

**UNDEF**



The United Nations  
Democracy Fund

**PROVISION FOR POST PROJECT EVALUATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS  
DEMOCRACY FUND  
Contract NO.PD:C0110/10**

**EVALUATION REPORT**



**UDF-RAP-08-248 – Engendering democratic governance in South Asia  
(Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan)**

**Date: 30 May 2012**

**Acknowledgements**

The evaluators would like to thank all those who made themselves available for interview, in particular the staff of SAP-International, SAP-Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan, and the women and men committed to moving towards gender equity in political processes in South Asia.

**Disclaimer**

The views expressed in this report are those of the evaluators. They do not represent those of UNDEF nor of any of the institutions referred to in the report.

**Authors**

This report was written by June Kane and Parshuram Upadhyay.

Landis MacKellar provided editorial and methodological advice and quality assurance with the support of Aurélie Ferreira, Evaluation Manager. Eric Tourres was Project Director at Transtec.

# Table of Contents

- I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..... 1**
- I. INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT ..... 5**
  - i. The project and evaluation objectives ..... 5
  - ii. Evaluation methodology ..... 5
  - iii. Development context..... 5
- II. PROJECT STRATEGY ..... 8**
  - i. Project approach and strategy ..... 8
  - ii. Logical framework..... 8
- III. EQ ANSWERS / FINDINGS ..... 9**
  - i. Relevance ..... 9
  - ii. Effectiveness ..... 12
  - iii. Efficiency ..... 14
  - iv. Impact ..... 14
  - v. Sustainability ..... 16
  - vi. UNDEF value-added ..... 18
- IV. CONCLUSIONS ..... 19**
- VI. RECOMMENDATIONS ..... 20**
  
- ANNEX 1: EVALUATION QUESTIONS ..... 21**
- ANNEX 2: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED ..... 22**
- ANNEX 3: PEOPLE INTERVIEWED ..... 23**



## I. Executive Summary

### i. Project Data

South Asia Partnership International (SAP-I) coordinated a project called *Engendering democratic governance in South Asia*, from 1 October 2009 to 30 September 2011. SAP-I had three implementing partners which were SAP national organizations in Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan. UNDEF's contribution amounted to USD345,000 (USD350,000 granted but USD5,000 under-spent), including USD25,000 for UNDEF monitoring and evaluation.

The overall objective of the project was “to contribute to an enabling environment for democratic governance and women’s participation in political decision-making processes in South Asia by developing an informed civil society and by fostering dialogue and discourse through watch groups”. The project aimed to enhance meaningful and equal participation of women in democratic governance by addressing the issues of gender-based exclusion, violence and discriminatory practices in politics.

To achieve this, it had two central strategies: the project would establish National Democracy Watch Groups (NDWGs) and Local Watch Groups (LWGs) in all three countries to collect evidence-based information and foster dialogue and discussion on gender-sensitive democratic culture and practices; and develop an informed civil society that would promote gender-sensitive practices to enhance the participation of women in democratic governance through knowledge sharing and debate in a series of local, national and regional meetings. The project additionally included a component focusing on sensitizing the media to break down gender stereotypes and feeding them story ideas, interviews and profiles as a basis for features and radio debates.

### ii. Evaluation questions

Evaluation questions relating to **relevance** focused on the timeliness of the project activities in relation to national and regional debate and events relating to women’s participation in governance (for example discussions on a constitution in Nepal, the creation of an Election Commission in Bangladesh), and the nature of the groups established, since they would be key to ensuring the impact of the project. Many interviewees commented on the importance of the project in relation to national debate on women’s role in government at both national and local levels, and on the credibility the grantee had built in this area. It was largely as a result of this strong reputation that the project was able to mobilize participants at the highest levels at local, national and regional levels.

In exploring the project’s **effectiveness**, it was noted that the project exceeded its aims, with all events taking place as planned. The project reached a significant number of people: the NDWGs attracted 36 high-profile members; the LWGs included 129 key people; 21 national meetings brought together 982 key players and the regional meeting was attended by 153 people. Seventeen advocacy meetings were held to hand over a charter that was adopted by the regional conference, and 103 journalists were trained, reaching out through the stories they subsequently developed and through radio debates to listeners, readers and viewers across the three countries.

Additionally, There were a number of unplanned outputs: a daily conference newsletter was published at the Lahore and Kathmandu national workshops; 300 posters were produced, with English, Nepali, Bangla and Urdu text; SAP-I wrote and published a book covering the issues and challenges identified at the regional conference: *Engendering democratic governance in South Asia*; and SAP-Nepal wrote and published a compilation of case

studies, *Incidents that changed the course of women politicians*. At the regional conference, representatives from Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and India indicated that they wished to carry the project's outputs forward in their countries.

The evaluators note that the budget was acquitted and an underspend of USD5,000 was notified to UNDEF but that the grantee was obliged to cover the costs of translation for the various outputs (posters, brochures, charter) because it had underestimated the costs. The evaluators also questioned the large number of meetings held during the project. All together, there were 22 meetings over 24 months -- variously called conferences, interactions, discourses and workshops – at local, national and regional levels. The grantee agreed that these were both time- and resource-consuming, although all were carried out as planned and were well received. The evaluators suggested, and the grantee agreed, that it would have been possible to reduce the number of meetings to free up funds for other purposes, including covering the underestimated translation costs (with UNDEF's approval).

Many of the participants interviewed responded favourably to questions relating to the **impact** of the project. It became clear that the strategic positioning of the members of the NDWGs and LWGs in all three countries made positive impact more likely, since they had access to key decision makers and positions of influence. Senior members of government (both national and local), democratic institutions such as electoral commissions and senior figures in the NGO and media worlds participated in the various meetings and/or groups, embedding the information provided and the debate into key areas of governance and civil society.

Impact was also assured through the interaction of three key components of the project: the LWGs and local-level meetings delivered evidence and data on the status of women in grassroots democratic institutions; this was fed to the NWDGs who complemented it with data and analysis of the situation in national politics and democratic institutions. This provided a significant evidence-based advocacy platform, which was then reinforced and supplemented by newspaper features, radio profiles and debates, generated by the media people who had gone through the training.

The Gender-sensitive Democratic Charter negotiated at the regional conference had a short-term impact and opened the doors to key decision makers at national level and at regional level in the form of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, SAARC. However when the evaluators asked questions about how the charter is being used four months after the end of the project, the answers were equivocal, with some interviewees not remembering the charter even though they had signed it. Medium- to long-term impact is thus not guaranteed.

The evaluators asked all those interviewed whether they were still engaged in activities deriving from the project and/or whether the outputs and outcomes of the project were still being used in their work. Without exception, the NWDG and LWG members interviewed indicated an ongoing commitment not only to the issue but to the work of the watch groups, and expressed some frustration that they had slowed down or not met at all since the project ended. Clearly there is great potential for **sustainability** of the groups.

Similarly, the journalists interviewed said that the project had equipped them to search out and develop stories on women's issues and to look for the 'women's angle' in political and social news.

### ***iii. Conclusions***

- The evaluators concluded that the Engendering democratic governance in South Asia ***project was timely, well planned and implemented and designed from the***

**outset to build strong groups of people at local and national levels**, equipped with valuable information, and prepared to advocate strongly in key agencies.

- **The regional components of the project were limited.** The evaluators concluded that there **remain untapped regional synergies that would add value** to the project's outcomes. In particular, there is great potential for **a regional network to be created bringing together the members of NDWGs** in the three countries. **Journalists, too, indicated an interest in developing a regional network of media professionals** interested in women's issues and participation in government.

- **The media training was well received and following this up by helping journalists to find good stories was an intelligent move.** There is clearly continuing interest from journalists in the issue of women in democratic governance, and this might be nurtured by feeding story ideas, interviewees and profiles to the journalists.

