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Lot 5: Mediterranean (MED) Region

***Synthesis Report for the
Enhancing Opportunities
for Women in Economic
Life (EOWEL)***

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1. INTRODUCTION

In its Technical Proposal, the MED Monitoring Contractor proposed to elaborate and submit to the EC Synthesis Reports on the main Regional Programmes. The role of these Synthesis Reports is to present briefly the intervention logic or the Programme, the implemented work plan, the monitoring results and their analysis. Experience from the past had shown that the Synthesis Reports, due to their concise and consolidated content, have been very welcome by the EC Services.

This is the first ROM Synthesis Report on the programme EOWEL – “Enhancing Opportunities for Women in Economic Life”, and it relates to the monitoring of the programme performed by two experts between the 16th of September and the 22nd of October 2007, in 7 out of the 9 partner countries addressed by the Programme. As a result of this regional mission, eight Monitoring Reports have been produced, one on each of the EOWEL projects.

In addition to the individual Monitoring Reports, the MED Monitoring team hopes that this Synthesis Report will provide the EC services with an overview of the strong and weak points of the different interventions as well as of the programme as a whole, taking into consideration common features as well as focusing on the strategic value of EOWEL as a programme, and not only as a group of projects. Also, this report aims to identify some recommendations for the improvement of the performance of the programme until its end, and to point out some lessons learnt that could nourish future EC women’s empowerment interventions in the region.



2. PROGRAMME SYNOPSIS

2.1. Background of the Programme

The Mediterranean countries show one of the lowest rates in the world of women's participation in the paid labour force. This situation remains so, despite the fact that in several countries notable advances have been made in closing the gender gap terms of educational and achievement, normally regarded as a key factor in enhancing women's economic participation. On the other hand, the link between gender and development has been widely recognised, since the active participation of women is demonstrated to be a key factor in socio-economic development. However, a number of obstacles to women's full economic participation remain in the political, legal and cultural fields, in addition to the economic field.

The EOWEL programme is the result of the cooperation among the EU countries, governments of Mediterranean partner countries and NGOs from both regions. Almost seven years have passed since the Euro-Mediterranean Conference on the Promotion of Women in Economic Development took place. This conference was followed in July 2001 by a regional forum on the "Role of Women in Economic Development: the Equality Dimension between Men and Women in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership", attended by both government and NGO participants. The forum discussed national reports prepared by various experts from the Mediterranean partner countries that were present, as well as several thematic reports based on studies carried out on the subject of women participation in the labour market in Europe, and existing programmes for promotion of enterprises directed by women.

The 2001 Communication from the Commission to the European Council and the European Parliament, entitled "Re-invigorating the Barcelona Process", emphasizes the need to take account of the social impact of economic transition at the regional level to complement measures already included under the National Indicative Programmes (NIPs) of the Mediterranean Partner countries¹.

Enhancement of the role of women in economic development is specifically mentioned, along with the implementation of best practice on linking training policies with employment needs. Greater attention is recommended to the sector of justice and home affairs, which includes seeking conformity of judicial systems, including family and inheritance law. The Regional Co-operation Strategy Paper 2002-2006 for the Mediterranean region recognises the need to respect in all programmes the crosscutting priorities of human rights, good governance, environment and gender"²

The MEDA Regional Indicative Programme (2002-2004) stated that whilst "progress has been made in improving civil and political rights of women in Mediterranean partner countries, ways need to be found to promote opportunities for women in economic life, and to remove obstacles to using their resources for economic development".

EOWEL was adopted in this general framework, as the main EC-funded programme intended to reduce the gender gap in the MEDA region through the integration of women in economic activity.

2.2. Programme Intervention Logic

The programme Enhancing Opportunities for Women in Economic Life (EOWEL) intends to provide a coordinated package of interventions in the mentioned fields, in order to thwart the unbalanced situation. Priority areas of intervention identified include: impact assessment of micro-credit/micro-finance schemes in the region, studies of the impact of macro-economic policies on women and men, development of gender-sensitive vocational training programmes, as well as training in leadership, and economic and legal literacy; capacity building of media institutions and internet networks to provide ongoing support to gender equality issues and, in particular, women's enhanced economic participation.

¹"Re-invigorating the Barcelona Process" Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament COM (2000) 497 final

² Euro-Mediterranean Regional Co-operation Strategy Paper 2000-2006, European Commission June 2000

Through a call for proposals, 7 projects were selected to be developed by non governmental organisations in 9 Mediterranean partner countries (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Syria and Turkey) and a technical assistance project to monitor and disseminate projects' results, together with advocacy actions focused towards gender mainstreaming in national public policies.

