi	Project Coordinator	Woman Forum, Elbasan AWEN member	28.03.2022
Entenela Ndrevataj	Journalist/Activist	Citizen channel	31.03.2022
Entela Gjoni	Executive Director	Jona Sarande AWEN member	06.04.2022
Enkelejda Bregu	Program Manager	EU Delegation	30.03.2022
Entela Avdulaj	Program Manager	The Psycho – Social Centre Vatra AWEN member	28.03.2022
Erisilda Shpata	Project Coordinator	Gender, Peace and Security, Durres- AWEN member	06.04.2022
Etleva Sheshi	Assistant Commissioner- Former Gender Gocal point Ministry of HSP	Ombudsman	Written feedback interview

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Fatbardha Menhalla	Coordinator for Juveniles and Domestic Violence	Local Police Municipality of Elbasan	28.03.2022
Gresa Hasa	Activist	Shota Magazine	24.03.2022
Gjinovefa Xhori	Specialist	Regional Employment Office, Vlore	28.03.2022
Ines Leskaj	Executive Director	AWEN	28.02.2022 24.03.2022 31.03.2022 19.04.2022
Irena Shtraza	Former AWEN Project Coordinator	UN Women	24.03.2022
Kristina Voko	Executive Director	Balkan Investigative Reporting Network, BIRN	30.03.2022
Ledio Sulkuqi	Chancellor	Judicial District Court, Elbasan	28.03.2022
Lorena Bardeli	Head of Sector for Strategic Planning, Standardisation and Monitoring of Social Services	Municipality of Shkoder	29.03.2022
Malvina Mejdiaj	Expert at Shelter	The Psycho – Social Centre Vatra AWEN member	28.03.2022
Manjola Veizi	Executive Director	Roma Women Rights Centre	01.04.2022
Marinela Seiraj	Project Coordinator	AWEN (UN women funded project)	31.03.2022
Megi Llubani	Project Manager	UN Women	01.04.2022
Migena Spaho	Director for Social Services	Municipality of Tirana	31.03.2022
Mihallaq Qirjo	Board Member	AWEN	25.03.2022
Mirela Arqimandriti	Executive Director	Gender Alliance for Development Centre AWEN member	25.03.2022
Mirela Gjoni	Psychologist	Woman Forum Elbasan, Counselling Center AWEN member	28.03.2022
Nertila Toli	Project Manager	Woman Forum, Elbasan AWEN member	28.03.2022
Oliana Manaj	Specialist at shelter	The Psycho – Social Centre Vatra AWEN member	28.03.2022
Plejada Gugashi	Programme Manager	Olaf Palme International Center	31.03.2022
Rezarta Qerimi	Finance Manager	AWEN	24.03.2022 31.03.2022
Rezarta Katuci	Programme Officer	Embassy of Sweden	25.03.2022
Rezarta Andoni	Local Coordinator for Domestic Violence	Municipality of Vlora	28.03.2022
Rezarta Agolli	Lawyer	AWEN (US Embassy and ADA funded projects)	31.03.2022
Rosela Kasa	Psychologist	Gender, Peace and Security, Durres AWEN member	06.04.2022
Sidorela Horeshka	Executive Director	Argitra Vizion, Diber AWEN member	06.04.2022

Evaluation of Sida's Support to AWEN

Sindi Shahu	Program Assistant	Counseling Line for Women and Girls AWEN member	25.03.2022
Silvana Makaj	Psychologist/Case Manager	Woman to Woman Shkoder AWEN member	29.03.2022
Soela Kurti	Lawyer	Woman Forum, Elbasan AWEN member	28.03.2022
Suad Arilla	Social Worker	Woman to Woman Shkoder AWEN member	29.03.2022
Trendelina Borici	President	Woman to Woman Shkoder AWEN member	29.03.2022
Valbona Sulce	Board Member	AWEN	25.03.2022
Valmira Pajenga	Finance Officer	Woman Forum, Elbasan AWEN member	28.03.2022
Vasilika Laci	Programme Officer	British Embassy	01.04.2022
Xheni Karaj	Executive Director	Aleanca LGBTI	28.03.2022
A.Sh	Beneficiary	Elbasan	28.03.2022
K.S	Beneficiary	Elbasan	28.03.2022
O.Xh	Beneficiary	Elbasan	28.03.2022
I.B	Beneficiary	Librazhd	28.03.2022
A.V	Beneficiary	Librazhd	28.03.2022
S. Q	Beneficiary	Shkoder	29.03.2022
M. C	Beneficiary	Shkoder	29.03.2022
E .Sh	Beneficiary	Shkoder	29.03.2022
A. M	Beneficiary	Shkoder	29.03.2022
Xh.M	Beneficiary	Vlora	28.03.2022
S.S	Beneficiary	Vlora	28.03.2022
A.I	Beneficiary	Vlora	28.03.2022
S.T	Beneficiary	Vlora	28.03.2022

## **Annex 6: Inception Report**

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

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AWEN	Albanian Women's Empowerment Network
KII	Key informant interview
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
QA	Quality Assurance
SEK	Swedish Krona
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
ToR	Terms of Reference

# 1 Introduction

---

FCG Sweden has been engaged by the Embassy of Sweden in Albania to conduct an evaluation of Sida's support to Albanian Women's Empowerment Network (AWEN) from 2019 until today. The purpose of the evaluation is "to provide Sida with an input to upcoming discussions concerning the support to women rights organisations during the new Strategy." According to the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the assignment, FCG Sweden should submit this inception report.

The inception report builds on FCG's technical proposal but develops and refines the evaluation questions presented in the ToR and presents a more detailed evaluation methodology and data collection strategy. It also discusses practical arrangements and puts forward a detailed work and time plan for the evaluation.

The inception report has been developed following a start-up meeting with the Embassy of Sweden in Albania and a meeting with AWEN in which methodological and practical aspects of the evaluation were discussed and agreed on. With the help of the Embassy and AWEN, we have identified documents of relevance for the evaluation and reviewed those of particular importance for designing the evaluation. The Embassy and AWEN have also assisted the Evaluation Team in identifying actors with experience and knowledge of AWEN's operations. Further potential informants have been identified through the literature review.

The draft version of this Inception Report has been assessed by FCG's Quality Assurance Expert Susan Tamondong. Taking into consideration the comments received and the discussions held during an inception report meeting involving the Embassy and the Evaluation Team, a final version of this report will be produced. Once approved, the final inception report will guide the scope, focus, timing, and methodological approach of the assignment.