- However, journalists are often limited by the unenlightened views of their sub-editors, editors, producers and other gatekeepers. **Including these gatekeepers in media training would contribute to an environment in which journalists' stories are more likely to be accepted for publication or broadcast.**

- **The Charter was a useful short-term tool for advocacy, particularly at regional level, however it is less likely to be effective in the longer-term** and needs to be reviewed to link it to international commitments such as CEDAW and national plans of action that already exist.

- Since the project was considered a pilot action, **it seems evident that, if finances permit, the actions could now be adapted and replicated in more regions** of Bangladesh, Pakistan and/or Nepal, or even other countries in South Asia where SAP-I is active, taking into account the lessons learned.

- **The evaluators noted that not all the funds were used**, and that a **timely conversation with UNDEF**, in accordance with contractual timelines, **might have allowed the unspent grant to be reallocated** for approved project activity such as translation costs.

- In hindsight, the **project design could have included fewer meetings and funds could have been redirected** to widening the geographical test sites of the LWG or perhaps to train more journalists and potentially some gatekeepers.

- The evaluators concluded that **an opportunity was missed, for both UNDEF and the grantee, when the milestone monitoring exercises** (particularly the first) **were not seen as an occasion for working with the grantee to begin to learn preliminary lessons**, reinforce areas of the project that could benefit from an 'outside' eye and make any other necessary adjustments designed to improve the project's likelihood of success.

#### **iv. Recommendations**

##### **For SAP-I and national partners**

- i. There remains considerable potential for action in the "remnants" of the EDG project, and SAP-I and national partners may wish to consider some follow-up activity* (funds permitting) that might include: facilitating ongoing meetings of the NDWGs; feeding stories and leads to trained journalists; encouraging and helping the journalists to make contacts with their counterparts in the other SAP countries and forming a network. There is, for example, potential for a regional NDWG advocacy network to be created bringing together the members of NDWGs in the three countries. If funds are not immediately available for this, it might begin as a virtual network, hosted on the

<http://www.engenderingdemocracy.net> website or using the <http://dgroups.org/Community.asp> D-group facility. Alternatively, free on-line communities such as Google Groups or Facebook groups might be set up.

*ii.* If resources are available, **bringing together media gatekeepers (editors, sub-editors, executive producers and others in decision-making roles in the media) would further reinforce the mobilization of journalists** in the EDG project and increase the likelihood of their developing gender-sensitive coverage and women's stories. This should not be promoted as training but might perhaps take the form of a modest "retreat" at which information can be shared and trust built.

*iii.* Since the EDG project was considered in many ways to be a pilot, and has proved to be a successful one, **consider adapting the methodology to take into account lessons learned (for example, fewer meetings and more emphasis on local-level actions) and extend it to other countries where SAP works.** Alternatively or additionally, consider extending the LWG component into more regions of Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal.

*iv.* **When planning and then managing the budget, emphasis quality rather than quantity** – for example, fewer meetings but more support to the NDWGs or support to trained journalists through work with their gatekeepers. Review the budget monthly and, **when it becomes clear that there will be unspent funds, discuss immediately with the donor how these funds might be reallocated within the project** to reinforce other components of the project.

*v.* **In order to make the Charter more effective in the medium- to long-term, review it in the context of commitments already made by governments in the three countries:** international conventions, national plans of action and legislation. For example, although CEDAW is not region- or country-specific, it would be relevant to reference Article 7, which covers equality in political and public life, in Article 3 of the charter detailing the principles.

#### **For UNDEF**

*i.* **Consider reviewing the way milestone Monitoring and Evaluation exercises are commissioned and carried out in order to maximize the value of these exercises.** They have potential to add value to the project's outputs and outcomes and increase their impact and might be seen as a collaborative "preliminary lessons learned" opportunity rather than an audit/observation of a single event.



## I. Introduction and development context

### *i. The project and evaluation objectives*

The project *Engendering democratic governance in South Asia* ran with UNDEF support from 1 October 2009 to 30 September 2011. UNDEF's contribution amounted to USD345,000 (USD350,000 granted but USD5,000 under-spent), including USD25,000 for UNDEF monitoring and evaluation..

The grantee was South Asia Partnership International (SAP-I) based in Kathmandu, Nepal, which coordinated the project and implemented national actions in Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan through country offices of the partnership (SAP-Bangladesh, SAP-Nepal and SAP-Pakistan).

The overall objective of the project was “to contribute to an enabling environment for democratic governance and women’s participation in political decision-making processes in South Asia by developing an informed civil society and by fostering dialogue and discourse through watch groups”. In particular, the project aimed to enhance meaningful and equal participation of women in democratic governance by addressing the issues of gender-based exclusion, violence and discriminatory practices in politics.

Since this was a regional project, moreover, it was considered particularly important to identify the extent to which regional synergies were achieved by the project and whether the lessons learned might therefore be relevant in other countries of the region beyond the project’s target countries.

### *ii. Evaluation methodology*

An international expert designated to lead the evaluation prepared a preliminary planning note (Launch Note) in January 2012 based on a review of project documentation (see Annex 2). Meanwhile, the national expert began developing with the grantee a schedule of interviews that would take place during a joint mission to Nepal from 12 to 18 February 2012. Because resources did not permit visits to all three participating countries, Nepal was selected for the mission as the base of SAP-I, and interviews with participants in Bangladesh and Pakistan were undertaken by phone and e-mail.

In Nepal, the experts met with SAP-I, SAP-Nepal, women from the three major political parties, members of the national and local watch groups established (men and women activists, politicians and civil servants, lawyers, media representatives and NGO members), media trainees, participants in the national and regional meetings, and relevant staff of UNWOMEN, which had monitored the project at the request of UNDEF at the time of the second milestone event. Meetings comprised a mix of one-on-one interviews and group discussions and presentations. For local-level participants, staff and other participants in Bangladesh and Pakistan, the evaluators sent questions by email and followed up by phone. Information was collected, analysed and is presented in this report according to the DAC criteria of: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. The evaluation criteria are outlined in more detail in Annex 1.

### *iii. Development context*

South Asia is one of the few regions to introduce positive discriminatory policies and affirmative action in the form of quota systems and reserved positions for women in politics. These policies, however, have not translated into practice, with women’s participation as policy makers in political governance amounting to just 16.6 per cent across the region. In the three countries where this project was implemented, it is above the average: at 31

December 2010, the proportion of women elected to parliament in Nepal was 33.2%, in Pakistan 21% and in Bangladesh 18.6%.<sup>1</sup>

However in most South Asian countries, even when women do get selected or elected for political positions, they are frequently silenced by harassment, innuendo and scandal spread in order to damage their reputations, or by direct violence. Within political parties, women are rarely in the senior ranks and are frequently seen simply as "vote banks", selected in order to attract women's votes and expected to follow the party line without influencing debate. It is not surprising, therefore, that women do not put themselves forward for political positions nor that, when they do, their participation often has little impact on policies and practices.

The root causes of the disempowerment of women in political processes and democratic institutions in South Asia vary across the region, with religion playing a more significant part in some countries than in others, and the role of powerful families and historical power bases differing among countries. However the countries of South Asia also manifest many similarities that contribute to the low status of women and their exclusion not only from politics but from economic and social development. All the countries of South Asia, and in particular Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan, are patriarchal societies where women are considered second-class citizens, are excluded from education and land ownership, and have little say in how they live their lives. Girls are less likely to go to school than boys so that literacy and educational attainment rates for women are lower. In the 2011 Human Development Report's gender inequality index, Bangladesh ranks 112<sup>th</sup>, Pakistan 115<sup>th</sup> and Nepal 113<sup>th</sup>.

These inequalities have been recognized in moves to enshrine women's right to equal opportunity, including in the political sphere, in law. Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan have all ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). All the countries of South Asia accept the notion of equal rights for all citizens and have rejected discrimination on gender grounds in their constitutions and legal frameworks. Many have set quotas to ensure women's participation in parliaments, local authority bodies and village councils. However these quotas are rarely met and, as noted above, even when the *quantity* of women satisfies the quota, the *quality* of their participation in decision and policy making is compromised by fear and tokenism.

