



Quarterly Progress Report Women Power in Politics Program Iraq

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Scope of Work

Goal 1: More women in leadership positions in parliament and federal government

Outcome A: Female aspirants are skilled and confident candidates in the election campaign

Output 1: 816 female election candidates in all 18 governorates of Iraq have been trained and supported in the run-up of the federal parliamentary elections

Activities 1 (Capacity building and assistance to female aspirants):

- 1.0. Preparatory meeting for training of trainers
- 1.1. Training of trainers
- 1.2. Local seminars for basic skills
- 1.3. Assistance during elections

Output 2: 311 high potential female candidates have received intense capacity building and support, and are connected with civil society at grassroots level

Activities 2 (Capacity building and assistance to high potentials):

- 2.0. Training of trainers
- 2.1. Selection of high potentials
- 2.2. Support to trainers
- 2.3. Advanced trainings and networking sessions for high potentials
- 2.4. Practical support to high potentials

Outcome C: Female representatives in parliament and federal government are more effective leaders who can promote women's rights, and engage in grassroots outreach

Output 3: 40-50 elected female members of parliament have received long-term support and assistance until almost a year after the elections

Activities 3 (Long term assistance to female MPs):

- 3.1. Training of trainers
- 3.2. Continuous support to female MPs and institutions
- 3.3. Advanced training workshops to elected MPs in Baghdad or elsewhere
- 3.4. Advanced training workshops to elected MPs in Erbil or elsewhere
- 3.5. Exchange with MPs from the Netherlands
- 3.6. Meetings to create more support from civil society

Outcome B: Political parties show more gender sensitivity by offering women's leadership training and women's support programs, and appointing more women in influential positions

Output 4: 8-15 political parties received information and support on engaging women on influential positions, offering women leadership training and gender support programs

Activities 4 (Engagement of political parties):

- 4.1. Discussion and educational meetings with Iraqi political parties
- 4.2. Exchange with Dutch political parties
- 4.3. Training and engagement of high potentials in influencing parties

Goal 2: Legislation and environment that is supportive of women's rights

Outcome C: Female representatives are more effective leaders who can promote a legislative agenda, supportive of women's rights, and engage in grassroots outreach (see also under goal 1)

Outcome D: Media have more attention for female politicians and their contributions to politics, show more balanced media coverage of female politicians

Output 5: The wider public (voters), authorities and other stakeholders have received balanced and correct information about the contribution of women to the democratic development of the country

Activities 5 (Awareness raising and education of voters):

- 5.1. Regional stakeholder conferences
- 5.2. Local community meetings for direct awareness raising
- 5.3. Engaging and informing influential media and journalists
- 5.4. Workshop with journalists and media professionals
- 5.5. Collection and publication of portraits and experiences of WPP women
- 5.6. Regular news releases about WPP program and female politicians

Activities 6 (evaluation and sharing for learning and awareness):

- 6.1. Mid-term review
- 6.2. End term evaluation
- 6.3. Conference to share results of the program incl. findings of research

Summary

During the last quarter of 2014, the new Government was formed and the Parliament started its sessions. Also, the Parliament showed an open approach towards civil society and organized meetings. A promising start. However, the Parliament then had a leave for a whole month.

In the WPP program, we continued to strengthen the working relations in Iraqi Parliament and to prepare the training and support to MPs and the exchange of MPs and political parties. The exchange visit had to be postponed several times, for various reasons. In the meantime, we organized the first meetings of new-coming female MPs with civil society in their constituencies. These meetings were very fruitful and are expected to generate valuable follow-up. In addition, we set the first steps to collect the portraits and experiences, to be published in 2015. Also during the past quarter, the Mid Term Review took place. Challenges for the realization of the WPP program during the past quarter included the slow progress in working with the Parliament, the identification of suitable locations for the training to MPs, the completion of the Dutch delegation for the exchange visit, the visa applications, and the ongoing unsafety in Iraq. Another challenge was the actual political will to support women's political participation when the Government was being formed (just two female ministers out of 33). On the positive side, we saw an increase of women in Parliament, exceeding the 25% quota. We'd like to consider this as one of the results of our work. Also, we observed that the new Parliament and Government showed more openness and a more constructive approach towards civil society.

Context: Relevant Developments

The last three months of 2014 showed improved relations between the Parliament and the Government as compared to the tense situation under former Prime Minister Nuri Al-Maliki. Mr Haidar Al-Abadi, appointed in September 2014, started his term as Prime Minister with better collaboration with and more trust from the federal Parliament. A positive and promising start.