## 2 The assignment

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This section presents the Evaluation Team's understanding of the assignment. It is based on the Terms of Reference for the assignment and partly reiterates what was stated in FCG's Technical Proposal. It proposes limited changes to the evaluation questions set out in the ToR.

### 2.1 Background

AWEN was established in 2009 and legally registered in December 2011 as an initiative of eight non-profit organisations to strengthen the cooperation among women rights organizations, ensure increased impact and generally to empower the feminist movement. Today the AWEN comprises ten member organizations based in seven different districts.

The object of the evaluation commissioned by the Embassy of Sweden is AWEN's intervention "Protection and promotion of women rights in Albania", which Sida supports with roughly SEK 17 million over four years (2019-2022). The initial duration of the intervention was 1 January 2019 - 31 December 2021. The time frame for the intervention has subsequently been extended to 31 December 2022.

The intervention’s expected result is “Women human rights are increasingly protected, promoted and respected in Albania”. More specifically, its objective is “increased role and contribution of women civil society organizations for the protection, promotion, and respect of women human rights in Albania.”

Relating to this objective are three high level outcomes:<sup>1</sup>

- Outcome 1: Increasingly protected and promoted women’s human rights through improvement and implementation of policies and legal framework at national and local level.
- Outcome 2: AWEN and members have strengthened institutional/ organizational capacities by becoming more democratic, accountable, independent, sustainable, and capable to promote and protect women human rights.
- Outcome 3: Vulnerable groups of girls and women, especially gender-based violence and trafficking survivors are protected and empowered.

## 2.2 Evaluation purpose and objectives

The evaluation should serve as an input to upcoming discussions on the support to women rights organisations in Albania under Sweden’s new strategy for reform cooperation with the Western Balkans and Turkey 2021-2027.

The objective of the evaluation is stated in the ToR:

“Evaluate the intervention ‘Protection and promotion of women rights in Albania’ and formulate recommendations as an input to upcoming discussions concerning the preparation for continued support to women rights defenders.”

## 2.3 Evaluation criteria and questions

To meet its purpose, the evaluation should assess the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, and sustainability, as well as ‘Other issues’ focusing on poverty reduction, transparency, and accountability of the intervention.

The ToR lists thirteen evaluation questions (EQ) that it categorizes under the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria and the heading Other issues. The Evaluation Team have suggested some minor clarifications and additions to these questions, as shown in the table below.

Table 1: Evaluation criteria and evaluation questions

Criteria	EQ in ToR	EQ as suggested by ET	Comments
Relevance	How has the programme addressed the relevant needs in the country? Have new, more relevant needs emerged and how the intervention has addressed them?	To what extent has the programme addressed relevant needs in the current country context? Have new, more relevant needs emerged? If so, to what extent has the intervention addressed them?	As the evaluation is expected to assess performance and not only be descriptive, we have in some places suggested that the word “how” is replaced with the expression “to what extent”.

<sup>1</sup> Referred to as outcomes in AWEN’s results framework, but to outputs in the ToR for the assignment.

	How relevant is the programme to target groups? How relevant the intervention has been to addressing needs and opportunities for women rights defenders in Albania?	How relevant is the programme to its target groups? How relevant is the intervention for addressing needs and opportunities for women rights defenders in Albania?	No substantive change
	To what extent the initiative contribute to shaping women's rights priorities in Albania?	To what extent has the intervention contributed to shaping women's rights priorities in Albania?	No substantive change
Coherence	How has the intervention's design and implementation considered the work of other actors working in the same area? How well the intervention fits with other Sida funded interventions addressing similar challenges including interventions implemented by AWEN and members?	To what extent has the intervention's design and implementation considered the work of other actors working in the same area? How well does the intervention fit with other Sida funded interventions addressing similar challenges, including interventions implemented by AWEN members?	The word "how" is replaced with the expression "to what extent".
	To what extent have AWEN have coordinated effectively and created synergies in their work?	To what extent has AWEN coordinated effectively and created synergies in its work?	No substantive change.
Effectiveness	To what extent has the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups?	To what extent has the intervention attained, or is expected to attain, its outcome level results. Are there any differential results across groups?	We suggest that the effectiveness criteria focuses on outcome level results.
	Has the M&E system delivered robust and useful information that could be used to assess progress towards outcomes and contribute to learning?	Has the M&E system delivered robust and useful information that could be used to assess progress towards outcomes and contribute to learning?	No change
Impact	To what extent has the project or programme generated, or is expected to generate, significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, high-level effects?	To what extent has the intervention generated, or is expected to generate, significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, high-level effects?	No substantive change

Efficiency	To what extent has the intervention delivered, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way?	To what extent has the intervention delivered, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way?	No change.
	Is the AWEN management team adequately resourced to enable the achievement of desired outcomes?	Is the AWEN management team adequately resourced to enable the achievement of desired outcomes?	No change.
Sustainability	To what extent will the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue?	To what extent will the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue?	No change.
Other issues	Has the project contributed to poverty reduction? Which dimensions of poverty were addressed by the project?	Has the intervention contributed to poverty reduction? Which dimensions of poverty were addressed by the intervention?	No significant change.
	Has the project been implemented in a transparent fashion? Are there accountability mechanisms in the project? How do they work at the level of member organisations of AWEN?	Has the intervention been implemented in a transparent fashion? Are there accountability mechanisms in the intervention? How do they work at the level of member organisations of AWEN?	No substantive change.

## 2.4 Scope and users

The evaluation will cover the period the 1 January 2019– 30 March 2022.

The primary intended user of the evaluation is the Embassy of Sweden in Tirana. We also expect that the evaluation will be of direct value for AWEN and its members.

## 3 Methodology

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### 3.1 Overall approach

The Evaluation Team will apply an evaluation approach that is utilisation-focused and participatory, whereby there is close interaction with key evaluation stakeholders, in order to capture their perspectives and experiences. We will involve the Embassy of Sweden and AWEN during the main stages of the evaluation process and both the Embassy and AWEN have provided input during the inception phase. Specific future opportunities for the Embassy and AWEN to provide input include the period for making comments on this draft inception report, interviews, and the period for providing comments on the draft evaluation report. The Embassy will also be invited to provide input during the start-up meeting, inception meeting and debriefing/validation meeting.

The evaluation will be characterized by a politically informed approach through which the relevance, effectiveness and impact of AWEN's work are assessed given prevailing political economy constraints. The Evaluation Team's in-depth understanding of women's rights, civil society and political developments in Albania and the region facilitates this approach. We will further strive to apply a human rights and gender responsive approach, inspired by the UN Evaluation Group's guidance on integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluations<sup>2</sup>, throughout the evaluation. This will impact the composition of the Evaluation Team, selection of interviewees, formulation of interview questions and the lens applied for analysis, presentation of evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations. We will also conduct the desk review with a special focus on capturing the voices of women and women human rights defenders. Generally, the object of the evaluation and our participatory and utilisation-focused approach should help to orient the evaluation in a gender responsive direction.