One positive sign, however, is that the issue of women's participation in democratic processes and institutions is a topic of national and regional debate in South Asia. Across the region, there are numerous non-governmental organizations (NGOs) lobbying and organizing to promote women's rights in general and women's political empowerment in particular. A number of high profile women – and men – have championed the cause of women's participation in democratic processes, however the low status of women is entrenched at grassroots level and is difficult to change in the short- or even medium-term.

Participation in policy and decision making is closely linked to economic and social development. The three countries of project activity are amongst the poorest in the world and rank low on the human development ladder.

In 2011, **Nepal** ranked 157<sup>th</sup> on the Human Development Index (HDI), the lowest of the South Asian countries.<sup>2</sup> The percentage of the population of 30.5 million in multidimensional poverty in 2011 was 64.7%, with 37.1% of the population living in severe poverty. Despite its low ranking, however, Nepal has shown rapid progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the last few years,<sup>3</sup> but inequalities between ethnic and social groups, the urban and rural population, men and women, and people from different geographic regions are still significant. Regional identity and geographical location are also

---

<sup>1</sup> Human Development Report Statistical Tables, 2011

<sup>2</sup> Human Development Reports, 2010, 2011

<sup>3</sup> National Planning Commission (NPC), *MDGs: Situation and necessity*, 2010

strong determinants of gender exclusion and unequal development outcomes. Ongoing political instability has also contributed to the low HDI ranking in recent years.

The country is going through a critical period in its history. With the end of the decade-long armed conflict in 2006, Nepal has been engaged in developing a new constitution through a 601-member democratically elected Constituent Assembly (CA) of which 197 members are women. Women CA members have established a women's caucus for a common voice among different political party members. This structure lobbies and advocates for women's rights and equal treatment in property, citizenship, and participation in constitution building.

The multidimensional poverty rate in **Bangladesh** is 57.8%, with 26.2% of the population of 150.5 million (2011) living in severe poverty. Bangladesh ranks 145<sup>th</sup> on the HDI. The 2011 population is officially given as 142.3 million, although many observers suggest that this is an underestimate; they point out, for example, that many Muslim men do not allow census-takers to count the women in their households in the census.

Bangladesh is a parliamentary democracy. Its elected parliament, the *Jatiyo Sangshad*, is headed by a female Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina. Social development indicators show poor health and education levels, considerably gendered, with literacy rates of 62% for men and 51% for women. Women have limited access to markets, productive services and local government and are subservient to men in many aspects of their lives -- the high profile women who have served the country at the highest levels have invariably come from affluent, high-ranking families with a long tradition of political leadership. Members of the parliament are elected by universal suffrage every five years. In May 2004, parliament passed a constitutional amendment to reintroduce quotas for women: seats in parliament were increased from 300 to 345, these 45 additional seats being reserved for women.

**Pakistan** has the highest population of the three countries being considered, with a total of 176.7 million people in 2011. It also has the highest GDP of the three, at 2,609, and the lowest percentage of population in multidimensional poverty (49.4%), but it has the lowest HDI ranking (146) and gender inequality ranking (145).

Pakistan is a federal parliamentary republic of four provinces and four territories. At local government level, there are three tiers of governance: the 113 districts each have an elected body, as do the *tehsils* and union councils that comprise each district. The central cabinet approved a quota of 10% reserved places for women in central superior services in 2006, replacing a quota of 5% across all levels of government. However in all spheres, women continue to face the discrimination and unequal treatment that is enshrined in the 1979 Hudood Ordinance enacted under the regime of Zia ul-Haq. Despite repeated statements about reviewing, amending or abolishing this ordinance, it continues to influence the courts and, more importantly, behaviour. Similarly, the 2006 Women's Protection Bill, which repeals some of the Hudood Ordinance clauses, has not been fully implemented and activists say that the reforms will be impossible to enforce.

Inequality is therefore firmly entrenched in the family, community and governance of Pakistan. The educational status of Pakistani women is among the lowest in the world. The school drop-out rate for girls is much higher than that for boys. This partly explains why the literacy rate for men is 69.3% while for women it is only 45.2%. In tribal areas, the female literacy rate is as low as 3%. Only 16% of Pakistani women are economically active. Domestic violence is prevalent and is not prohibited in law. Although women are allowed to inherit and own property, in practice few women achieve this.

## II. Project strategy

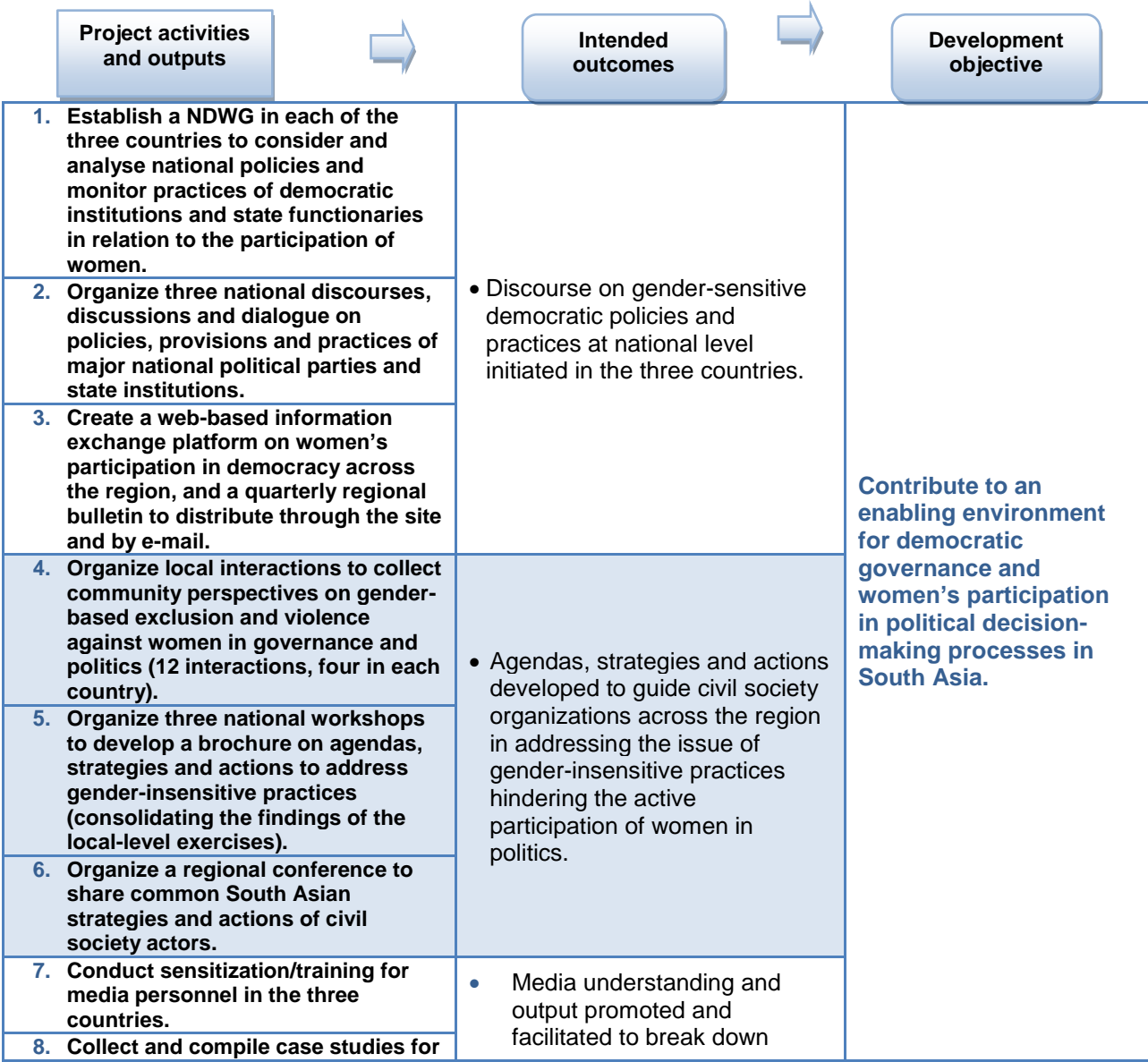
### i. Project approach and strategy

The project strategy was to:

- Establish National Democracy Watch Groups (NDWGs) in each of the three partner countries, in order to foster dialogue and discussion on gender-sensitive democratic culture and practices;
- Develop an informed civil society that would promote gender-sensitive practices to enhance the participation of women in democratic governance, and
- Achieve this by mobilizing women politicians, media personnel, academics, gender activists, NGO personnel and lawyers from local to national levels; sharing knowledge and information on gender-sensitive democratic cultures and practices; sensitizing media to break down gender stereotypes; and collaborating and networking with national and regional organizations with a view to promoting collective agendas and actions.