The new Council of Ministers was complete from October 18th on, after Mr Al-Abadi had presented his additional nominations for ministry positions and the Parliament had approved them. The new appointments included the ministers of Defense and of Internal Affairs (two delicate appointments, because they head the army and the police forces, and both for which the initial nominations were rejected by Parliament¹) as well as the ministers for Tourism, Finance and Women's Affairs. The new minister of Women's Affairs is Ms Bayan Nuri Tawfiq, a member of the Iraqi Kurdistan Islamic Party².

Women are underrepresented in the new Government. The complete Council of Ministers, as approved in October 2014, has 33 members of whom just two women: the minister of Health (Ms Adila Hamud Hussein) and the minister of Women's Affairs (Ms Bayan Nuri Tawfiq). That is disappointing. On the other hand, when three male MPs moved to governmental positions and were replaced by three women, the number of women in the Iraqi federal Parliament went up to 86 women (instead of 83, as before). That is 26%, so beyond the required 25% of the quota - a small difference but a milestone at the same time. One of the objectives of the WPP program is to get more women in leadership positions in Parliament and Government, so we cannot else but consider the low representation of women in the Government as a negative development for our program and a signal that there is still a long way to go, but the higher representation of women in Parliament -beyond the required 25% quota- as a positive development and an indicator that political parties are willing to give more space to women than before. Soon after her appointment, Health minister Adila Hamud Hussein showed how courageous women in politics can be. In December, she went incognito (disguised as a completely veiled woman) to a hospital in Baghdad to reveal and address corruption in hospitals. She observed the corruption and made it public.

¹ The approval from Parliament does not mean that the nominated persons were not controversial. The new Interior minister is Mr Mohammed Salem Al-Ghabban, a Shiite with close connections to the controversial Badr Corps, an Iran-backed Shiite militia, by many Sunnis accused of severe human rights abuses, including torture and extrajudicial killings, and deeply distrusted by many Sunnis. Members of the Badr Corps held high positions in the ministry of Internal Affairs during the rule of PM Al-Maliki. Less controversial is the new Defense minister, Mr Khaled Al-Obeidi, a former military officer and a Sunni from Mosul, more or less a symbol of the Iraqi military's failure to stop the expansion of the ISIS forces in June 2014.

² الحزب الاسلامي الكردستاني العراقي



Minister of Health Ms Adila Hamud Hussein in her position as minister and in disguise to reveal and address corruption in a hospital in Baghdad in December 2014.



The most important political issue during the past quarter was the state budget. Due to instable oil prices, the 2015 state budget had to be revised several times³ and lead to debates about the need to adopt an austerity policy and what to include in the state budget. The Government was committed to have its budget passed as soon as possible, but because no agreement could be reached on short notice, the Parliament decided on November 30th to take a leave in December and postpone the debate about the state budget. In the meantime the Government calculated a new budget and presented this new budget draft on December 20th 2014, to be discussed in Parliament in January 2015. The Parliament's leave in December had a negative effect on the WPP program, because MPs were not at work in Baghdad for a whole month. This was right after the Parliament had finally succeeded to form all its Parliamentary Committees, at the end of November. As a result, it has been difficult and time-consuming to communicate with Members of Parliament during the past quarter as well.

November 2014 witnessed two significant activities for civil society, conducted in the federal Parliament, which are expected to have a positive effect on the WPP program. The first one was a discussion seminar about the importance of cultural diversity in Iraq, held on November 26th 2014, initiated by the Speaker of Parliament and coordinated by Al-Amal. The seminar was attended by 20 MPs and 14 representatives from civil society that are involved in this issue. The aim of the seminar was to set the first steps for a law that should protect minority rights in Iraq and secure protection to IDPs. The second significant event was a meeting to promote and support cooperation between the Iraqi Parliament and civil society, held on November 30th 2014. The Parliament Speaker also initiated this event, in collaboration with the Parliamentary Civil Society Committee. The meeting was attended by MPs and 100 civil society activists. Ms Hanaa Edwar, Secretary-General of Al-Amal, delivered a speech on behalf of Iraqi civil society. The meeting resulted in a set of recommendations to the Civil Society Committee in Parliament, the Speaker of Parliament, and to NGOs. These two events are expected to have a positive effect on the WPP program, because they strengthen our cooperation with the new Speaker of Parliament and the new Civil Society Committee in Parliament.