The Programme aims globally at “promoting opportunities for women’s participation in economic life by developing and supporting measures to eliminate underlying structural obstacles notably in policy formulation and planning including gender impact analysis of macro-economic policies, micro-credit programmes, training and capacity-building, information-sharing and networking” (overall objective).

The specific objectives are:

- To improve integration of women in the labour market;
- To facilitate the creation and the management of enterprises by women;
- To provide better access to financial tools and mechanisms; and
- To develop capacity-building, education and vocational training for civil servants and members of non-profit organisations, NGOs, Mediterranean resource centres, and focal points.



2.3. Projects under the Programme

The main features of all the Projects of the Programme are recapitulated in the table overleaf:

Table 1: Projects under the Programme

N	CRIS contr.	Project Title	Coordinator	End date	EC Budget	Partner Countries	Short Description	Mgmt
1	113240	Role of women in economic life (RWEL)	British Council	31/12/08	1.781.100	UK, Cyprus	The project has 3 specific objectives: (1) Monitor the "Enhancing of Opportunities for Women in Economic Life (EOWEL)" projects and ensure coherence through the provision of overall coordination and technical and administrative assistance to the EOWEL partners and related MEDA authorities in charge of gender policies; (2) Produce studies on Gender Mainstreaming policies in the Mediterranean countries and build a database for policy formulation and planning that will reinforce women's actual contribution to the economy; (3) Collect information related to gender equality knowledge- base and promote visibility through awareness-raising actions.	AIDCO HQ
2	112878	Creating new opportunities and network facilities for marginalised home-based working women (HBWW)	Planet Finance Morocco	30/06/07	298504	Morocco, Turkey	The project aims to set up a Mediterranean Centre for home-based working women in the textile sector, which will offer sustainable business models and actively support trade with training, networking and organisation.	EC Del. in LBN
3	112872	Free to Work	Tatawor	28/12/07	33026	Jordan, OPT	The project aims at anticipating the needs and modifications in employment within the companies in Amman and Gaza in order to identify the actual and potential markets as well as the human resources necessary for their development.	EC Del. in LBN
4	112880	Economic empowerment of rural Palestinian women: a joint Israeli, Palestinian and European Project (EERPW)	NISPED	01/01/08	360025	Israel, OPT, Italy, Belgium	The twofold purpose of the project is: 1. Capacity building leading to independent income-generating rural enterprises run by rural Palestinian women. 2. On-going, mutually beneficial economic ties between Palestinians/Israelis/Italians.	EC Del. in LBN
5	112894	Economic empowerment for Palestinian women: Turning Business ideas into reality (TBIIR)	CJAED	28/12/07	300044	Israel, OPT	The two-folded purpose of the project is: 1. Develop an entrepreneurship comprehensive training & support programme adapted to the women's needs for the start-up and initial fielding of enterprises in Ramallah, Hebron, Nablus, and Bethlehem. 2. Promote inter-regional cooperation and cross-border sharing of information by creating women's networks, providing opportunities for networking between Palestinian and Israeli (Jewish and Arab) women entrepreneurs and representative bodies.	EC Del. in LBN
6	112907	Femmes entrepreneuses en Méditerranée (FEM)	ENDA	30/06/08	485841	Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt Lebanon, France	Improve the standard of living and the capacity to generate sustainable income of 7676 women micro-entrepreneurs in the MEDA region (Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia).	EC Del. in LBN
7	112916	Gender Equality in Employment and Small enterprises (GEESE)	El Mobadara	27/12/07	349751	Jordan, OPT	The project aims to increase women access to credit and business development services required for effective management of their business, II: To provide un- employed women with vocational skills and the skills of business to increase their access to quality job opportunities and III: To support recognition of women contribution and improve image of women in the media.	EC Del. in LBN
8	112927	Sustainable Economic Opportunities for Women in the MEDA Region (SEOW - MENA)	CRTD.A	29/12/07	499999	Lebanon, Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Syria, Belgium	The project aims at putting in place sustainable opportunities for women's participation in economic life in the 5 selected countries of the MENA region.	EC Del. in LBN

3. WORK PLAN 2007

3.1. Monitoring Approach of the MED Monitoring Team

The portfolio of EC-funded Projects in the Mediterranean Region consists of various types of projects which mainly differentiate due to their:

- Design;
- Geographical location;
- Size and complexity;
- Central or deconcentrated management.