The six different OECD-DAC evaluation criteria and the "Other issues" set out in the ToR require somewhat different approaches and data collection strategies. The assessment of **relevance** will take AWEN's own programme and its areas of focus as a starting point. These will then be assessed in relation to current and emerging needs and where an organization like AWEN is most likely to make a difference. The assessment will consider AWEN's ability to adapt, identify adequate solutions, and develop appropriate strategies and approaches. The assessment will be grounded in an analysis of survey responses, answers from key informants, including AWEN staff, donors, government officials, external observers and in particular AWEN's members, partners and other human rights defenders.

AWEN's partners and other human rights defenders will also be the key informants when assessing the interventions **coherence**. We will in particular focus on obtaining the views of those with knowledge of other Sida funded interventions addressing women's rights issues. We will look at AWEN's consultation and coordination efforts from the beginning of the design phase until today.

The **effectiveness** assessment will be divided into an assessment of results and an assessment of the quality of AWEN's M&E system. AWEN's proposal to Sida presents three outcomes focusing on (i) strengthening and implementing laws and other public policies, (ii) strengthening the organizational capacity of AWEN and its members, (iii) and protecting and empowering vulnerable groups of girls and women, especially gender-based violence and trafficking survivors.

While AWEN's proposal provides some information on the specific issues that AWEN will tackle and strive to influence under these three broad outcomes, it also recognizes that the project is implemented in a changing environment and needs sufficient flexibility to adjust to the priorities of both its member organization and those of Albanian duty bearers. When assessing the first and third of AWEN's outcomes, the Evaluation Team will therefore apply an outcome harvesting inspired approach rather than a deductive approach that strictly follows AWEN's original intervention logic. Our assessment will, however, focus on identifying outcome and impact level results within AWEN's stated focus areas. It will subsequently determine if AWEN has contributed to the results, and, to the extent possible, how significant AWEN's contribution has been. We will take AWEN's own results reporting as a point of

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<sup>2</sup> United Nations Evaluation Group (2014). Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations. New York: UNEG

departure for the effectiveness assessment, but we will also draw on other thematic reports, survey responses and most importantly a wide range of key informants.

When assessing attainment of the second intended outcome concerning the organizational capacity of AWEN and its members, we will look at the organization's formal structures, transparency and accountability practices, and financial stability and fundraising capacity. Some of the findings relating to this outcome will also feed into the separate evaluation questions on sustainability and transparency. We expect that AWEN's own documentation and interviews with AWEN staff and members will be the main sources of information for this assessment.

The assessment of the monitoring and evaluation system will look at the frequency and extent to which the system has been applied, the quality of the data collected and the extent to which the system has provided learning and guided implementation. Data will be gathered through a review of documentation and interviews with AWEN staff and members.

The **impact** assessment approach will be directly linked to the results assessment carried out as part of the effectiveness assessment. It will rely on the same outcome harvesting inspired approach but will focus on whether the intervention has contributed to increased protection, promotion, and respect for women's rights in Albania or to any potentially negative effects.

Traditional **efficiency** assessments measure outputs in relation to inputs and require that benefits are measured in monetary terms or in some other metric measurements. They also require that the findings are compared with the costs of other interventions with similar or identical outputs. As recognized in the ToR, for an evaluation of this nature, this is difficult to achieve. As an alternative, with a focus on two of AWEN's member organizations, the efficiency review will look at whether the programme is on budget, activities are carried out on time, and management and activity costs are reasonable. We will also review the resources of AWEN's management team by assessing both the sufficiency of its human resources and its capacity relating to women's rights, programme management and sub-granting. This assessment will largely draw on AWEN's and the two member organizations' own documentation, but will be complemented by the key informant interviews.

When assessing **sustainability**, the Evaluation Team will consider both the sustainability of AWEN and its members and the sustainability of the net benefits to which the evaluated intervention has contributed to its thematic focus areas for its target groups.

### 3.2 Data collection

The evaluation will use a mixed data collection strategy. While it will primarily be quantitative, relying on a review of available documentation and key informant interviews, a questionnaire/survey will be disseminated electronically.

#### Desk review

The desk review will form the start of the data collection process. It will be structured around the evaluation criteria and contribute to answer the evaluation questions and focus and frame key informant interviews.

We will primarily base the desk review on documents obtained from AWEN and the Embassy of Sweden. These documents include the strategic plan, project documents, progress reports, assessment memo,

minutes from annual meetings, past evaluations, and action plans. Any policies, manuals, guidelines, or similar documents relating to AWEN's follow-up and learning structures that exist will be assessed as relevant. It will also be important for the Evaluation Team to review proposals and progress reports produced by AWEN's members and partner organizations.

### **Interviews and focus group discussions**

The Evaluation Teams has conducted a mapping of stakeholders (see Annex 3). The mapping identifies individuals with knowledge of AWEN and its operations. It also reflects on their interests in the programme as well as the evaluation. On the basis of this mapping and suggestions from both the Embassy and AWEN, a purposeful sample of key informants representing the following groups and actors will be amongst those approached for interviews: AWEN, AWEN members, Other AWEN grantees, other CSOs working on women's rights, Albanian duty bearers, donors and international agencies, media, and external observers. A list of potential interviewees is presented in Annex 2. In addition, it is expected that we will identify additional informants through chain referral sampling. Interviewed key informants will thus be asked to suggest further informants.

We will organize focus group discussions when necessary to obtain the views of several people, including beneficiaries, in a limited period of time and when it seems likely that interaction between the participants may lead to informative discussions. In order to facilitate dynamic discussion and ensure that all participants have the opportunity to express their views, the aim is that no focus groups will involve more than seven to eight persons.

The Evaluation Team will ensure that the evaluation does not present information that may be harmful to individual stakeholders or stakeholder groups. Informants will be interviewed on the basis of voluntary participation and confidentiality. No comments will be directly or indirectly ascribed to any individual without their full informed consent. Apart from interviews focusing on the organizational development aspects the evaluation, all interviews will be semi-structured and adapted to the respondent's expected area of experience and knowledge. The semi-structured interviews will aim at capturing the interviewees most significant experiences, reflections, and ideas.