Program Progress by Program Objectives

Program Objective #1: Compared to the current situation, more women will be in leadership positions in parliament and national/federal government.

Significant program activities related to PO #1 during past quarter:

Further preparatory work in Parliament was done to be able to organize the training and support to new-coming female MPs, as well as the exchange visit – all of them activities that aim to contribute to more and more capable women in leadership positions. In November 2014, besides the above mentioned two events, we had several meetings in the Iraqi Parliament about cooperation in the context of the WPP

³ The first budget was based on US\$ 90 per barrel, then on US\$ 80 per barrel, and finally on US\$ 70 per barrel.

program. These meetings were especially with the Parliament's Civil Society Committee and with the Foreign Relations Department. Both showed enthusiasm and willingness to cooperate and help. The Civil Society Committee has started to inform new female MPs about the WPP program and to invite them to activities held within the framework of the WPP program. The Foreign Relations Department offered help in preparing meetings (with the Speaker of Parliament, with Parliamentary Committees and with political parties and blocs in Parliament) and in providing facilitations for the exchange visit of Dutch MPs and political parties (including reserving a meeting hall in the Parliament, facilitating the visa applications for the Dutch delegation, helping to organize a meeting with the President of Iraq, and approaching Al-Rashid Hotel to get a 50% discount). After repeated requests from our side, the Directorate of Parliament provided us with a list of all female MPs. In the meantime, we discussed with US State Department where we could organize the series of training to MPs, because neither Baghdad, nor Erbil, nor other places in Iraq were deemed suitable (for a number of reasons explained to US State Department/DRL). Training outside Iraq appeared unacceptable for US State Department. Eventually, it was decided to try the first training in Erbil and see how many MPs would be willing to go there. This first training will take place in February 2015, the other two in March 2015.

On the Dutch side, the **preparations for the exchange visit of MPs** were ongoing throughout the whole quarter. There will be two simultaneous exchanges during this visit: an exchange of Dutch and Iraqi MPs (under Program Objective #1) and an exchange of representatives of Dutch and Iraqi political parties (under PO #2). The exchange had first been planned for October 2014 (however: no green light from the Dutch Parliament, right after start of Dutch military operations in Iraq), then postponed until January 2015 (green light, but not a suitable timing for Iraqi Parliament, right after December leave and urgency to discuss state budget), then postponed to February 2015 (still green light, but not a suitable timing for Dutch MPs, right before the election campaigns), and then again postponed to April 2015. Preparations included meetings and ongoing contact with the three Dutch political foundations involved, the Dutch Parliament, the Iraqi Parliament, the Dutch Embassy in Baghdad, the Iraqi Embassy in The Hague, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Dutch Parliament Safety Coordinator and Dutch National Anti-Terrorism Bureau, Iraqi/British private security contractor Control Risks, and also the US State Department. We informed the vice Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament, Mr Aram Sheikh Muhammad Ali, about the WPP program and the exchange visit in November 2014, during his visit to the Netherlands. On December 10th we organized a prep-meeting in Dutch Parliament with all above mentioned stakeholders in the exchange visit.

We organized the **first meetings of new-coming female MPs and representatives from civil society in their constituencies**, to encourage cooperation and create support. Two of such meetings took place in December 2014, with three new-coming female MPs who had participated in the WPP program. On December 3rd, in a meeting we organized in Najaf, MPs Ban Abdul-Ridha Dawash and Azhar Al-Tarihi met with representatives of civil society. 40 women and men from Najaf province participated in this meeting. They discussed possible coordination to determine the most urgent needs of the society and mechanisms to transfer this to the Parliamentary Committees. It was agreed to conduct such meetings periodically to strengthen the relationship between civil society and female MPs, which would also improve the image of the female MPs in society, it was expected. On December 24th, in a meeting we organized in Diwaniya, MP Suham Musa Al-Musawi met with 55 civil society activists from Qadisiya province. The meeting focused on the same points as in Najaf, although in Diwaniya there was more debate about how to support civil society organisations and how to create a suitable environment for their work. Ms Suham Musa Al-Musawi offered to organize meetings for local civil society activists with Ministries and Parliamentary Committees, including the Civil Society Committee, to create a direct channel to express the existing needs. The meeting in Diwaniya was attended by a local monitor of US State Department as well. Because the three MPs showed serious willingness to cooperate with civil society, and this can lead to very fruitful follow-up, we believe that in the forthcoming period we should train the MPs more on cooperation between the civil society and legislative authorities, and the positive impact that this cooperation/relationship can bring to the Iraqi civil society in general. Also during the exchange of Iraqi and Dutch MPs, the relation of MPs with civil society will be discussed.