There are two main types of projects, to which all MED projects can be grouped: (a) National (bilateral), and (b) Regional.

The Programme “Enhancing Opportunities for Women in Economic Life” consists of 7 regional projects addressing various countries through specific interventions, and a technical assistance project to monitor and disseminate projects’ results, together with advocacy actions focused towards gender mainstreaming in national public policies. The responsibility for their implementation is usually with the Project Coordinator, i.e. the leader of the implementing consortium who is based in a MED country, while the EC Delegation in Beirut is responsible for the management of all EOWEL projects except the technical assistance project, which is based at the British Council office in Cairo and is managed centrally by the AIDCO/A3.

The MED Monitoring Team, based on its experience gained through the implementation of the ROM in the MED Region in the period 2002 to 2006, has classified (with the approval of the AIDCO/A2 and AIDCO/A3) the Regional Projects into three main categories with the characteristics summarised in the following table:

Code	Characteristics	Monitoring approach
A	Projects with strong components in the MED countries and/or projects addressing a small number of MED countries	Monitoring in the MED country where the big bulk of activity is implemented and/or the Project Coordinator is based.
B	Projects the main bulk of activity of which is implemented in one country (usually in Europe) by their EU leading partner, while there are some activities in the MED	The Projects’ Coordinators are visited first and, depending on the findings of these visits and on the needs of the Task Managers, a plan of sample visits to high priority partners and countries is set, which helps among other to identify best practices and problem issues. The number and locations (countries) of the sample visits is subject to the limits of the M-Project’s budget. In case of ex-post ROM the maximum possible number of partners is visited.
C	The implementation takes place in Europe to produce results concerning the MED Region	Visits to the Projects’ Coordinators in Europe.

The eight projects under the EOWEL Programme are classified under the Category A above.

The monitoring of such regional programmes is assigned to a pair of International Monitors, equally informed on the Programme and equally responsible for its monitoring, with complementary qualifications that ensure proper coverage of the sector expertise and the ROM experience. The Regional Support Network of Experts and the National Monitors of the ROM Team complement the pair of monitors in the visits to the MED countries. The Leading Monitor of the Programme, i.e. one of the two International Monitors, is responsible for the elaboration of the Synthesis Report and works for this purpose in close cooperation with the other monitor and the ROM Team members involved in the monitoring of the Programme in the field.

3.2. Incorporation of the Programme in the Workplan

The definition of the Monitoring Portfolio started with the reception of the list of projects to be monitored in 2007, prepared by AIDCO/A2 in coordination with the EC Delegations in MED Countries and with AIDCO/A3 for (non de-concentrated) regional programmes. The ROM Team contributed to the finalisation of the Portfolio through checking on the monitorability of the projects versus the three main monitorability criteria provided for in the ROM Methodology. Based on this, the ROM Team elaborated its proposed Workplan for 2007, which was agreed with the relevant EC Services and adjusted and consolidated through continuous coordination and consultation with the concerned AIDCO Units (A2 and A3 and with the EC Delegations).

In this framework, the 2007 Portfolio of the MED ROM Team comprised the following 8 EOWEL projects to be monitored in 2007:

- Role of women in economic life (RWEL) (British Council). Technical assistance project.
- Creating new opportunities and network facilities for marginalised home-based working women (HBWW) (Planet Finance Morocco)
- Free to work (Tatawor)
- Economic empowerment of rural Palestinian women: a joint Israeli, Palestinian and European Project (EERPW) (NISPED)
- Economic empowerment for Palestinian women: Turning Business ideas into reality (TBIIR) (CJAED)
- Femmes entrepreneuses en Méditerranée (FEM) (ENDA)
- Gender Equality in Employment and Small enterprises (GEESE) (El Mobadara)
- Sustainable Economic Opportunities for Women in the MEDA Region (SEOW - MENA) (CRTD.A)

The MED ROM Plan of Operations 2007 provided for the following plan for the monitoring of the projects in 2007:

Table 2: Portfolio of projects and monitoring plan of the projects in 2007

#	CRIS Contract	Title	Mission	BE	CY	FR	IT	UK	DZ	EG	IL	JO	LB	MA	PS	SY	TN	TK	Involved Countries	Visited countries	Monitoring Coverage
1	113240	Role of women in economic life (RWEL)	ME4		x			x		√									3	1	33%
2	112878	Creating new opportunities and network facilities for marginalised home-based working women	ME4											√				x	2	1	50%
3	112872	Free to Work	ME4									√			x				2	1	50%
4	112880	Economic empowerment of rural Palestinian women: a joint Israeli, Palestinian and European Project	ME4	x			x			√					√				4	2	50%
5	112894	Economic empowerment for Palestinian women: Turning Business ideas into reality	ME4							√					√				2	2	100%
6	112907	Femmes entrepreneuses en Méditerranée (FEM)	ME4			x				x			x	x			√		6	1	17%
7	112916	Gender Equality in Employment and Small enterprises (GEESE)	ME4							√		x							7	1	14%
8	112927	Sustainable Economic Opportunities for Women in the MEDA Region (SEOW - MENA)	ME4	x					x	x			√	x		x			9	1	11%
TOTAL				2	1	2	1	1	1	4	2	2	2	3	3	1	1	1	Average coverage		29%

√: Existing and visited partner, x: Existing partner

The main data of the Monitoring Mission in the frame of which the projects have been monitored in 2007 are presented in the following two Tables:

Table 3: Monitored projects in 2007

N°	Mission	Period	Projects monitored	Monitoring Reports produced
1	ME4	16/09/2007 to 22/10/2007	Role of Women in Economic Life (RWEL)	1
2			Creating new opportunities and networking facilities for marginalised home-based working women	1
3			Free to Work	1
4			Economic Empowerment of Rural Palestinian Women: a joint Palestinian, Israeli and European Project	1
5			Economic Empowerment for Palestinian Women: Turning Business Ideas into Reality	1
6			Femmes Entrepreneuses en Méditerranée (FEM)	1
7			Gender Equality in Employment and Small Enterprises (GEESE)	1
8			Sustainable Economic Opportunities for Women in the MENA region (SEOW-MENA)	1

Table 4: Overview of the monitoring activity for the Programme

Statistics of the Programme Monitoring Activity from 16/09/2007 to 22/10/2007			
N° of projects monitored	8	N° of monitoring operations	8
N° of specified sectors covered (at the level of CRIS code)	1	N° of monitoring reports	8
N° of missions undertaken	1	Million € covered (All projects monitored)	€4,4
N° of Countries visited	6	Average size of Project monitored (mio €)	0,6

3.3. Preparation of Missions

The preparation of the missions was carried out based on the experience on the monitoring of similar programmes gained in previous years. A key element for the successful preparation is the smooth, close cooperation with all involved actors and in particular with the responsible EC Delegation and the AIDCO/A3.

3.3.1. Cooperation with AIDCO

As mentioned in Section 3.2 above, the ROM MED Plan of Operations for 2007 was adjusted and consolidated through a continuous coordination and consultation with the AIDCO/A2, responsible for the MED Monitoring Project and the AIDCO/A3, responsible for Regional Programmes and Projects:

- On the level of AIDCO/A2, regular meetings were held to update the plan and to prepare the Monitoring Missions.
- On the level of AIDCO/A3, working contacts and consultation concerned fine-tuning of the “Regional Projects” component of the plan and preparation and organisation of all planned monitoring missions.

3.3.2. Cooperation with the EC Delegation

In the beginning of 2007, an Introductory Note was sent by AIDCO/A2 to all the concerned EC Delegations in MED Countries, presenting to them the portfolio of projects for 2007. Based on this Note, the MED ROM Project established its first working contact with the AIDCO/A3 and the EC Delegation in Lebanon on 23 March 2007, proposing dates and tentative contents for the monitoring missions for the Lebanon. On the basis of the obtained agreements, the monitoring mission preparation could take place within usual delays prior to the planned mission implementation.

3.3.3. Preparation and Organisation of the Monitoring Visits

As already mentioned in the previous sections, the timing of the monitoring missions had been set in March 2007, in cooperation with the AIDCO and the EC Delegation in Lebanon. In the case of the EOWEL projects, no need arose to modify this initial planning.

Two monitors were assigned to the monitoring of the EOWEL programme, as per the approach presented in section 3.1 above.

The Monitoring Team received the documentation through the AIDCO Responsible, the Delegation Responsible, the British Council (EOWEL Monitoring Team) and the different projects' managers.