### **Survey**

The Evaluation Team is expecting to carry out an electronic survey targeting AWEN member organizations and a broad range of other human rights defender organizations in Albania. In total, the survey will be sent to roughly 80 human rights defender organizations that AWEN has helped the evaluation team to identify. The survey will primarily consist of closed questions directly linked to the evaluation's relevance criterion, as this is an area that respondents that may not be very familiar with the details of AWEN's operations can still provide well considered answers to. However, it will also touch on other aspects of the evaluation.

### **3.3 Evaluation matrix**

Annex 5 includes an evaluation matrix that shows the link between the evaluation criteria, the evaluation questions, the additional sub-questions or lines of inquiry that will guide data collection and analysis, and the different data collection methods or approaches that we intend to use for each evaluation question.



### **3.4 Data analysis and development of recommendations**

We will apply an intuitive approach to data analysis, drawing on the Evaluation Team's contemplation, experiences and understanding of the context. Our analytical approach will also include elements of an intersubjective approach through which the Evaluation Team engages stakeholders in verification of findings and conclusions. While the analysis will start on an individual level during the desk study phase, it will continue through extensive discussions within the Evaluation Team during the in-country data collection phase and the report writing phase. Thus, data analysis will not be an activity distinct from data collection. Rather, analysis of collected data will be an ongoing activity conducted in parallel with the desk review, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and survey work. The ongoing analysis will inform the data collection and help ensure that it is relevant for addressing the evaluation questions.

Triangulation will be key to ensuring the reliability and validity of the findings and to mitigate any biases or problems that may arise from one single method or a single observer. We will triangulate among the methods of gathering data, sources, and stakeholder perspectives, and across evaluation team members. As part of the data analysis, the Evaluation Team will also strive to disaggregate collected data to identify and clarify any gender-based differences.

The analysis should lead to relevant, concrete, and specific recommendations that can serve as an input to planned discussion regarding future support to women rights defenders in Albania. All recommendations will take into consideration needs, existing opportunities and challenges, and available resources. If and when relevant, we will categorize the recommendations as short-term, medium-term, and long-term.

### **3.5 Reporting**

A draft version of the final evaluation report will be submitted to the Embassy of Sweden and AWEN for comments by 9 May 2022. The Evaluation Team will consider all comments received and any omissions or factual errors will be corrected, and any substantive disagreements will be acknowledged in the final version of the report that will be submitted to the Embassy no later than on 24 May. A response matrix will be prepared in order to ensure that all key comments received are duly considered.

### **3.6 Ethics**

With the exception of performance related evaluation findings and conclusions, the Evaluation Team will ensure that the evaluation does not present information that may be harmful to individual stakeholders or stakeholder groups. The Team will interview informants on the basis of voluntary participation. No comments will be directly or indirectly ascribed to any individual without their full informed consent. People will be interviewed individually when there are heightened concerns about confidentiality and about the influence of the presence and responses from others on that person's answers.

The evaluation will be guided by the propriety standards set out in the Program Evaluation Standards developed by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation to ensure that an evaluation is conducted legally, ethically, and with due regard for the welfare of those involved and those affected

by its results.<sup>3</sup> FCG acknowledges, however, that not all ethical issues that can potentially arise can be solved through careful planning. For this reason, the Team members' past experience of conducting qualitative and participatory evaluations, and of adapting and responding to situations that may arise, is an essential aspect of FCG's approach to safety and ethics. It should finally be noted that all members of the Evaluation Team have committed to abide by FCG's code of conduct. The Evaluation Team will not interview any children under the age of 18.

### **3.7 Limitations and challenges**

The evaluation is dependent on key informants being willing to set aside time to meet with the ET and openly and honestly share their views about the programme and the work of AWEN. To ensure that people can participate, potential interviewees will be contacted well in advance of the proposed interview date. We will also try to allow for maximum flexibility as to when the interviewees are conducted. It is expected that AWEN, when needed, can facilitate the evaluation by encouraging its partners to meet with the Evaluation Team. It is also expected the introduction letter issued by the Embassy will facilitate the set-up of meetings.

We expect that the Covid-19 pandemic will not constitute a challenge to the evaluation. We thus presume that all Evaluation Team members will visit Albania and be involved in face-to-face interviews and focus group discussion. However, in case international travel is not possible, the Albanian team member will be responsible for carrying out the face-to-face interviews in Albania. When possible and suitable, the other team members will join these interviews virtually. In the event that no face-to-face interviews are allowed, we will conduct all interviews virtually. Regardless which of these scenarios that will be followed, the Team Leader's and Team Member's roles in terms of evaluation design, documentation review, analysis and report writing will not be affected.

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<sup>3</sup> Program Evaluation Standards, Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation;  
<https://www.oecd.org/dev/pgd/38406354.pdf>

## 4 Evaluation phases

The table below describes the remaining steps of the three phases of the evaluation, what will be done during each phase and when it will be implemented.

Table 2: Evaluation phases

Phase	Description	Dates
<b>Inception</b>		
Submission of draft inception report	Submission of report for comments	8 Mar
Comments from intended users	Comments on the Draft inception report from the Embassy and AWEN.	15 Mar
Inception meeting (virtual)	Discuss the Draft inception report. Participants: Embassy of Sweden and Evaluation Team.	16 Mar
Final inception report	Submission of final inception report.	18 Mar
Approval of Final inception report		22 Mar
<b>Data collection and analysis</b>		
Practical preparations for visits and interviews	Organizing and preparing for interviews and discussions in Albania	22 - 23 Mar
Continued desk review	Continued review of documentation	22 Mar-23 Apr
Interviews and focus group discussions	Face-to-face and, if necessary, virtual interviews with key informants.	24 Mar-1 Apr
Analysis and follow-up interviews	Telephone and online follow-up interviews	1-19 Apr
Debriefing and validation workshop (virtual)	Debriefing and discussion of evaluation findings, emerging conclusions and suggested recommendations. Participants: Embassy of Sweden and Evaluation Team	22 Apr
<b>Reporting and dissemination</b>		
Analysis and preparation of draft report, including QA	The draft report will be prepared by the ET and go through a QA process before being submitted to the Embassy.	25 Apr-8 May
Submission of draft report		9 May
Comment period	Period for intended users to review and comment on the draft report	9-16 May
Preparation of final report	The final version of the report will be prepared taking into account comments received from the intended users of the evaluation.	17-24 May
Submission of final report		24 May

