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by the Council of Europe

Seed funding for grass root initiatives on youth engagement in peace and democratic processes in the Euro-Mediterranean region

NARRATIVE REPORT

Get Heard Plus

1 Novembre 2019 to 29 February 2020

Implemented by

Youth Empowerment Society

INSTRUCTIONS

Complete the information above and below. You are encouraged to add visual elements such as photographs, tables, graphics, etc. and you may format the document as you wish, as long as you answer the questions in the following pages.

Make sure you attach the financial report and all support documents specified in the guidelines for reporting, as well as statistics and media and visibility elements.

If you have doubts contact Lisbon.forum@coe.int



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Description of the Organisation and the project

Background of the Organisation

Briefly explain the founding and work which has been implemented by the Organisation (as in the application form)

Currently, we are implementing many projects, including the project (Get Heard) that launched in 2018. This is an initiative that highlights rights and laws to protect women and helps broadcast their stories to the world. It's implemented with the support of IRI (International Republican Institute) and funding of The Euro-Mediterranean Foundation of Support to Human Rights Defenders (EMHRF) in partnership with Code For Africa, and other educational institutions based in Morocco. (Get Heard) aims to introduce girls and women from different Moroccan cities to the national and international laws and regulations protecting them from sexual harassment, violence and extortion.

Get Heard+ uses its online platform (Sem3iSawtk.Com) to teach them basic skills and techniques to produce their own podcast, in order to have a voice online to tell their stories.

The project has achieved worldwide success where we participated in the World Forum for Democracy in Strasbourg and the Evidence Symposium on Adolescents and Youth in the Middle East and North Africa from UNICEF at the American University of Beirut. Our last participation was an invitation from your North-South Center to participate in the 3rd Regional Workshop for the Empowerment of Women: "Narrowing the gap between the rhetoric and practice to protect women from violence" in Madrid. Then the project was covered through international media platforms, including the Aljazeera, the BBC Arabic, and the DW Arabic.

<http://bit.ly/2PrmFon>

<http://bit.ly/2W25PyU>

Currently, we supervise over the implementation of the programme "Young Mediterranean Voice" after we were chosen by the British Council as a forum of debates. 'Young Med Voices' (YMV) is a regional programme aimed at developing skills and opportunities for youth-led debate across the Arab region, and supporting youth to speak up and be heard. Jointly launched in 2011 by the Anna Lindh Foundation and British Council, YAV has already involved more than 80,000 young people in debating activities across Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. The Programme is built and delivered through partnerships with universities, schools and NGOs, ensuring the involvement of youth from different social and geographical backgrounds.

Context

Explain the context within the project (as in application form)

Our selection of the project presented to you is related to the topics mentioned in your announcement. We will work on the following topics:

- Increasing the number and type of grass-roots activities in order to reach out to more marginalized youth;
- Advocating for gender issues and gender-based discrimination in the context of youth, peace and security
- Implementing target actions for gender mainstreaming;
- Advocating for the recognition of the contribution of youth civil society to peace and security;
- Improving recognition of civil society initiatives for promoting and building peace, taking into account the needs and priorities of the context in the countries

As well as the idea of the project it is related to the recommendations made by the working groups at the Lisbon meeting. Prioritise gender issues in the political agenda to better integrate the gender perspective and women participation in peace processes.

The presented project aims to contribute to the local and national civil society's fight against violence against women and in particular sexual harassment and sexual assault.

The number of Moroccan women who were victims of sexual harassment and violence increased in 2015, from 54% to 63%, as highlighted in the 2015 annual report of the National Observatory on Violence against Women.

Beyond the violations identified by the report, it can be assumed that there is a large number of cases of violence not identified

because they were not reported by the victims.

It is in this context that YES wishes to contribute, through its project focusing on raising awareness about sexual harassment and sexual assault, to the elimination of all forms of violence against women.

To this end, the association received funding from the International Republican Institute (IRI) and The Euro-Mediterranean Foundation of Support to Human Rights Defenders (EMHRF) for improving knowledge of women's rights among 120 young women (between the ages of 18 and 35) and to encourage them to report and advocate against harassment, sexual extortion and gender-based violence.

The support obtained, in the amount of € 17,000 for a period of 1 Year, enabled YES to launch its "Get Heard" project in the 6 cities in Morocco, where it organised 6 workshops aimed at improving its beneficiaries' knowledge about advocacy mechanisms, international standards on women's rights and the use of new methods and techniques for defending such rights.

The association also produced 20 podcasts on testimonies from participants.

