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

EVALUATION REPORT

58-UDF-LEB-10-375- Creating Civil Society- Parliament Liaison Unit in Lebanon

Date: 19 March 2015

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Parliamentary challenges while also bringing the project activities closer to beneficiaries. Most project interviewees expressed a gTJ ET BT 1256.013o pressed

comparison to the overall budget spent by the project manager and the external consultancy team on liaison unit services. Along the same lines, the main NCSP activity related to the draft legislation on CSO participation realized by the Law World Federation in Egypt was not accounted for in the overall budget.

Although the IndyAct project has offered an alternative for joint CSO work through the creation of the NCSP, its **impact** is missing.

existing CSO networking. The project intervention logic suffered from the disconnect between the overall goal of giving a stronger voice to advocacy CSOs in legislative processes, and the activities/outputs foreseen. No indication was given on how the NSCP would align with the

means by which they could hold the Parliament accountable for the legislative process and the implementation of laws.

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II. Introduction and devem8ction ane(anme(ev)t)4(d)coevu

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national expert hired under the Transtec contract with UNDEF. The evaluation methodology LV VSHOOHG RXW LQ WKH FRQWUDFW¶V 2SHUDWLRQDO 0DQXDO
Pursuant to the terms of the contract, a Launch Note (UDF-LEB-10-375) was prepared describing the analysis methodology and instruments used during the evaluation mission to Lebanon (Beirut). The evaluators interviewed IndyAct staff, external consultants in charge of the NCSP implementation and Members of Parliament. Due to the political situation over the last two years, the evaluation team faced many difficulties in meeting project stakeholders in particular the Parliamentary authorities and the external consultancy team responsible for this project implementation. All of them had left at the time of evaluation. Nonetheless the evaluation team met a representative sample of beneficiaries in Beirut. Annex 3 contains the complete list of persons interviewed.

During the preparatory work, the evaluators identified several issues, which they followed up on during the fieldwork in Lebanon. These included:

- **Ability of the project to reach its anticipated outcomes** as it had ambitious goals considering the Lebanese political situation. As

III. Project strategy

(i) Project approach and strategy

The Creating Civil Society- Parliament Liaison Unit in Lebanon project sought to enhance trust building and better cooperation among advocacy CSOs and between CSOs and the Lebanese

Before the project, a first round of CSO mapping was conducted by IndyAct to identify CSOs that were working on advocacy issues. This basic survey demonstrated that none of them had relationships with the Parliament and that there was no official process to engage CSOs with the Parliament to push laws through the legislative process further and faster. IndyAct used these assessments as a means to develop a CSO needs assessment and the NCSP agenda for action. The agenda for essential services provided the focus for the establishment of the NCSP and the basis for discussions between CSOs and the Parliament. The project targeted 50 advocacy CSOs. Each CSO had its own focus based on its institutional and practical experiences. As part of this process, a training program was designed and implemented to strengthen the CSOs ¶ advocacy skills and to professionalize Lebanese CSO activities.

(ii) Logical framework

The following W D E O H V X P P D U L] H V W K H V U P D F W L V W R X W S X W V contributing to the ultimate development objective. The table is based on the original logical framework provided by IndyAct. The logical framework does not clearly demonstrate the natp1 BT 1 0 0 1 405.43 557.23 Tm [(cl)5(ea)3(r)-3(l)15(y)11( )] TJ ET BT 1 0 0f0 1 70.8Ca 1 0 0 BT 1 0

MPs in which chosen advocacy CSOs present their legislative demands, and discuss them together. M3 is the second seminar in month 19	
4.1Design template for newsletter and develop process for collecting articles, editing, formatting, printing and distribution through electronic and hard copies to MPs, decision makers, and NGOs 4.2 Producing and distributing newsletter every month	4. Produce a monthly newsletter through which MPs are updated on advocacy CSOs work
5.1Contact MPs and request meetings according to the priorities and interests of CSOs	5. Organize at least 100 meetings between CSOs and MPs
6.1 Draft the legislation 6.2 Have at least 10 MPs sign on the legislation for it to enter the legislative process 6.3 Advocate for the adoption of the legislation	6. Have a draft legislation on CSO participation
Outcome 2: The skills of CSOs in advocacy campaigning is strengthened and increased	
1.1Build agenda and content of workshop, and conduct logistical preparations for the event 1.2 Conduct training workshop	1. Organize training workshop for advocacy CSOs

IV. Evaluation findings

(i) Relevance

The project objective was totally consistent with one of the national Lebanese priorities, which calls for better democratic governance. Although, the political turbulence in the country has affected the results of the Parliamentary agenda, the political situation indicates that there is still a need for an emphasis on national and inclusive dialogue between civil society and state institutions in particular in terms of the accountability of state institutions, and the inclusive participation of citizens. Democratic governance is also seen as an essential component for conflict prevention, and Parliaments, being the representative body of the people, can be well suited to managing social crises, preventing violent conflict and bringing about lasting peace. The wave of popular demand for more inclusion and a stronger voice for citizens across the region, which accompanies the events of the Arab Spring, underlines a strong need to engage in dialogue and strengthen the relationships between state and society.

The project strategy of strengthening interactions between CSOs and the Parliament made it relevant from a political, social, and economic development perspective as it is widely recognized that an improved CSO advocacy performance program is intrinsically linked with reconciliation and the consolidation of the rule of law and social cohesion. The concept of pooling CSO resources into a unique and consolidated structure through the establishment of the National Civil Society Parliament liaison unit to provide CSOs with services and liaise with the Parliament was also relevant to support various CSO causes for the benefit of a more democratic and fair society and for informing the Parliament to the people ¶ Needs.