## 5 Quality assurance

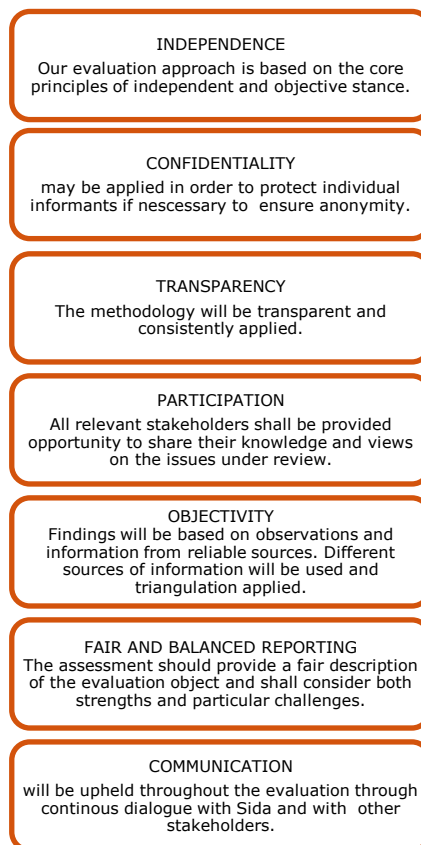
Quality evaluation is, fundamentally, adherence to agreed-upon standards. Our integrated **Quality Management System (QMS)** consists of key internal FCG Sweden policies, including a FCG Sweden Quality Policy, the FCG Sweden Quality Manual, the Project Management Manual and the FCG Sweden Code of Conduct. The QMS is based on the requirements of **SS-EN ISO 9001:2015** and is reviewed annually by an auditor.

Specifically for evaluation services, we have established and continuously elaborated on an **Evaluation Quality Assurance System**, which draws on the *OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards* and applies a multi-dimensional perspective, with due consideration taken to the methodological; the utilisation; and the human resources perspectives. This system includes i) our core principles (see picture); ii) a number of guiding documents on evaluation quality; iii) documented routines for monitoring quality and quality assurance procedures throughout all services provided; and iv) standardised templates for inception and final evaluation reports, structured in accordance with the OECD/DAC Standards with detailed instructions included under each section.

### 5.1 Quality reviews

Each evaluation assignment under this Framework Agreement will undergo an adapted quality review at **three specific occasions** during the design and implementation process. These reviews will be done using specifically developed quality assurance checklists:

1. **A quality review ahead of implementation:** This quality review takes place in the **design phase** of an evaluation, to ensure that the evaluation will be implemented with an integrated HRBA and gender equality perspective, as well as with environmental considerations. It will also encompass verification that the evaluation is designed with an utilisation focus, using the Utilisation-Focused Evaluation (U-FE) checklist.
2. **A quality review of the draft inception report:** Reviewing the draft inception report against the **inception report checklist** will ensure that any potential gaps or high risk areas that might jeopardise the quality of the final product are identified. This review will also ensure that the evaluation process is **utilisation-focused**<sup>4</sup> and that a **HRBA and a gender perspective** as well as **environmental considerations** (where appropriate) will be applied throughout the implementation of an evaluation.



<sup>4</sup> Quinn Patton, M, *Utilisation-Focused Evaluation (U-FE) Checklist*, (2013)

3. **A quality review of the draft evaluation report:** Reviewing the draft final report against this **evaluation report checklist** will highlight areas of improvement required in relation the more technical subject matter of the evaluation. Also, it will ensure that the report is **utilisation-focused** and that a **HRBA and a gender perspective** are applied as well as that **environmental considerations** (where appropriate) have been made.

All aspects (OECD/DAC Quality Standards, UF-E, HRBA, GE, Environment and other ethics) considered in the quality assurance of the evaluation process and product was summarised in the table in Annex 2 in the previously submitted Technical Proposal.

## 5.2 Roles and responsibilities in the quality assurance process

The Team Leader of the assignment, the designated Evaluation Manager and the Quality Assurance Expert have well-defined responsibilities in ensuring the quality of an evaluation process and product:

Role		Responsibilities
Team Leader (TL)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepares the call-off response in collaboration with the designated Evaluation Manager. The <b>check-list for reviewing the planned evaluation, ahead of implementation</b> is used to verify that the planned evaluation adhere to agreed-upon standards.</li> <li>• Timely submits all agreed deliverables to the appointed Quality Assurance (QA) Expert for quality review.</li> <li>• Takes action on all matters raised by the QA Expert.</li> </ul>
Evaluation Manager (EM)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinates the QA process and ensures that deadlines are kept.</li> <li>• Ensures that the TL responds to all matters raised by the QA Expert.</li> </ul>
Quality Assurance Expert (QAE)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides advice and comments throughout the evaluation process.</li> <li>• As a new approach introduced for this Framework Agreement, the <b>QAE always participates in the start-up meeting with Sida</b> (by Skype if physical attendance is not possible), together with the TL and the EM.</li> <li>• Reviews the draft inception report against the <b>inception report checklist</b> before submission to Sida.</li> <li>• Reviews the draft report against the <b>Final report checklist</b> before submission to Sida.</li> </ul>

## 6 Work plan

Work plan	Total Workdays	Team					Wno.	Feb					March					April					May				
		Name Henrik Alffram (TL)	Mirela Jonuzaj (TM1)	Visare Gorani (TM2)	Susan Tamondong (QAE)	Evelina Eriksson (PM/EM)		Dates	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
<b>Inception Phase</b>																											
Start-up meeting (virtual)	2,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5				17th Feb																	
Initial desk review	4	2	1	1																							
Preparation of Draft Inception Report	4	2	1	1																							
QA of Draft Inception Report	1				1																						
<b>Submission of Draft Inception Report</b>	1	0,5				0,5						8th March															
Comments on Draft Inception Report	0												15th March														
Inception Meeting (virtual)	2	0,5	0,5	0,5		0,5							16th March														
Finalisation and <b>Submission of Final Inception Report</b>	1	0,5				0,5							18th March														
Approval of Final inception report	0													21st March													
<b>Data Collection &amp; Analysis Phase</b>																											
Continued desk review	3	1	1	1																							
Practical preparations for visits and interviews	2	1	0,5	0,5																							
Interviews and focus group discussions	22	8	7	7																							
Analysis and follow-up interviews	4	2	1	1																							
Debriefing and validation workshop	2	0,5	0,5	0,5		0,5																		20th April			
<b>Reporting Phase</b>																											
Analysis and preparation of Draft Final Report	6,5	4,5	1	1																							
QA of Draft Evaluation Report	1				1																						
Submission of <b>Draft Evaluation Report</b>	1	0,5				0,5																			9th May		
Comments on Draft Evaluation Report	0																									16th May	
Finalisation and <b>Submission of Final Evaluation Report</b>	1	0,5				0,5																				24th May	
<b>Total number of work days</b>	58	24	14	14	2,5	3,5																					