Activities and project outputs are summarized in the logical framework diagram that follows.

### ii. Logical framework



media coverage.	stereotypes of women in the media and focus on positive stories of women in politics.	
9. Publish and broadcast case studies.		
10. Organize radio debates.		
11. Organize three national interactions to share information on democratic practices within state functionaries and political institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information and knowledge shared to increase understanding and guide actions to increase the meaningful participation of women in politics, both national and regional.</li> </ul>	
12. Create information-sharing vehicle (D-group)		
13. Organize one regional interaction to develop common understanding of gender-sensitive democratic practices.		
14. Develop and publish a regional Democratic Charter focusing on quality participation of women, in English, Bangla, Urdu and Nepali.		
15. Organize meetings to share the charter with national governments, major political parties, SAARC and other stakeholders.		

### III. EQ answers / findings

#### i. Relevance

##### ▪ Time and place

The low participation of women in governance in South Asia exists at all levels, from national parliaments to local municipalities to school management committees. SAP-I had been working on issues relating to the status of women in democratic processes for a decade before beginning consultations with partner organizations in Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan with a view to developing the Engendering Democratic Governance (EDG) project. In particular, SAP-I had broken new ground in the area of violence against women in politics and, through this, had both established its credibility among a wide range of actors in political institutions and civil society, and had also acquired significant insight into the status of women in politics at local, party and national levels. One NDG member in Bangladesh gave SAP-I's good reputation as one of the key reasons why she became involved in the project.

The decision to focus on the establishment of National and Local Democracy Watch Groups, and to bring targeted actors together in a series of local, national and regional forums to share experiences about women in governance, was designed to establish and equip a dedicated group of people who were ideally positioned to use the understanding and knowledge gained to advocate within their own constituencies for change.

SAP-I considered that, although there were some differences in the root causes of low participation of women in governance between the countries of South Asia, these are outweighed by the many similarities: patriarchal societies, low educational status of women, traditional role of women as tending to the home not employed outside it, and the disempowerment of women in male-dominated decision-making bodies and through structural obstacles to their advancement.

It was therefore decided to implement the EDG project in three countries in parallel, using the same methodologies in each, with a number of regional events for cross-country sharing and learning. In Nepal in particular, however, the crucial importance of national debate on the

status of women in governance at a time of constitution-building and demobilization of armed wings of the CPN (Maoist) suggested that the time chosen was relevant to feed evidence-based information into the national debate and mobilize key actors to advocate for change.

SAP-I and its three country partners – SAP-Bangladesh, SAP-Nepal and SAP-Pakistan – saw the EDG project as a pilot, allowing lessons to be learned that might not only be replicable in other countries of the region, but might allow scaling-up of the project in the three original countries.

- ***Mobilizing the right people***

SAP-International's first activity was to organize a three-day consultative meeting with potential members of a NDWG in each country. The invitees to these meetings were carefully chosen: at national level, the political party members, members of the parliament or equivalent (in Nepal the CA), lawyers, human rights activists and media who attended are leaders in their fields, positioned to have access to policy- and decision-makers and recognized as already having a voice in areas such as human rights and women's issues. The invitees at the meetings chose people (both men and women) from among them who would become founder members of the NDWG – 14 members in Pakistan, 11 in Nepal and 11 in Bangladesh.

At the same time, Local Watch Groups (LWGs) were constituted at municipal (or equivalent) levels, with members chosen from similarly influential groups at local level. Four LWGs were constituted in each country: in Chittagong, Patuakhali, Rajshani and Sirajgonj in Bangladesh; in Peshawar, Quetta, Hyderabad and Faisalabad in Pakistan, and in Morang, Banke, Kaski and Makwanpur in Nepal (locations chosen in consultation with the NDWG). One or two representatives from the LWGs also attended the national group's meetings.

The link between the watch groups at local and national levels was strategic: while advocating for change and promoting debate at community level, the local members collected information and case studies at grassroots level and fed these into the national groups, whose role was to monitor and analyse the status of women in democratic processes at all levels and then use this information to support advocacy and lobbying within key democratic institutions. Specifically, also, the national groups were tasked with contributing to a number of local, national and regional forums at which information was shared, lessons were learned and the elements of a regional Charter were developed and adopted.

The personal profiles of the NDWG and LWG members, and SAP's ability to engage them in the project, was vital to securing the positioning and therefore influence that SAP aimed for. Similarly, the involvement of the media in all three countries was seen as fundamental to taking messages of gender equity in political representation to constituents at grassroots level. In short, while the high-profile advocates pushed for structural change within democratic institutions at all levels, the media helped to build a groundswell for change in communities of voters.

- ***Working on Community perspectives***

The LWGs were tasked specifically to gather community perspectives on the role of women in governance so that those advocating for change would have concrete examples to quote in support of their arguments. In Nepal, for example, one area to be addressed was the local government budget. By law, local budgets must allocate 35% of funds to target programmes including women's advancement, but this is almost never achieved. Providing evidence of this to those able to address the problem was seen as one way to promote real change.

Information gathered at grassroots level was also fed into a national workshop in each project country at which this information was supplemented by expert presentations. From these exchanges, a brochure was developed outlining the problem of low participation of women in democratic processes, the challenges women face and the national frameworks that set out targets and quotas. This brochure, translated into English, Bangla, Nepali and

Urdu, was widely distributed including to the media. Thus links were again strengthened between national advocacy and local realities, with the media key to building bridges of understanding.

- ***Mobilizing the media***

While the media were seen as key players in the EDG project, vital to influencing decision and policy makers, they were also seen as part of the problem, rarely covering women's achievements and perpetuating the traditional image of women as subservient and powerless.

The project therefore integrated senior media personnel into the watch groups and forums, but also organized training for journalists, introducing them to the issues involved and also providing media-specific modules on appropriate reporting and identification of appropriate stories (this facilitated by a senior journalist).

Media can be resistant to "training" by NGOs, and indeed in Pakistan SAP found that the only way to persuade journalists to participate was by taking them away to a resort for three days. Even then, the journalists at first showed a lack of interest in women's issues. In Nepal and Bangladesh, in contrast, the journalists were invited to "orientation sessions" on the issue of women in democracy, and involving media professionals as trainers diminished concerns that the media might be 'used' by the NGO.

The journalists who attended the training were challenged to write positive stories about women in leadership and representative roles, and the SAP project office in each country helped by providing leads and interviews, as well as by compiling 72 case studies profiling women in leadership roles. As a result of the media activity, 67 features were produced in print and broadcast outlets. Additionally, each national SAP organized a series of radio debates on issues related to women and democracy, 25 in all.