Desiring to extend this experience to the cities of Fes, Casablanca and Houceima, YES is requesting support from your centre in order to pursue its activity for 60 new female manual workers in plants and factories and 30 female students, as follows:

- Three awareness-raising campaigns aimed at encouraging beneficiaries to report sexual harassment and sexual assault.
- Three training sessions about communication tools and the use of podcasts to report and advocate against harassment on the social networks.
- The production of podcasts linked to the testimonies of victims of violence and sexual assault, to contribute to preventing harassment at all levels in society.

For reference, the proposed project is on your website as a good practice after participating with you in a 3rd Regional Workshop for the Empowerment of Women: "Narrowing the gap between the rhetoric and practice to protect women from violence"

Objectives of the project

Explain the objectives of the project (as in the application form)

Impact (overall objective)

we targeted 60 women from 3 marginalized regions of Morocco, aged between 18 and 30, were involved in women rights advocacy process, and we made sure they are up to the date on the new law to combat violence against women in Morocco

Specific objectives

Learn the basics of women's rights advocacy.

Identify the international laws and conventions such as SIDA convention and ISTANBUL convention that is related to the subject. How to use media tools to defend women's right.

Targeted group(s)

Specify the target group (as in the application form)

60 Moroccan girls aged between 18 to 30 Years from Casablanca, Fez, Al Hoceima

How many young people contributed to the project?

The project was implemented by young teamwork, aged (between 19 and 32), including 4 young females and 3 young males. the project manager, coordinator and two teamwork members got compensation.
3 volunteer members.

The trainers received consulting compensation.

Also, the trainers were 75% females, due to the sensitivity of the discussed topics, and for the participants to not feel embarrassed about the disclosure, cooperating with expert trainers within the domain.

Methodology

How did you start?

At the beginning of the project, we launched the participation application form in Arabic, where we received more than 130 participation requests from the targeted regions. After that, the team selected the participants and contacted them via e-mail. At the same time, coordination was done with local partners in the targeted areas:

JCI Casa Horizon association in Casablanca

Pioneering Women Association for Development, Fez

Women Association for Development and Solidarity in Al Hoceima

For the trainers, they were selected based on their experience and their relation to their professional background, plus to the objectives of the project. At this stage, so that three female trainers were selected :

Khadija Khafid is a graduate of the Higher Institute of Journalism and Information and a trainer in advocacy and women's rights domain

Hafida Chahra, coordinator of the Young Lawyers Association and responsible for a protection center for women victims of violence

Fadwa Kamal is an international digital expert and trainer. She is the founder of Hacks/Hackers Casablanca, a Moroccan chapter of the international network that organizes collaborations among journalists and technology experts: In part, she convened meet-ups on fighting fake news, mobile reporting and many other innovative topics. In 2017 and 2018, Kamal led the StoryLab Academy training hundreds of journalists in Morocco for Google News Lab, the World Bank, and, Code for Africa. In 2019, Kamal is a Social Media Solutions program trainer for International Center for Journalists, in collaboration with the Facebook Journalism Project, training journalists on best practices in verification to separate fact from fiction; online safety; building audience rapport; and using social media to create news content, Kamal just completed an M.Sc. degree in International Political Economy at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland..

Bilal ElMaaroufi is a founder of Media Space For Advocacy and trainer of advocacy with local institutions

Then the training materials for the training sessions were designed according to the project objectives and the aiming results for it (the training materials are attached to the report in Arabic, but the material summaries have been translated to English language)

For training sessions, which were in two days in each city :

Casablanca 23 and 24 Novembre 2019

Fez 21 and 22 December 2019

Al Hoceima 22 and 23 February 2020

The full program is attached to the report

At the same time, the teamwork was publishing awareness publications on the official page of the project, which estimated 7000 followers from Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia.

www.facebook.com/sem3isawtk.com

How did you monitor the implementation?

Implementation was monitored by teamwork made up of expert people who have separated depending on the tasks: coordinating with the participants, communicating, and coordinating with the incubated associations for training. A specialized team's task was to prepare the training material and evaluation for the work of trainers before and after each training. Also, evaluation forms were relied upon which were designed to measure the extent of the participants' absorption of the training material. After the exercises, samples of the participants were interviewed over the phone to assess their benefit and the changes in their personal experiences after participating in the program.

Did you use any of the Council of Europe expertise and tools (conventions, publications, standards, etc.)?

Among the resources that we relied on was the Istanbul convention, on the recommendation of Mr. Graziano during the Skype meeting before the implementation of the project. Where we printed the convention and shared it with all the participants, and the trainers explained the terms of the agreement in a simple way.

If there were any changes to the initial plan please specify.

Yes, we had some changes in the work plan, especially when the transfer of funds was late in order to complete the training workshops.