## Annex 1: Documentation

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AWEN, Albania. Project applications from members 2021

AWEN, Albania. Annual reports from members 2021

AWEN, Albania. List of Applicants for Emergency grants 2021

AWEN, Albania. List of 4 winning projects from Emergency grants 2021

AWEN, Project Proposal AWEN, 2019-2021

AWEN, Project Proposal AWEN, 2022

AWEN, Updated budget AWEN 2022

AWEN, Narrative reports AWEN 2019,2020

AWEN, Activity Plan and Timeline 2022

AWEN, Annex 1, RBM, 2019-2021

AWEN, Annex 2, Staff roles and responsibilities

AWEN, Annex 3, Timeline for implementation

AWEN, Annex 4, Risks and management strategies

AWEN, Annex 5, Detailed Budget AWEN 2019 – 2021

AWEN, Annual Reporting 2020-Narrative report assessment

AWEN, Public Outreach plan AWEN 2022

AWEN, Strategic plan AWEN 2022-2027

Embassy of Sweden, Albania. Agreement between Embassy and AWEN and two amendments

Embassy of Sweden, Albania. Experience of Sida direct support to Albanian organisations

European Union, Gender Action Plan III - 2021-2025. Country Level Implementation Plan - CLIP Albania  
EU Delegation Albania 2021

Embassy of Sweden, Albania. Conclusion on Performance - Assessment of performance 1st Year

Embassy of Sweden, Albania. Completion Memo

Kocaqi, Monika et al., Albania Country Gender Equality Brief 2020. UN Women 2020

Kuci, Liri, Resisting "the same old story": violence, rape and the urgent need of feminism in Albania,  
Lefteast, 2022

Kvinna till Kvinna, Women's Rights in Western Balkans, 2020

Ljungman, Cecilia, Evaluation of Swedish Civil Society Support in Albania, NIRAS Sweden, 2018

Ministria E Shendetesise Dhe Mbrojtjes Sociale, National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2030, 2021

United Nations Albania, Advancing gender Equality and the Empowerment of all women and girls in  
Albania-A position Paper by UN in Albania 2021



## Annex 2: Potential interviewees

Name	Position	Institution/organisation
<b>Embassy of Sweden</b>		
Rezarta Katuci	Programme Officer	Embassy of Sweden
<b>AWEN Staff</b>		
Ines Leskaj	Executive Director	AWEN
Adena Vangjeli	Project Coordinator	AWEN
<b>Former AWEN staff</b>		
Irena Shtraza	Project Coordinator	UN Women Albania
<b>AWEN External Board members</b>		
Delina Fico	Board Member	AWEN
Mihallaq Qirjo	Board Member	AWEN
Valbona Sulçe	Board Member	AWEN
<b>Awen member organizations</b>		
Mirela Arqimandriti	Executive Director	Gender Alliance for Development Centre
Bajana Cevoli	Executive Director	"Association of Women and Girls with Social Problems"
Afroviti Gusho	Executive Director	"Me the Woman"
Sidorela Horeshka	Executive Director	"Agritra Vision"
Trendelina Boriçi	Executive Director	"Woman to Woman"
Shpresa Banja	Executive Director	"Woman's Forum"
Brikena Puka	Executive Director	"The Psycho – Social Centre "Vatra"
Entela Gjoni	Executive Director	"Jona" Association
Iris Luarasi	Executive Director	"Counseling Line for Girls and Women"
Aurela Anastasi	Executive Director	"Center for Civic and Legal Initiatives"
<b>Central and local governmental institutions</b>		
Brunilda Dervishaj	Gender focal point	Ministry of Health and Social Protection
Romina Kuko	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Interior (Mol)
Iris Aliaj	Counselor	Ministry of Justice
Eglantina Gjermeni	Former Director of GADC, former head of Parliamentary sub commission on women and gender	Head of the Albanian Mission to OSCE in Vienna.
Anisa Ruseti	Deputy Mayor	Tirana Municipality
Rezarta Andoni	Local Coordinator for Domestic Violence	Vlora Municipality
Gjinovefa Xhori	Specialist	Regional Employment Office Vlore
Entela Billa	Child protection worker	Dibra Municipality -Child Protection Unit
Valbona Tula	Director	Shkodra Municipality- Regional State Social services

Evaluation of Sida Support to Albanian Women Empowerment Network (AWEN)

Fatbardha Menhalla	Coordinator for Juveniles and Domestic Violence	Elbasan Municipality- Police Directorate
Ledio Sulkuqi	Chancellor of Court	Elbasan District
Arbi Basho	Local Coordinator for Gender Equality and Domestic Violence	Pogradec Municipality
Emanuela Cetri	Local Coordinator for Gender Equality and Domestic Violence	Saranda Municipality
Etleva Sheshi	Assistant Commissioner- People's Advocate Institution	Ombudsman
<b>Other donors, INGOs, media and others</b>		
Estela Bulku Irena Shtraza	Head of Programme Unit Project Coordinator	UN Women
Edlira Papavangjeli	Programme Coordinator UN Joint Programme End Violence against funded by Sida and the cooperation with WCSOs funded by UNDP	UNDP
Angelina Pistoli	Public Engagement Advisor	US Embassy
Enkelejda Bregu	Program Manager	EU Delegation
Elona Fana	Programme Officer	Austrian Development Agency
Vasilika Laci	Programme Officer	British Embassy
Sihana Nebiu	Head of Democratization Dept.	OSCE
Egla Mitre	Political Officer	Netherlands Embassy
Nicole Farnsworth	Consultant	Kosovo Women Network/Research/Monitoring
Plejada Gugashi	Programme Manager	Olof Palme International Center
Anca Ciupa	CoE consultant and member of WAVE Network	Wave Network
Maja Stajcic	Senior Programme Officer	Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation
Kristina Voko	Executive Director	BIRN Albania
Gresa Hasa	Human rights Activist	
Liri Kuci		SHOTA
Xheni Karaj	Executive Director	Aleanca LGBT
Entenela Ndrevataj	Journalist/Activist	Citizens Channels
Edlira Cepani	National Coordinator	Women's Network Equality in Decision Making (EDM)- Rrjeti i Grave Barazi në Vendimmarrje
Alma Katragjini	Specialist	General Police Directorate / Public Relations and Media
<b>End beneficiaries</b>		
Women and girls, boys and men during field visits (to be identified)		