Participating journalists interviewed in Nepal (the evaluators were not able to reach journalists in Bangladesh and Pakistan) were overwhelmingly positive about the experience of participating in the training. They said that they learned a great deal from the modules on women in democracy, and appreciated how the issue was then integrated into the modules on reporting on women's issues. All confirmed that they continued to look for 'women's angles' and women's stories in their daily work, although it became clear that the independent, privately-owned media outlets (numerous and increasing in Nepal) were much more likely to permit such stories to go to print or to air. One journalist who worked for national (state-controlled) radio had covered a story on domestic violence that was critical of the man involved and had then promptly been suspended for six weeks.

- ***Using Electronic information***

To reinforce the groups formed and capture and spread further the expertise being shared, a number of electronic platforms were created: a website brought together case studies, research and experiences and allowed for distribution of six editions of an electronic newsletter. D-groups and e-bulletins were created, aimed at those who influence and make policy. SAP-I created and maintains the website, while national SAPs are able to post materials in their own languages through password-protected access. SAP-I explained that, in future, they may build on the electronic platforms to create a virtual regional women's network. Although the evaluators reviewed the electronic platforms established, it was not



**Journalists at the media training in Pakistan**

Men were included in all components of the EDG project. If women's status is to improve, then men will be vital agents of change too.

possible to ascertain how much they were used. It is likely, however, that use was limited to those in urban areas or able to access Internet at work.

- **Gender-sensitive Democracy Charter**

The two regional events organized – a regional conference and a regional “interaction” in Kathmandu and Lahore respectively -- were also used as the culminating events in the preparation of a regional *Gender-sensitive Democracy Charter* on which the NDWGs had worked. The Charter was presented to the regional conference in draft form and finalized with input from participants. It was intended as a guide, a blueprint for a range of constituents to advance the status of women in governance. It includes an agenda outlining the actions that governments, national legislative bodies and the regional body, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), should undertake.

The intention was that each recipient would use the principles in the charter and the guidance provided to develop an individual workplan (SAP-I is developing its own workplan based on the charter) and that political parties and governments in particular would consider the charter in revising structures and policies.

- **Regional nature of the project**

Given that the project was implemented in three countries, it is important to assess to what extent the project was “regional” in nature. In fact, at many levels the project was essentially three national projects running alongside each other, with agreed methodologies and approaches. This was potentially useful, if SAP-I then takes a comparative approach to assessing the lessons learned from the project over time (for example, if the NDWG concept works in all three countries, is it sustained in all countries?) Bringing together the three country projects in a regional conference and regional interaction were most obviously linked to the desire to develop a regional charter that could then be presented to SAARC as a regionally relevant blueprint. Beyond the conference and charter, however, there were no regional activities nor regional outputs. There was, however, and still is potential for more regional added-value to be achieved:

The NDWG in Nepal, for example, said that they had benefited greatly from meeting NDWG members from Bangladesh and Pakistan at the regional conference, and wondered whether they might in future be able to form a three-country advocacy network, sharing experiences and information, developing joint strategies and working together (for example continuing to lobby SAARC). An NDWG member from Pakistan echoed this interest. Similarly, journalists in Nepal saw great potential in being part of a subregional network of journalists interested in covering women’s issues. Such networks cost very little: they can be hosted on something as simple as a Google Group or Facebook group, with SAP national organizations feeding story ideas, profiles or interviewees from time to time. This could have been built into the project *ab initio* at very little cost.

## **ii. Effectiveness**

The project was completed within the planned time-frame with no variations in plans. It was timely, well planned and implemented, and designed from the outset to build strong groups of people at local and national levels, equipped with valuable information, and prepared to advocate strongly in key agencies.

### **Watch groups**

This was evident in the creation and above all motivation and resourcing of the watch groups:

- 3 NDWGs were formed and active throughout the project (Pakistan 14 members; Nepal 11 members; Bangladesh 11 members)



- 12 LWGs were formed and active throughout the project (details in body of report; 129 members total)

### **Meetings and events**

The watch groups formed the core of a number of meetings and events that were organized. Having been chosen for their ability to reach out to different constituencies, they were vital in mobilizing participation in the meeting and also helped set the agenda and contribute as speakers. The implementing organization seems to have recognized this from the beginning and its attention to maintaining the interest of watch group members and engaging them fully in the project was a major factor in the project's effectiveness and an indicator of good planning.

- 12 local interactions were organized with 402 participants (Pakistan 124; Nepal 158; Bangladesh 120)
- 3 national interactions took place with 230 participants
- 3 national workshops were organized with 181 participants (Pakistan 49; Nepal 77; Bangladesh 55)
- 3 national discourses were organized with 169 participants (Pakistan 70; Nepal 46; Bangladesh 53)
- 17 national meetings were held to hand over the Charter to key policy makers: Election Commissions (3), political parties (9), SAARC (1) and press (4) involving 125 people
- 1 South Asian regional conference was organized with 153 participants

The regional meetings were a central element of the 'regionality' of the project, however it is clear that there remain untapped regional synergies that would add value to the project's outcomes. In particular, there is great potential for a regional network to be created bringing together the members of NDWGs in the three countries.

### **Training and media outputs**

The media training that was organized was well received and following this up by helping journalists to find good stories was an intelligent move. There is clearly continuing interest from journalists in the issue of women in democratic governance, and this might be nurtured by feeding story ideas, interviewees and profiles to the journalists. Such media engagement could certainly not have been achieved if the project had simply included a 'media liaison' element (commonly including sending out press releases and organizing occasional press conferences).

- 103 media personnel were trained (Pakistan 35; Nepal 32; Bangladesh 36)
- 72 case studies were developed to be shared with media as a basis for potential stories
- 67 articles appeared in print and broadcast media
- 25 radio debates were broadcast focusing on women in democratic government

### **Information materials**

Information products are frequently an area where NGO projects are weak. The design of information materials is a specialized area and in particular the formulation and formatting of 'messages' is often best left to professionals (or developed in collaboration with professional input). Overall, the materials produced by the project focused on targeted information to those already engaged in the project, and to this extent therefore they were more likely to be well received.

The evaluators were able to review the materials and consider that they were likely to be effective in transmitting the information that participants would need, and to this extent were effective.

- 6 e-bulletins/newsletters were created and posted to the website
- A virtual platform was created and used by approximately 200 people: <http://www.engenderingdemocracy.net>

- A web-based discussion group was activated to allow participants to interact: <http://dgroups.org/Community.asp>
- A brochure was produced in 4 languages summarizing issues discussed at the local interactions and national workshops
- A *Gender-sensitive Democracy Charter for South Asia* was developed, translated into 4 languages and 1,500 copies were widely distributed and used as an advocacy tool at national and regional levels.

There were a number of unplanned outputs and, precisely because they were not firmly rooted in the overall project design, these were potentially less effective:

- A daily conference newsletter was published at the Lahore and Kathmandu national workshops and, while useful to the participants, did constitute a drain on personnel resources
- 300 posters were produced, with English, Nepali, Bangla and Urdu text and its message was not tested.

Additionally, during the life of the project:

- SAP-I wrote and published a book covering the issues and challenges identified at the regional conference: *Engendering democratic governance in South Asia*
- SAP-Nepal wrote and published a compilation of case studies, *Incidents that changed the course of women politicians*.

### **iii. Efficiency**

#### **▪ Budget**

The budget was acquitted and an underspend of USD5,000 was notified to UNDEF. However SAP-I advised that they had underestimated the cost of translation for the products and were obliged to cover these costs themselves.

There were some delays in transferring funds to SAP-Bangladesh because of complex requirements in receiving external funds in that country. Additionally, SAP-I expressed some frustration that national partners did not acquit funds promptly and were slow to report until funds had been transferred.