Key successes/outcomes related to PO #1 during past quarter:

- Working relations with relevant actors in Iraqi Parliament, more solid basis laid for organization of training and support to new-coming female MPs, as well as the exchange visit;
- Working relations with relevant MPs and security bodies, green light from Dutch authorities for the exchange visit;
- Meetings of female MPs and civil society.

Program Objective #2: Legislation and an environment that is supportive of women's rights.

Significant program activities related to PO #2 during past quarter:

On the Dutch side, the **preparations for the exchange visit of political parties** were ongoing throughout the whole quarter. As mentioned above, there will be two simultaneous exchanges during this visit to Baghdad: an exchange of Dutch and Iraqi (female) Members of Parliament and an exchange of representatives of Dutch and Iraqi political parties. The exchange of the political parties is meant to contribute to a more supportive environment for women's political participation (PO #2). For description of the activities conducted: see above under PO #1.

Furthermore, we have been exploring a **gender audit tool** as an instrument for improving the work of Iraqi MPs in making the legislation in Iraq more gender sensitive and supportive of women's rights. This is a tool that is being developed under the umbrella of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), an intergovernmental organization that supports sustainable democracy worldwide. We have provided inputs in the development of this tool and will now await the tool to be ready to be used, so we can introduce this to the female MPs in Iraq.

In addition, we set concrete steps for **publicity about women from the WPP program**, as inspiring examples of women who participate in decision making and public life, as part of the awareness raising and education of female voters – a way to contribute to a more supportive environment in society. We started the preparations for the 'Portraits of Women: Experiences' publication. On top of the Mid Term Review, evaluator Ms Magy Mahrous agreed to write down personal stories and experiences of women in the WPP program for the book. MP Suham Musa Al-Musawi agreed to be the face of the WPP program. We wrote her personal story down on basis of an interview. Also, photos of Suham Musa were made. The interview with photos will first be published online, in 2015. A summary is included in the box below: 'Suham Musa – from disgrace to symbol'.

Key successes/outcomes related to PO #2 during past quarter:

- More solid basis laid for organization of exchange visit of political parties;
- Personal story of Suham Musa written down, photos made;
- Consultant assigned to collect personal stories and experiences.



Suham Musa – from disgrace to symbol

When Suham Musa from Qadisiya went to secondary school, she was considered the disgrace of her village. People wondered: What should a 12-year old girl learn there? How could she ever become a good housewife? Her parents challenged this and allowed Suham to pursue her dreams. Suham graduated from university as agricultural engineer and helped farmers in her native district for 18 years. She was no longer considered a disgrace, but a high quality professional. The farmers appreciated her expertise and dedication. Suham knew what the people in her native area needed and stood up for them. It did not surprise anyone when she showed political ambitions. In 2013 Suham was elected as representative in Qadisiya Governorate Council. There she advocated agriculture subsidies and better education. But Suham wanted to achieve more and directed her eyes to the federal Parliament in Baghdad. In Spring 2014 our ways crossed, when Suham decided to participate in the Women Power in Politics program. She followed our training in the field of campaigning, interacting with media, debating and negotiating. She was very successful: after her impressive election campaign in Qadisiya, Suham Musa was elected in Parliament by majority vote. She is now an independent strong woman who participates in decision-making about the future of Iraq. The people back home are really proud.

Significant other program activities during past quarter:

We had the **Mid Term Review** conducted in November-December 2014. In October, we selected evaluator Ms Magy Mahrous from Egypt from 12 applications to the call we had issued. She selected and interviewed people for the MTR in November-December, including the project staff at Hivos and Al-Amal. Ms Mahrous submitted the first draft report on December 14th, to which we gave feedback on December 18th. The second draft report was submitted on January 19th. The final report of the review will be available on short term. The Mid-Term Review focused on (1) the progress in the implementation of the WPP program, (2) the quality and relevance of the WPP program, and (3) the effectiveness of the WPP program.

In addition, during the past quarter, we have completed the **further revision of the program documents of the WPP program** (the scope of work, the monitoring & evaluation scheme, the updated budget with budget narratives), based on the feedback from DRL.