## Annex 3: Stakeholder mapping

Stakeholder	Category (relating to project)	Interests (in evaluation)	Role (in evaluation)
<b>Commissioner</b>			
Embassy of Sweden	Donor	Programme and strategy development	Commissioner, informant, beneficiary
<b>Implementing organization and its network members</b>			
AWEN staff	Implementer, direct beneficiary	Programme and strategy development	Beneficiary, informant
Former AWEN staff	External	Unknown	Informant
AWEN member organizations	Beneficiary	Direct	Beneficiary, informant
Former representatives of member organizations	External	Unknown	Informants
CSOs awarded advocacy grants	Beneficiary	Direct	Beneficiary
AWEN external board members	Beneficiary	Direct	Informants
<b>National and local level duty bearers</b>			
Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MHSP)	Duty bearer, policy maker	Indirect	Informant
Ministry of Interior (Moi)	Duty bearer, policy maker	Indirect	Informant
Ministry of Justice (MoJ)- Free Legal Aid Directory	Duty bearer, policy maker	Indirect	Informant
Former Head of Parliamentary sub commission on women and gender	External	Indirect	Informant
Ombudsman	Duty bearer	Indirect	Informant
Tirana Municipality	Duty bearer	Indirect	Informant
Durres Municipality-Directorate of Social Services	Duty bearer	Indirect	Informant
Vlora Municipality -Regional Employment Office	Duty bearer	Indirect	Informant
Dibra Municipality -Child Protection Unit	Duty bearer	Indirect	Informant
Shkodra Municipality- Regional State Social services	Duty bearer	Indirect	Informant
Elbasan Municipality- Coordinator for Juveniles and Domestic Violence in Police Directorate	Duty bearer	Indirect	Informant
Elbasan District -Chancellor of Court	Duty bearer	Indirect	Informant
Pogradec Municipality- Local Coordinator for Gender Equality and Domestic Violence	Duty bearer	Indirect	Informant
Saranda Municipality- Local Coordinator for Gender Equality and Domestic Violence	Duty bearer	Indirect	Informant

<b>Other donors and international agencies</b>			
UN Women	Donor	Planning and prioritizing	Informant
UNDP –UN Joint Programme End Violence against Women	External	Indirect	Informant
US Embassy-Public Engagement Advisor	External	Indirect	Informant
EU Delegation	External	Indirect	Informant
Austrian Development Agency- Programme Officer	External	Indirect	Informant
British Embassy	External	Indirect	Informant
OSCE - Democratization Dept	External	Indirect	Informant
Netherlands Embassy	External	Indirect	Informant
Kosovo Women Network/Research/Monitoring Consultant	External	Indirect	Informants
Olof Palme International Center	External	Indirect	Informants
Wave Network	External	Indirect	Informants
Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation	External	Indirect	Informants
<b>Other CSOs, media and activists</b>			
BIRN Albania	External	Indirect	Informant
Aleanca LGBT	External	Indirect	Informant
Citizens Channels - Journalist/Activist	External	Indirect/ Journalist/Activist	Informant
Women's Network Equality in Decision Making (EDM)- Rrjeti i Grave Barazi në Vendimmarrje	External	Indirect	Informant
Human rights Activists	External	Indirect	Informant

## Annex 4: Draft survey for AWEN member organisations and CSO partners

Legend: VS=Very satisfactory; S=Satisfactory; SS=Somewhat satisfactory; NS=Not Satisfactory; HE=High extent, ME=Moderate extent; LE=Low extent and NA=Not at all

General information	Organisation:	Date			
<p>1. You are (mark all that are applicable): A member organisation of the AWEN <input type="checkbox"/>; <input type="checkbox"/> A CSO beneficiary of AWEN's Emerging Advocacy Grants <input type="checkbox"/>; Other <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2. Do you represent/defend: The interests and rights of all women in Albania<input type="checkbox"/>; The interests and rights of GBV survivors<input type="checkbox"/>; The specific interests and rights of minority women<input type="checkbox"/>;The specific interests and rights of women with disabilities <input type="checkbox"/></p>					
I. Relevance		VS/HE	S/ME	SS/LE	NS/NA
Considering the current women's rights needs in Albania, how relevant is AWEN for its members?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Considering the current women's rights needs in Albania, how relevant is AWEN for other civil society organizations working on women's rights?					
Considering the current women's rights needs in Albania, how relevant is AWEN for government					

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agencies working on women's rights related issues?					
To what extent has AWEN contributed to shaping women's rights priorities relating to Domestic & Gender-based Violence?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To what extent has AWEN contributed to shaping women's rights priorities relating to socio-economic rights and participation of women and girls?					
To what extent has AWEN contributed to shaping women's rights priorities relating to representation of women and girls in political life?					
<b>II. Coherence</b>		<b>VS</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>NS</b>
To what extent has AWEN coordinated effectively with its members organizations?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To what extent has AWEN coordinated effectively with other stakeholders (than its members)?					
<b>III. Effectiveness</b>		<b>VS</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>NS</b>
To what extent has AWEN contributed to strengthening of laws and other public policies concerning women's rights?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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To what extent has AWEN contributed to the protection and empowerment of victim's of gender based violence and survivors of human trafficking?					
<b>IV. Efficiency</b>		<b>VS</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>NS</b>
Is the AWEN management team adequately resourced to effectively carry our its mandate?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>VI. Sustainability</b>		<b>VS</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>NS</b>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How sustainable are the changes achieved for rightsholders benefitting from the intervention?					
How sustainable are the changes achived in terms of AWEN's own organizational capacity?					
<b>VII. Other questions</b>		<b>VS</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>NS</b>
Is AWEN operating in a transparent fashion?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has AWEN a well-functioning democratic structure?					

## Annex 5: Evaluation matrix

The evaluation matrix below lists the OECD-DAC criteria and the revised evaluation questions linked to these criteria. We have developed sub-questions in order to provide further guidance as to the focus of data collection and analysis, and reflected on the data sources for each evaluation question.