The intervention logic was based on the inclusive participation of CSOs in setting up the NCSP unit, which was also relevant. The CSO needs assessment conducted with the baseline survey and the NCSP concept presentation to a large panel of stakeholders strengthened interactions among advisory CSOs and made the project relevant from a CSO cohesion perspective. However, a number of strategic weaknesses in the project design ultimately weakened relevance (as well as effectiveness, see below). Specifically, the project implementation modalities were only vaguely related to the stated objectives:
While the main objectives were clearly stated, implementation modalities were only briefly explained in the project document. It is surprising that the project document did not refer to IndyAct ¶ Past experience and knowledge in the public and political area, and that there was no contextual information given on what the main respective internal CSOs and Parliamentary challenges were to date and what was needed for the NCSP to become a reference tool for CSO policy influence. The project document treated each activity in isolation and did not specify how the NCSP activities would attain the status of being a

reference tool for advocacy CSOs or legislative policy makers, nor how it would contribute to legislatives changes.

- Potential Links and common needs between advocacy CSOs and the Lebanese Parliament were not explored. While the project document stated that the NCSP would help to increase CSO advocacy skills,

(ii) Effectiveness

Several planned activities were apparently implemented on time and according to schedule. Meetings among advocacy CSOs to present the NCSP concept and approach was an important first step in building trust to facilitate a common understanding of CSO advocacy challenges including CSO V professional needs. Most project interviewees, including CSO beneficiaries, MPs, and the UNDP officer in charge of the milestone report, expressed great interest in the creation of the NCSP. Several of the participants interviewed attributed this to the need to find alternative ways of influencing the legislative process. However, the project strategy was never really clear on how this would result in change. In this respect, the NCSP advisory council comprising nine members elected by a larger panel of advisory CSOs effectively contributed to the recognition of the NCSP by CSOs. Nonetheless, the logical link between the establishment of the NCSP as a catalytic liaison office between the Parliament and the advocacy CSOs and the expected outcome of influencing the legislative process was not made clear.

The restricted NCSP approach

Although the Liaison Officer worked on the NCSP ¶ **V**isibility through the newsletter, the efforts made by IndyAct and the NCSP unit did not pressure MPs and Parliamentary policy makers by demonstrating the necessity of the NCSP to increase CSO engagement and to establish conditions for trust building between CSOs and Parliament. The Parliament was not really involved in this project. The individual MPs stressed that they were informed about the project at the starting point but were never re-contacted by the NCSP liaison officer or IndyAct project manager to participate in project activities. As regards the lack of direct Parliament involvement, the MoU was not signed (output 2) between the NCSP and the

are not willing to work together. The IndyAct project did not change the CSOs ¶practices or their perception of the Parliament and it in fact re-enforced current practices where the empowerment of advisory CSOs is seen as an action outside of the public authorities ¶ agenda.

While the project Final Narrative Report does not specify whether outcomes/impacts refer to legislative changes and policy changes, information gathered during interviews suggested that the lack of interaction between CSOs and the Lebanese Parliament also reduced the overall impact. There is no evidence that MPs and Parliamentary administration are more aware of & 6 2 Ve¶ legislative demands. The evaluation as well as the final report primarily concerned activities and outputs and the indicators provided could not be verified and were not detailed enough to extrapolate the impact. At the time of the evaluation visit; the project had not made any specific contribution so far to the issues of the ongoing legislative process. As relayed by a beneficiary interviewee, there was no creation of new information which could be used by advocacy CSOs and/ or legislative policy makers as a reference tool for discussion. Although the political situation does not facilitate the relationships between civil society and MPs, the reactions of individual MPs encountered give little reason to hope that the project had a substantial impact.

(v) Sustainability

The assessment of the sustainability of such a project would require a systematic process, tracing the NCSP ¶ relationship with the Lebanese Parliament, to assess the extent to which the NCSP interactions with Parliamentary stakeholders contribute to trust building and partnerships for social cohesion.

The evaluators are, however, doubtful that this project will be able to make any sustainable changes. The project did not touch upon the strategic issue of Parliamentary functioning or on Parliamentary challenges faced on the issues of accountability and transparency - it only dealt with the fragmented situation of advocacy CSOs. Indeed, it is the zero-sum game principle because there is no change

CSOs in the past, isolated NCSP project activities, a lack of NCSP ownership and collaborative and new CSO initiatives towards the Parliament. The lack of an NCSP mechanism to catalyze CSOs/PE common needs was also a missed opportunity to build broader support for the policy changes.

VI. Recommendations

To strengthen similar projects in the future, the team recommends:

i. Pressing more forcefully for Parliament

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VII. ANNEXES

Annex 2: Documents Reviewed:

Related documents

IndyAct project document,

IndyAct Mid-term an Q X D O S U R J U H Strengthening local NGOs in areas where extractive operate ´

IndyAct, Milestone, verification mission report, April 2013 2010

IndyAct Final Narrative report

IndyAct, minutes of meeting Dr Riad GhannamFˆCSO Liaison Unit - Lebanese Parliament, July 2012

IndyAct, minutes of meeting for Opening Ceremony and future plans for the unit, November 2012

IndyAct, Minutes of pre-launching of the NCSP, January 2013

IndyAct, NCSP Liaison Unit, Minutes of Meeting, February 2013

IndyAct, NCSP Liaison Unit, Minutes of Meeting - General Meeting IV, January 2013

Annex 4: Acronyms

CBO	Communities Based Organizations
CD	Community development
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSO	Civil Society Organization
IRE	Institute for Research and Empowerment
LG	Local Government
MPs	Members of Parliament
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NCSP	