#### **▪ Activities**

Within 24 months, there were many meetings -- variously called conferences, interactions, discourses and workshops – at local, national and regional levels. These were both time- and resource-consuming, although all were carried out as planned. Participants interviewed confirmed that the meetings were valuable sources of evidence-based information, and helped with networking. However it must be asked whether it was necessary to have so many meetings, often bringing together some of the same players. SAP-I agreed that it would have been possible to reduce the number of meetings. Combining some of the national meetings would have freed up funds for other purposes – for example increasing the number of regions in which the project was piloted from four to five in each country, or holding a networking event bringing together the LWGs in each country.

### **iv. Impact**

#### **▪ Positions of influence**

A number of interviewees noted the high level of credibility of SAP-I and its ability to mobilize people from a range of sectors at the highest levels. Although there are many NGOs working on women's empowerment, they said, SAP-I is known for being at the forefront of understanding in relation to women in politics, the obstacles they face and the issues to target in order to promote change.

As a result of this, in all three countries the implementing SAPs were able to invite key players to participate in the NDWGs and LWGs – members of political parties, senior journalists, nationally renowned human rights activists as well as senior NGO representatives. In turn, these watch group members had access to key people in government, political parties, media and democratic institutions such as the Electoral Commission and, at local level, leaders in local governance.

Similarly, key players readily accepted invitations to the various meetings, both as participants and as speakers. This added to the credibility of the project and its outputs, potentially increasing the impact. The Chief Election Commissioner of Nepal, for example, took the evidence presented by the project into account in developing a Gender Unit within the electoral commission.

▪ **Planting a seed**

The involvement of so many people in the various events, and reached through the watch groups means that a seed has been planted in many constituencies and contributes to national discourse on women in leadership and governance.

In Nepal, the Chief Election Commissioner confirmed that the outputs of the project were seriously considered within that body, although he also said that he firmly believes that women's empowerment must begin in the home and community, and must result in girls being sent to school and a reduction in abuse and violence in the home. These are urgent issues, he said, and are at the heart of discrimination against women.

The Commissioner believed that groups at local level, in particular, must be safeguarded and nurtured, since they are likely to have most immediate impact on the status of women in general. They should receive subsidies from the government, he said, and more media time. The importance of empowering women at local levels was repeated by a number of interviewees in all three countries, and was cited by SAP-I as an early lesson to be learned from the project and one that resulted in more attention being paid to the LWGs and local meetings.

The impact at local level was mentioned by several different participants as the most important outcome of the project. A LWG member from Pakistan who had been involved in coordinating LWG meetings advised that in her community the LWG had, *inter alia*, organized youth training on democratic governance, produced a study on local governance practices, and participated in 16 radio debates. A NDWG member in Bangladesh cited the local-level actions as so crucial that the project would have been incomplete without them.

**Getting the message out at local level**

The media component of the EDG project was crucial to reaching out to people in communities in all three countries so that they, too, would begin to consider the important role women play in democratic governance. In each country, the SAP national organization not only trained journalists but fed to them profiles of women in politics at different levels, interviews and evidence-based data and encouraged them to work on print, radio and TV features.



**Media trainees in Nepal**

In a series of broadcast debates, local FM radio stations provided a forum for local political party leaders, government officials and women rights activists to debate the challenges facing women in governance and the importance, in particular, of women being involved in local government.

One profile broadcast, for example, was of Bishnu Ojha, a UML leader and women's activist, who had worked in a factory and been a key player in the labour movement. She became engaged in party politics and stood for election within her party's decision-making body. She was defeated as a result of a political conspiracy driven by men within the party, and was not pre-selected as a parliamentary candidate despite her popularity. She now works as an activist in the NGO sector.

- ***Media as partners***

The inclusion of journalist training and engagement in the project increased the likely impact of the project by building an important bridge between the high-profile participants at both national and local levels, and the communities who ultimately must vote for and support change.

While the immediate impact of the media component of the project can be seen in the large numbers of articles and features that appeared in all three countries, the longer-term impact will depend on the extent to which journalists remain interested in women's issues and follow up their preliminary training. Additionally, one NDWG member in Nepal, herself a senior journalist, identified the next step as bringing together senior journalists and female politicians, with a view to helping the women to learn how to interact with the media and gain confidence. This, she believes, would help female political leaders to more regularly offer themselves for interview and would result in journalists seeking women's views more often. Another factor affecting the impact of the journalist training and mobilization is the attitude of the "gatekeepers" in media houses – the editors, sub-editors and executive producers who ultimately run or do not run a story that a journalist has developed. All the journalists interviewed mentioned this, with those from independent outlets suggesting that their editors might be interested in some "sensitization" (diplomatically presented and ideally at an attractive venue) themselves. Working with gatekeepers in the state-run media is more difficult because it is seen as attempting to influence policy, and may not be possible at this time in any of the countries involved in the project.

- ***The Charter and advocacy***

The charter was broadly distributed; watch groups members in all three countries used it as a tool for advocacy at various levels – in Nepal, for example, NDWG members attended 17 meetings during the project period with government ministries, political parties and bodies such as the Election Commission. At local level, watch group members are also developing their own plans based on the charter. They have translated it into local languages and are similarly using it for advocacy.

The South Asia Research Institute took the charter and revised it before submitting it to SAARC. SAP-Nepal and SAP-I met with the Secretary-General of SAARC who responded positively to the charter and promised to integrate the issue of women's participation into SAARC's Democracy Group work. Many key decision makers pledged their commitment to implementing the charter. A number of NGOs came forward to volunteer to take the charter forward also. At the regional meeting to endorse the charter, representatives from Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and India attended (at their own cost) and signalled that they are prepared to use the charter for advocacy also. SAP-I will monitor progress of the charter and follow up.

However, the impact of the charter may be short-term. Just five months after the end of the project, senior women politicians interviewed had only a vague recollection of signing up to the charter. One, importantly, said that the most important frameworks for women's equality must be the international commitments that her country (Nepal) has made. She cited CEDAW as the guide that she uses and promotes, and suggested that additional promises were largely cosmetic unless they were clearly linked to higher-level obligations.

## ***v. Sustainability***

- ***Keeping people engaged***

The project has established, in all three countries, a significant group of people who have been equipped with reliable information and in the charter a modest tool to continue to advocate for change in favour of women's participation in democratic institutions both at national and local levels.

NDWG members in Nepal said that the group had many good ideas and high expectations. They had put together a plan of action and met almost monthly for the 24 months of the project but were disappointed that, since the project had ended, SAP-Nepal had not convened a meeting. They are still ready, they said, to work on the issue of women in democracy but, as busy people, they need to be motivated. A regular meeting, they said, would require “just a venue and a cup of tea” and would not therefore require significant resources. “There is a sense,” one NDWG member said, “that now that the charter is in the hands of key players, the work is done. In fact, we can do much more.” One suggestion from the Nepal NDWG was for a five-year strategy to be drawn up so that the group would have direction and be re-energized. Another member suggested that it is time now for the three NDWGs to create a regional network, not limited to the three project countries, to build a regional network for change.

This was echoed in a suggestion from an NDWG member in Bangladesh. She believed that building strong regional links would be a crucial part of future actions, which would also include working with members of the newly established Election Commission in Bangladesh in anticipation of elections sometime in the next two years. Another NDWG member in Bangladesh said that there is unfinished business for the group there, which needs to do more monitoring and analysis of data relating to democratic institutions.

**Ms. Yadav** regrets that she was not able to join the National Democracy Watch Group in Nepal, but says her role as Treasurer of the Nepali Congress Party (NCP) means that time and energy for other things are in short supply.

She did, however, participate in the national discourse and workshops and says she emerged having learned a great deal but most of all empowered by the opportunity to share with others the issues that challenge women involved in politics and governance.

“We had a rare opportunity to share examples of what we can achieve to promote gender balance in politics in Nepal,” she says. “It became obvious that change can only come when women in politics have access to information and resources, and capacity building that redresses imbalances in their knowledge and understanding.” When women are informed, Ms Yadav believes, they will not remain silent within their parties or in political forums. “At the moment,” she says, “women are frightened to speak up because they are not confident of their understanding and knowledge. Coming together is invaluable and this project allowed us to do that.”