Table 3: Evaluation Matrix

Criteria	EQ (as suggested by ETT)	Sub-questions/issues for inquiry	Data sources
<b>Relevance</b>	To what extent has the programme addressed relevant needs in the current country context? Have new, more relevant needs emerged? If so, to what extent has the intervention addressed them?	What are the primary needs and opportunities in relation to women's rights?  To what extent is AWEN focusing on these primary needs and opportunities?  To what extent have needs and opportunities changed over the past five year?  To what extent has AWEN adapted to changing needs and opportunities, if any, and ensured continued relevance?	Document review to identify needs addressed. Emerging needs, relevance of addressed needs and adaptability determined through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and survey.
	How relevant is the programme to its target groups? How relevant is the intervention for addressing needs and opportunities for women rights defenders in Albania?	How relevant is the intervention for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AWEN's members</li> <li>- Other CSOs working on women's rights</li> <li>- Relevant government authorities</li> </ul>	KIIs and survey.
	To what extent has the intervention contributed to shaping women's rights priorities in Albania?	To what extent has it shaped priorities relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Domestic &amp; Gender-based Violence</li> <li>- Socio-economic rights and participation of women and girls</li> <li>- Property rights of women and girls</li> <li>- Representation of women and girls in political life</li> </ul>	Document review to identify needs addressed. KIIs, document review and survey to determine shaping of priorities.



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<b>Coherence</b>	To what extent has the intervention's design and implementation considered the work of other actors working in the same area? How well does the intervention fit with other Sida funded interventions addressing similar challenges, including interventions implemented by AWEN members?	<p>To what extent did AWEN consult with other actors in the design of its strategy?</p> <p>To what is AWEN reinforcing, complementing or duplicating the work of other Sida funded interventions focusing on similar issues?</p> <p>To what extent is AWEN reinforcing, complementing or duplicating the work of its members?</p>	Document review, KIIs and survey.
	To what extent has AWEN coordinated effectively and created synergies in its work?	<p>In implementation of activities and campaigns, to what extent and how effectively does AWEN coordinate and cooperate with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Member organizations;</li> <li>- Other CSOs working in the same field;</li> <li>- Government authorities.</li> </ul>	Document review, KIIs and survey.
<b>Effectiveness</b>	To what extent has the intervention attained, or is expected to attain, its outcome level results. Are there any differential results across groups?	<p>To what extent has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-AWEN increasingly protected and promoted women's human rights through improvement and implementation of policies and legal framework at national and local level. (Outcome 1)</li> <li>-AWEN and members strengthened institutional/organizational capacities by becoming more democratic, accountable, independent, sustainable and capable to promote and protect women human rights. (Outcome 2)</li> <li>-Vulnerable groups of girls and women, especially gender based violence and trafficking survivors are protected and empowered. (Outcome 3)</li> </ul> <p>Which groups have primarily benefitted from progress relating to outcome 1?</p>	Document review with a focus on the AWEN's and its members own monitoring data, KIIs and survey.

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		<p>Which members have particularly benefitted from progress relating to outcome 2?</p> <p>Which vulnerable groups of girls and women have benefitted from progress relating to outcome 3? Which groups have not benefitted?</p>	
	<p>Has the M&amp;E system delivered robust and useful information that could be used to assess progress towards outcomes and contribute to learning?</p>	<p>Has the M&amp;E system been applied as intended?</p> <p>What is the relevance and quality of the data collected?</p> <p>To what extent has the M&amp;E system provided learning and guided implementation of the intervention?</p> <p>When it comes to the focus of the M&amp;E system, are there differences between groups?</p>	<p>Review of AWEN's own monitoring data, monitoring data from member organizations and KIIs.</p>
<b>Impact</b>	<p>To what extent has the intervention generated, or is expected to generate, significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, high-level effects?</p>	<p>Women human rights are increasingly protected, promoted and respected in Albania.</p> <p>What are the intended or unintended high level effects relating to the protection, promotion and respect for women's rights, taking into consideration possible differences between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- local and central level;</li> <li>- thematic focus areas; and</li> <li>- target groups?</li> </ul>	<p>Review of AWEN's own monitoring data and data from KIIs and the literature review.</p>
<b>Efficiency</b>	<p>To what extent has the intervention delivered, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way?</p>	<p>Note: The assessment will not focus on AWEN but on two of its supported member organizations.</p> <p>Is the programme on budget?</p> <p>Have activities been carried out on time?</p>	<p>KIIs and an assessment of budgets, narrative and financial reporting and workplans. Costs will be compared with those of other organizations.</p>

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		<p>Are management costs reasonable (assessing for instance overall cost for managing the programme, salary levels; office rent)?</p> <p>Are activities cost-effective (assessing for instance cost per participant in workshops and trainings)?</p>	
	<p>Is the AWEN management team adequately resourced to enable the achievement of desired outcomes?</p>	<p>Has the management team sufficient human resources?</p> <p>Has the management team relevant and sufficient thematic capacity in the field of women’s rights?</p> <p>Has the management team sufficient financial management capacity?</p> <p>Has the management team appropriate systems and sufficient capacity for sub-granting?</p> <p>Is there any organisational/skill gap that impedes AWEN’s performance?</p> <p>If the team is not adequately resourced, how can it be enabled?</p>	<p>Document review and KIIs.</p>
<p><b>Sustainability</b></p>	<p>To what extent will the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue?</p>	<p>To what extent will the net benefits of the intervention continue taking into consideration possible differences between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- local and central level;</li> <li>- thematic focus areas; and</li> <li>- target groups.</li> </ul> <p>What may be the challenges to AWEN’s and members sustainability at various levels: individual, organizational and financial?</p> <p>What are the factors that can contribute to increase the intervention’s sustainability?</p>	<p>Document review and KIIs.</p>

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<p><b>Other issues</b></p>	<p>Has the intervention contributed to poverty reduction? Which dimensions of poverty were addressed by the intervention?</p>	<p>To what extent has the intervention contributed to reduce poverty in the following dimensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resources</li> <li>- Opportunities and choice</li> <li>- Power and voice</li> <li>- Human security</li> </ul>	<p>Document review and KIIs.</p>
	<p>Has the intervention been implemented in a transparent fashion? Are there accountability mechanisms in the intervention? How do they work at the level of member organisations of AWEN?</p>	<p>How well is AWEN’s democratic organizational structure perceived to be working in practice?</p> <p>To what extent is the board providing strategic guidance and oversight?</p> <p>To what extent is there effective division of responsibilities and decision-making powers between the board and the secretariat?</p> <p>To what extent do AWEN members perceive that they “own” AWEN and its strategy/programme?</p> <p>To what extent have AWEN’s members been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- involved in developing the strategy?</li> <li>- consulted on and involved in implementation of the strategy?</li> <li>- involved in following up/evaluating the strategy?</li> </ul> <p>To what extent is AWEN and its members making information about their operations available to stakeholders and the general public?</p> <p>What mechanisms have AWEN and its members in place to ensure that the views of target groups/end-beneficiaries are considered in project and activity design and implementation?</p>	<p>Document review and KIIs with focus on AWEN staff members and members organizations.</p>

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		Are there whistle blower mechanisms in place?	
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