Key successes/outcomes related to other activities during past quarter:

- Mid-Term Review conducted, feedback to draft report provided;
- Scope of Work, Monitoring & Evaluation Scheme and budget of the WPP program, with budget narratives, further adapted.

Updated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Please see the updated M&E Plan in the Annex 1 to this report.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Challenges

The formation of the new Government showed that **political participation of women** in itself is a huge challenge in Iraq –the core of our WPP program– and shows how relevant our work is, but at the same time we positively observed a slight increase of female MPs, going beyond the required 25% quota. Furthermore, although the past quarter showed more openness and interest from Parliament's side to explore fruitful interaction with civil society, especially from the new Speaker of Parliament, and we also had several meetings about the WPP program, we were nevertheless again confronted with **slow progress** in working with the Parliament to get the WPP program realized. There was ongoing unrest in Parliament. It took the Parliament until the end of November to get organized in committees and when additionally, after repeated but fruitless debates about the state budget, the Parliament had a whole month of holiday in December, this definitely affected our efforts to give concrete shape to the program. Even simple things like getting contact details of new-coming female MPs appeared more difficult than expected. However, the Iraqi Parliament cannot be blamed for the delays entirely. Another major challenge for realization of the WPP program was to find a **suitable location for the trainings for MPs**. None of the cities in Iraq were considered suitable, for various reasons, whereas training outside Iraq appeared unacceptable for US State Department.

The organization of the exchange visit showed additional challenges. First of all, finding **suitable dates** for everyone involved was very difficult and time-consuming. The exchange had first been planned for October 2014, but could not take place then because the Dutch MPs did not have approval to travel to Baghdad, right after the start of Dutch military operations in Iraq. When we postponed it until January 2015, we received the green light from the Dutch security authorities, but it appeared not to be a suitable timing for the Iraqi Parliament, right after its December leave and the urgency to discuss the 2015 state budget in January. We then postponed the exchange visit to February 2015. We still had the green light from the Dutch authorities, but it appeared not to be a suitable timing for the Dutch MPs, right before the election campaigns in the Netherlands. We then postponed the visit to April 2015, which is now still under consideration of all stakeholders involved. Not only the dates were a challenge, but it also appeared to be a challenge to **complete the Dutch delegation for the exchange visit**. Getting three suitable MPs on board was a time-consuming and sometimes frustrating effort. Safety aspects played a crucial role for some MPs, as well as the costs of this visit and also the planned dates, as mentioned.

Indeed, the **safety situation in Iraq** remains a challenge. The military operations, the general crisis situation in Iraq and the negative trend in terms of women's participation in the public sphere have their effects on the lives of Iraqi citizens and reduced their mobility inside Iraq, even inside Baghdad. This leads to delays as well, but we have not been forced to put any activities on hold. Finally, **visa applications** are a continuing challenge for the realization of our program, both for Hivos staff as well as for consultants such as the evaluator of the Mid Term Review.

Lessons learned

The main lessons learned are that we need to **remain patient and persistent** to get concrete results, as well as **be flexible** in our approach. Progress is sometimes slow and delays happen, planned activities are sometimes postponed time and again, the safety situation and changing priorities in the political scene sometimes require sudden change of plans – these are realities that we have to accept and bend towards **alternative plans**, if necessary. On the other hand, we see positive developments as well, and we'd like to believe that these are results or at least a reflection of the work we have been and are still doing: for example the new Parliament's and Government's interest to explore cooperation with Iraqi civil society, the increase of women in Parliament after the new Government was formed, the fruitful results of the meetings of female MPs with representatives from civil society in their constituencies, the self-confidence that some of the new female MPs show, and the courageous move of the (female) minister of Health to reveal and fight corruption in hospitals. Without intending to claim these small successes as ours completely, we are convinced that we have contributed to these developments and cannot help being proud of our role and contributions.

Proposed Activities for Next Quarter

The activities planned for the following quarter (Q1 2015) are shown in the overview below. Because we will request a **no-cost project extension for two extra months**, this will not be the last quarter of the WPP program. For the complete adapted timeline, including the second quarter of 2015, please see Annex 2.