Ms Yadav believes the experience of the EDG project contributed to her input into discussions within the NCP which, at its 2011 convention, revised its rules and regulations to increase women’s participation, setting quotas for all levels of representation. “The work of SAP,” she concluded, “opened the eyes of women who, although they live these issues every day, never had the chance to talk about them and learn from others. I am hopeful. Knowledge imprinted on the heart and mind is there to be used in the days ahead.”

At local level, the LWGs have established themselves and become real agents for change. The Executive Director of SAP-Nepal believes that “you can feel the change in the four districts – people are more concerned, more engaged”. In all three countries, the watch groups at local level are considered to have an identity and are invited to participate in events in their capacity as watch group members. SAP-Nepal believes that the local watch groups are one of the most important outcomes of the project. In Nepal they have become so active and embedded in their communities that they are moving towards becoming legally registered entities. In Nepal, a LWG member advised that her group is continuing to work, organizing events to mark International Women’s Day, disseminating the charter and lobbying local institutions. However she had some concern that gradually interest will begin to fade if SAP-Nepal does not help motivate and facilitate the group. In Bangladesh, also, the LWGs are still meeting.

As noted above, also, there is clear potential to keep the trained journalists in Nepal engaged in the work begun by the EDG project. This must be tapped soon, however, if the interest of the journalists is not to be lost.

▪ ***Taking the charter one step further***

The charter achieved its immediate purpose as the culmination of all the debate and data gathering that had been undertaken in the project in the form of a document that could be used as a tool for advocacy and, importantly, bring the outcomes of the project to the attention of SAARC. However questions were raised about its longer-term usefulness, in particular in relation to other commitments that have been made by governments at regional and international levels.

***vi. UNDEF value-added***

The participation of women in democratic governance is a priority area for both policy and programme initiatives in South Asia but is a relatively crowded field. In Nepal alone, UNDP, The Bridge (Australian Government supported), the Asia Foundation, International IDEA (USAID/IFES-supported), UNWOMEN and several national human rights NGOs work in this area in different ways. UNICEF also until recently had projects promoting youth participation in local governance. In the absence of more coordinated action among at least the UN players in this area, opportunities for value-added are being missed. For example, UNWOMEN has established “watch groups” in Nepal, working at local level to monitor and promote gender equity. It should be possible to explore whether these groups could benefit from being linked to the SAP-established LWGs.

## IV. Conclusions

*i.* It is clear from the comments of all those interviewed that the **EDG project was timely, well planned and implemented and designed from the outset to build strong groups of people at local and national levels**, equipped with valuable information, and prepared to advocate strongly in key agencies.

*ii.* Many participants appreciated the opportunity to attend the regional conference however the project did not attempt to build links among the participants at a regional level. **There remain untapped regional synergies that would add value to the project's outcomes.**

*iii.* The project was considered a pilot action, and the results suggest that **the actions could now be adapted and replicated in more regions of Bangladesh, Pakistan and/or Nepal, or even other countries in South Asia where SAP-I is active**, taking into account the lessons learned.

*iv.* The comments of the NDWG and LWG members in particular indicate a willingness to **continue and even expand the work of these groups** (lobbying, data gathering, monitoring, promoting debate). This should be achievable with minimal resources.

*v.* The media training was well received and following this up by helping journalists to find good stories was an intelligent move. **There is clearly continuing interest from journalists in the issue of women in democratic governance.**

*vi.* **Journalists are often limited by the unenlightened views of their sub-editors, editors, producers and other gatekeepers** who are not generally included in the sensitization efforts.

*vii.* In hindsight, the **project design could have included fewer meetings and funds could have been redirected** to widening the geographical test sites of the LWG or perhaps to train more journalists and potentially some gatekeepers.

*viii.* **The Charter was a useful short-term tool for advocacy, particularly at regional level, however it is less likely to be effective in the longer-term.**

*ix.* In relation to the budget, it is a pity that not all the funds were used, particularly since there were costs that had to be covered by the grantee. **A timely conversation with UNDEF, in accordance with contractual timelines, might have allowed the unspent grant to be reallocated for approved project activity.**

*x.* An opportunity was missed, for both UNDEF and the grantee, when the **milestone monitoring exercises (particularly the first) were not seen as an occasion for working with the grantee to begin to learn preliminary lessons**, reinforce areas of the project that could benefit from an 'outside' eye and make any other necessary adjustments designed to improve the project's likelihood of success.

## V. Recommendations

### ***For SAP-I and national partners***

i. (Based on Conclusions ii, iii, iv, v)): There remains considerable potential for action in the “remnants” of the EDG project, and SAP-I and national partners may wish to consider some follow-up activity (funds permitting) that might include: ***facilitating ongoing meetings of the NDWGs; feeding stories and leads to trained journalists; encouraging and helping the journalists to make contacts*** with their counterparts in the other SAP countries and forming a network. There is, for example, ***potential for a regional NDWG advocacy*** network to be created bringing together the members of NDWGs in the three countries. If funds are not immediately available for this, it might begin as a virtual network, hosted on the <http://www.engenderingdemocracy.net> website or using the <http://dgroups.org/Community.asp> D-group facility. Alternatively, free on-line communities such as Google Groups or Facebook groups might be set up.

ii. (Based on Conclusion vi): If resources are available, ***bringing together media gatekeepers*** (editors, sub-editors, executive producers and others in decision-making roles in the media) would further reinforce the mobilization of journalists in the EDG project and ***increase the likelihood of their developing gender-sensitive coverage and women’s stories***. This should not be promoted as training but might perhaps take the form of a modest “retreat” at which information can be shared and trust built.

iii. (Based on Conclusion iii): Since the EDG project was considered in many ways to be a pilot, and has proved to be a successful one, consider adapting the methodology to take into account lessons learned (for example, fewer meetings and more emphasis on local-level actions) and ***extend it to other countries where SAP works. Alternatively or additionally, consider extending the LWG component into more regions of Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal.***

iv. (Based on Conclusions vii, ix): ***When planning and then managing the budget, emphasis quality rather than quantity*** – for example, fewer meetings but more support to the NDWGs or support to trained journalists through work with their gatekeepers. ***Review the budget monthly*** and, when it becomes clear that there will be unspent funds, discuss immediately with the donor how these funds might be reallocated within the project to reinforce other components of the project.

v. (Based on Conclusion viii): In order ***to make the Charter more effective*** in the medium- to long-term, review it in the context of commitments already made by governments in the three countries: international conventions, national plans of action and legislation. For example, although ***CEDAW*** is not region- or country-specific, ***it would be relevant to reference Article 7, which covers equality in political and public life, in Article 3 of the charter detailing the principles.***

### ***For UNDEF***

i. (Based on Conclusion xi): ***Consider reviewing the way milestone Monitoring and Evaluation exercises are commissioned and carried out in order to maximize the value of these exercises.*** They have potential to add value to the project’s outputs and outcomes and increase their impact and might be seen as a collaborative “preliminary lessons learned” opportunity rather than an audit/observation of a single event.