On the other hand, we overcame the challenges we faced, especially in Al Hoceima region, given that the region does not allow girls to participate in social life.
It is also considered a hotspot after the movement that defined the Reif region in Morocco and the arrest of movements leaders which made young and elder women afraid of going through human rights experiences of any type.
To overcome the fears, we have cooperated with a local society that has a good reputation among residents for communicating with the targeted groups. It made communication easier for us, and the licensing process for training.

Outcomes/Results

Description of results

What were the achievements?

The achievements were:

To Complete all project objectives and activities despite the challenges

Thus we ran 3 training sessions

More than 80 young women benefited from it

The most important achievement was persuading and convincing participants to provide audio and video recordings to a group of participants who shared their experiences with sexual harassment and shared their dreams and aspirations to live in safety and peace with providing their recommendations for the role of the democratic process in peacebuilding.

Among the achievements that we are proud of is some participants presented the content in Berber dialect with a very distinctive expression about their desire to overcome the difficult conditions that some of them in their regions and share their dreams and aspirations

The number of recorded audio and video content reached 15 videos and podcasts,

<https://soundcloud.com/sem3isawtk>

How did the seed funding contribute to the implement the key findings of the 2018 Lisbon Forum on “youth, peace and security”?

As was indicated in our request for this support, we focused on implementing the project on contributing to the achievement of the following recommendations

Prioritize gender issues in the political agenda to better integrate the gender perspective and women's participation in peace processes

Because the project mainly works on making women's voices heard and enable women's roles to attain a stable life for Moroccan women, free from violence and thus achieve the social security that we aspire to.

Was the role of young people in democratic promotion, social cohesion, peace building – all elements within the youth, peace and security (YPS) agenda recognized? Explain how?

Through the discussions that took place during the training workshops, there was an implicit recognition by the participants of the role of youth in promoting democracy, social cohesion, and peacebuilding

So we tried to formulate the concept through an in-depth discussion using the World Coffee methodology for discussion on three levels, as follows:

- Democracy's relationship with peacebuilding and social cohesion

- Political practices and social representations that hinder the role of youth in promoting democracy, social cohesion, and peacebuilding

- Positive practices to empower youth roles in promoting democracy, social cohesion, and peacebuilding

How did the funding increase the organisations expertise on “youth, peace and security”?

This experience has greatly contributed to strengthening our team's capacities in understanding new concepts related to building peace and security by promoting democracy.

this opportunity allowed us to open up to a new experience, develop our project work, and link it directly to security and peace, especially with the selection of some areas which defines popular mobility and contributed to enriching the discussion, such as Al-Hoceima, which we considered a unique experience for us, where the discussion was linked more to the look for more solutions and face the challenges.

How do you intend to follow-up the project? What are the follow-up mechanisms which you will put into place now that the project has ended?

Through the recommendations that we reached through interviews with some participants and after the positive results achieved by Get Heard+ project, Get Heard is in the early stages, which culminated in several media productions, strengthening the capabilities of dozens of young women, and inviting us to talk about our experience in several international forums and international media platforms, the last of which was the report on the experience in a Moroccan TV channel named "AlAoula" and our participation in Paris Peace Forum and France 24. We developed an idea for a new version of the project "Get Heard+" that differs from the previous one neither in terms of inputs nor in terms of outputs, and the basic idea this time is to complete our baseline work by creating a correspondence team for the digital platform and making it a participatory platform open for girls and women to express all creative means.

This makes us want to cooperate with you in a new phase, hoping to create a group of female graduates from media institutes and women's activists who belong to various regions of Morocco specialized in the mechanisms of creative, digital media production that serve women's issues in Morocco and let women voices Get Heard.

Moroccan TV channel: <https://web.facebook.com/Sem3iSawtk/videos/2618117808277291/>

France 24 : <https://youtu.be/oprg4PT6XUg>

What was the overall evaluation from beneficiaries of the project?

We adopted the pre-assessment and post-assessment, as it was distributed to the participants before training and after the training in order to compare their benefit from the training and the results were as follows:

In terms of statistics, we wanted to follow up on how our program impacts our female participants and how effective the training is, using post-workshop forms.

Furthermore, it seemed pertinent to share a few statistics for your review. As we expected, more than 80 % of our participants never heard of the Istanbul Convention (The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence).

While 45% just got introduced to CEDAW (The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women) for the first time in their lives. Also, only around 30 percent of them are familiar with Law 103-13 (Law on the elimination of violence against women in Morocco) and its updated versions.

Importantly, over 65% of the female participants suggested that we organize and/or facilitate intensive training destined to them and covering deeper aspects of these laws and their application using real-life cases. This according to them could be built in a TOT format so they could redeliver the training to their peers and increase the positive impact.