	Quarter:	Q1 2015		
	Months:	#16	#17	#18
		Jan	Feb	Mar
3. Long term assistance to elected female representatives				
3.2. Continuous support to female MPs		x	x	x
3.3. Advanced training to female MPs in Baghdad or elsewhere				x
3.4. Advanced training to female MPs in Erbil or elsewhere			x	x
3.5. Exchange with Dutch MPs		prep	prep	prep
3.6. Meetings to create more support from civil society			x	x
4. Engagement of political parties				
4.1. Discussion and educational meetings with Iraqi political parties			x	x
4.2. Exchange with reps of Dutch political parties		prep	prep	prep
5. Awareness raising and education of female voters				
5.2. Local community meetings				x
5.5. Publication Portraits of Women: Experiences		x	x	x
6. Monitoring & evaluation				
6.1. Regular monitoring		x	x	x
6.2. Planning and monitoring visits			x	x
6.3. Mid-term evaluation		x		
6.5. End conference				prep
6.6. Quarterly reporting		x		

The updated planning of the three training workshops for MPs:

Training workshop 1, Erbil, February 2015, 5 days
Topic: Gender equality, gender sensitivity, gender responsible budgeting
Part 1: Training workshop for MPs on gender sensitivity and awareness, conducted by a gender trainer (3 days).
Part 2: Training workshop for MPs on gender responsible budgeting, conducted by trainer(s) from UN Women network (2 days).
Possibly to be repeated for a second group of MPs, in March 2015.
Training workshop 2, Erbil, March 2015, 5 days
Topic: Women's leadership, communication skills, facilitation and strategic thinking
Part 1: Training workshop for MPs on women's leadership, communication skills and facilitation, conducted by 1-2 trainers from WDN network or other networks (4 days).
Part 2: Training workshop on strategic thinking, conducted trainers from WDN network or other networks (1 day).
Training workshop 3, Baghdad, March 2015, 3 days
Topic: Structures, procedures, rules, and bylaws of the parliament – plus Iraqi MP exchange/mentoring
Part 1: Training workshop for MPs on structures, procedures, rules, and bylaws of the Iraqi parliament, including specific parliamentary commissions, conducted by 2-3 Iraqi experts, judges, MPs (2 days).
Part 2: Exchange of experienced MPs and ex-MPs with new-coming MPs, with advice and mentorship (1 day).
Possibly not to be conducted on three consecutive days, but spread over a longer period in March 2015.

Coordination with other Donors

We have been coordinating with the Dutch government, the co-donor of the WPP program, mainly concerning the exchange visit of MPs and political parties to Baghdad. Beyond that, we did not coordinate with other donor agencies.

Sustainability

Hivos and Al-Amal have been discussing the issue of sustainability of the WPP program since we passed the midpoint of the program. Various ideas have been exchanged. Further discussions will be held on basis of the results and recommendations from the Mid Term Review.

The draft report of the Mid Term Review mentioned that the sustainability of the WPP program lies mainly in the building on the previous achievements and activities. The sustainability of this program is already built-in for the following reasons: (i) cadres of trainers have already been trained and have trained others, sustainability is enhanced through having a cadre of 27 local trainers, (ii) training materials and curricular have been developed and used, the developed curricular have been contextualized and are focused on improving skills and taken into consideration the specific nature of each governorate in Iraq, (iii) trainers and program teams were available and visited women candidates to help them through consultations and overall support, (iv) informal women groups and connections have emerged and with some additional attention can thrive into something more organized and formal. The MTR evaluator observed that the WPP program used several approaches to strengthen its sustainability, including (a) building on existing networks, under the coordination of an experienced local organization, Al-Amal, (b) selection of competent local trainers and further developing their skills, (c) development of training curriculum, sensitive to the local culture and the needs of each governorate respectively, (d) the existence of a loose women's network/caucus that can act as a nucleus for more work with women and building a strong link between them. The MTR sees the following challenges to sustainability: (1) sustainability of the above mentioned small newly emerging women's networks/caucus will be tested over time as there is little indication that sufficient resources are available to support them, (2) commitment from political parties to maintain any level of women participation also needs very close monitoring in the future, (3) little indication was given to any systematic effort carried out to liaise and connect to the wider donor/INGO supported programs that could have had a complementary role to that of WPP program, this might have been useful in strengthening the sustainability of the project and could have been a great learning and networking opportunity. According to the MTR evaluator, sustainability can be increased through: (I) more in-depth gender training for candidates, but also for political parties, men, husbands, etc, (II) more in-depth studies on barriers of women participation, and (III) more collaboration with other donors/INGOs.