## ANNEXES

### Annex 1: Evaluation questions

#### General evaluation question categories

DAC criterion	Evaluation Question	Related sub-questions
Relevance	To what extent was the project, as designed and implemented, suited to context and needs at the beneficiary, local, and national levels?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Were the objectives of the project in line with the needs and priorities for democratic development, given the context?</li> <li>▪ Should another project strategy have been preferred rather than the one implemented to better reflect those needs, priorities, and context? Why?</li> <li>▪ Were risks appropriately identified by the projects? How appropriate are/were the strategies developed to deal with identified risks? Was the project overly risk-averse?</li> </ul>
Effectiveness	To what extent was the project, as implemented, able to achieve objectives and goals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To what extent have the project's objectives been reached?</li> <li>▪ To what extent was the project implemented as envisaged by the project document? If not, why not?</li> <li>▪ Were the project activities adequate to make progress towards the project objectives?</li> <li>▪ What has the project achieved? Where it failed to meet the outputs identified in the project document, why was this?</li> </ul>
Efficiency	To what extent was there a reasonable relationship between resources expended and project impacts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and project outputs?</li> <li>▪ Did institutional arrangements promote cost-effectiveness and accountability?</li> <li>▪ Was the budget designed, and then implemented, in a way that enabled the project to meet its objectives?</li> </ul>
Impact	To what extent has the project put in place processes and procedures supporting the role of civil society in contributing to democratization, or to direct promotion of democracy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To what extent has/have the realization of the project objective(s) and project outcomes had an impact on the specific problem the project aimed to address?</li> <li>▪ Have the targeted beneficiaries experienced tangible impacts? Which were positive; which were negative?</li> <li>▪ To what extent has the project caused changes and effects, positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen, on democratization?</li> <li>▪ Is the project likely to have a catalytic effect? How? Why? Examples?</li> </ul>
Sustainability	To what extent has the project, as designed and implemented, created what is likely to be a continuing impetus towards democratic development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To what extent has the project established processes and systems that are likely to support continued impact?</li> <li>▪ Are the involved parties willing and able to continue the project activities on their own (where applicable)?</li> </ul>
UNDEF value added	To what extent was UNDEF able to take advantage of its unique position and comparative advantage to achieve results that could not have been achieved had support come from other donors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What was UNDEF able to accomplish, through the project, that could not as well have been achieved by alternative projects, other donors, or other stakeholders (Government, NGOs, etc).</li> <li>▪ Did project design and implementing modalities exploit UNDEF's comparative advantage in the form of an explicit mandate to focus on democratization issues?</li> </ul>

## Annex 2: Documents reviewed

### Background documents

*Human Development Report 2010-11 – Nepal*, UNDP 2011

*Issues of citizens*, SAP-Nepal, July 2009

*Exploring gender gaps in politics, participation and policies*, SAP-I 2009

### Project outputs

*Engendering democratic governance in South Asia*, SAP-I 2011

*Incidents that changed the course of women politicians*, SAP-I 2011

*Towards gender-responsive politics* (brochure), SAP-I 2011

*Gender-sensitive democracy charter of South Asia*, SAP-I 2011

### Project documentation

Project Document, UDF-RAP-08-248

Mid-term Progress Report, UDF-RAP-08-248

Final Project Narrative Report, UDF-RAP-08-248

Milestone verification mission report 1 (31 March 2010)

Milestone verification mission report 2 (7 June 2011)

Report on national consultations of NDWG, February-March 2010

Report on national discourses, July – September 2010

Report on local-level interactions, June – July 2010

Concept note for EDG discussion groups

Compte-rendu of press conference, 28 September 2010

Compte-rendu of national workshops. February – March 2011

Report on regional conference “Promoting gender-responsive democratic governance in South Asia”, June 2011

Report on media training programme, December 2010

Report on national interactions, August – September 2011

Report on South Asian regional conference, September 2010

*EDG Newsletters* 1 – 6 (April 2010, August 2010, September 2010, November 2010, February 2011, October 2011) at: [www.sapint.org/ednewsletter](http://www.sapint.org/ednewsletter)

Project posters

## Annex 3: People Interviewed

Activity	Dates
Preparatory phase start	January 2012
Travel to/from Nepal	12/19 February 2012
Effective mission dates	13 – 17 February 2012
Reporting	1 <sup>st</sup> week March 2012
<b>13 February 2012</b>	
Dr Rohit K. Nepali, Executive Director, SAP-I Overall Programme Coordinator	Presentation/Q & A Group discussion
Ms Shanti Uprety, PLAN International Former SAP-I Programme Officer	Group discussion
Ms Sandhaye Paudel, SAP-I Programme Officer	Group discussion
Ms Chitrlekha Yadav, Treasurer, Nepali Congress Party	Interview
<b>14 February 2012</b>	
Mr Neel Kantha Uprety, Chief Election Commissioner a.i., Nepal	Interview
Mr Sharada Prasad Trital, Joint Secretary, Election Commission Nepal	Interview
Mr Suresh Kumar Verma, Executive Director, SAP-Nepal	Interview
Mr Anil Khanal, Programme Coordinator, SAP-Nepal	Presentation Discussion
Mr Umesh Shrestha, Programme Admin/Finance Officer, SAP-Nepal	Discussion
Ms Babita Basnet, President, Forum of Women Journalists, NDWG member, Nepal	Group discussion Individual follow-up discussion
Ms Padma Mathema, National Rapporteur on Trafficking, NDWG member, Nepal	Group discussion Individual follow-up discussion
Mr Charan Prasai, Coordinator, Joint Forum for Human Rights, NDWG member, Nepal	Group discussion
Mr Krishna Man Pradhan, Executive Director, Nepal Law Society, NDWG member, Nepal	Group discussion
<b>15 February</b>	
Ms Roshani Poudel, Gender and Human Rights Consultant, UNWOMEN Nepal	Group discussion
Mr Yamun Yadav, Programme Support Manager, UNWOMEN Nepal	Group discussion
Mr Kiran Pant, Banking consultant, Participant, National discourse on gender equality, Nepal	Interview
Ms Chandni Joshi, former Regional Director of Unifem, Speaker, National and Regional discourses on gender equality, Nepal and Bangladesh	Interview
Ms Ussakala Rai, UML (Communist Party of Nepal) and member of Women's Caucus, participant at local consultation	Interview
Hon. Ma'dhav Kumar Nepal, former Prime Minister, Senior Leader, UML (Communist Party of Nepal)	Courtesy meeting
Dr Padma Khatiwada, College Professor (Migration and demographics), Rapporteur, Nepal national workshops	Interview
<b>16 February</b>	
Ms Amrita Thapa Magar, CPN (Maoists), Member of Central Committee, Speaker at national discourse	Interview

Mukunda Sharma, Joint Secretary & Spokesperson, Constituent Assembly (Committee on determination of forms of the governance of state)	Briefing
Mr Raju Nurul Alam, former Programme Coordinator, SAP-Bangladesh	Remote interview
Mr Abbas Ali Siddiqui, Programme Coordinator, SAP-Pakistan	Remote interview
(Follow-up contacts to Bangladesh and Pakistan)	
<b>17 February</b>	
Mr Kapil Kafle, Editor, Himalayan Television, Media training facilitator	Interview
Ms Ratna Chaudhary, Radio Nepal, Media training	Interview
Mr Tara Regmi, News 24 Nepal, Media training	Interview
Ms Sabita BK, CIN Radio Network Nepal, Media Training	Interview
Ms Juneli Shrestha, LWG member, Pakistan	Phone interview
Round-up meeting and debriefing SAP-I and SAP-Nepal	
<b>Remote contacts, Bangladesh and Pakistan</b>	
Khawar Mumtaz, NDWG member, Pakistan	Remote interview
Naghma Imdad, NDWG member, Pakistan	Remote interview
Yasmin Mughal, LWG member, Pakistan	Remote interview
Nasima Aktar Joly, NDWG Coordinator, Bangladesh	Remote interview
Rezaul Haque, NDWG member, Bangladesh	Remote interview

## Annex 4: Acronyms

CA	Constituent Assembly (Nepal)
CEDAW	UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CPN	Communist Party of Nepal
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EDG	Engendering Democratic Governance
EQ	Evaluation Questions
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
LWG	Local Watch Group
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NCP	Nepali Congress Party
NDWG	National Democracy Watch Group
NGO	Non-governmental organization
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SAP-I	South Asia Partnership International
SAP-	South Asia Partnership-[name of country member]
UML	Nepali Maoist Party
UN	United Nations
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNWOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States dollar