Briefing and debriefing meetings with the EC Delegation in Lebanon and with AIDCO Headquarters were organised, as appropriate. These meetings took place in the following dates:

- September 20th, 2007: Briefing meeting at the EC Delegation in Lebanon (Ms. Lenka Vitkova, Operations Manager of EOWEL 7 NGO projects; Ms. María González Mata, monitor).
- October 1st, 2007: Briefing meeting at AIDCO Headquarters (Ms. Claire Kupper, Operations Manager of RWEL project, Ms. Lourdes Cantarero, monitor; Mr. Dragan Crnjanski, MED Monitoring Team Leader).
- October 12th, 2007: De-briefing meeting at AIDCO Headquarters (Ms. Claire Kupper, Ms. Lourdes Cantarero, Mr. Dragan Crnjanski).
- October 22nd, 2007: De-briefing meeting at the EC Delegation in Lebanon (Ms. Lenka Vitkova, Ms. María González Mata).



4. INSIGHTS OF THE PROGRAMME

4.1. Programme Performance by Monitoring Criteria

The following table presents the average performance of the projects, which were monitored in 2007. The performance of the projects is calculated as the average of the five monitoring criteria (Relevance and quality of project design, Efficiency of implementation to date, Effectiveness to date, Impact prospects, and Potential sustainability). For the calculation of the averages, the grades a, b, c, d have been replaced by scores 4, 3, 2, 1 respectively.

Table 5: Average ratings per each main criterion

Criterion	Average rating	Sample (Number of Projects)	Sample (Number of M-Reports)
Quality of project design	2,69	8	8
Efficiency	2,45	8	8
Effectiveness	2,65	8	8
Impact	2,77	8	8
Sustainability	2,70	8	8
AVERAGE	2,65	8	8

NOTE: *The Average of all reports produced for each project was calculated first and then the Average at Programme level (i.e. of all projects) was calculated.*

As presented in the above table, the Programme performed well (average performance at programme level is 2,65/4,00).

In end-2007, the following projects (monitored in 2007) are considered as successes (projects with ratings “a” and/or “b” for all criteria):

- Economic Empowerment for Palestinian Women: Turning Business Ideas into Reality (TBIIR)
- Femmes Entrepreneuses en Méditerranée (FEM)

None of the 8 EOWEL projects was assessed to be at a critical stage (two or more “d” ratings).



4.2. Projects' Performance by Monitoring Criteria and Prime Issues

Table 6: Average ratings for main criteria and prime issues

Code	Criterion	Projects								Average
		P1 RWEL	P2 HBWW	P3 FTW	P4 EERPW	P5 TBIIR	P6 FEM	P7 GEESE	P8 SEOW	
M1	Quality of project design	2,30	3,00	2,30	3,30	4,00	2,30	2,30	2,00	2,69
M11	Actual Relevance	3,00	3,00	3,00	4,00	4,00	3,00	3,00	2,00	3,13
M12	Feasibility & flexibility	2,00	3,00	2,00	3,00	4,00	2,00	2,00	2,00	2,50
M2	Efficiency to date	2,40	2,80	2,20	3,00	3,00	2,20	2,00	2,00	2,45
M21	Input availability	2,00	3,00	2,00	3,00	3,00	2,00	3,00	2,00	2,50
M22	Activity timeliness	2,00	3,00	2,00	2,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	2,00	2,25
M23	Results achievement	3,00	3,00	2,00	3,00	3,00	2,00	2,00	2,00	2,50
M24	Partner contribution & involvement	2,00	2,00	3,00	4,00	3,00	2,00	2,00	2,00	2,50
M3	Effectiveness to date	3,00	2,10	2,90	3,78	3,45	2,00	2,30	1,70	2,65
M31	Accessibility of results	3,00	2,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	2,00	3,00	2,00	2,63
M32	Use of results	3,00	2,00	3,00	4,00	3,00	2,00	2,00	2,00	2,63
M33	Project Purpose achievement	3,00	2,00	3,00	4,00	4,00	2,00	2,00	1,00	2,63
M34	Status of previous key observations	3,00	3,00	2,00				3,00	3,00	2,80
M4	Impact Prospects	3,00	3,55	2,90	2,82	3,00	2,00	2,82	2,10	2,77
M41	Ensuring of impact achievement	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	2,00	3,00	2,00	2,75
M42	Wider planned effects	3,00	4,00	3,00	N/A	3,00	2,00	N/A	2,00	2,83
M43	Status of previous key observations	3,00	4,00	2,00	2,00	N/A	N/A	2,00	3,00	2,67
M5	Sustainability	2,80	3,22	2,44	3,22	2,60	2,40	3,22	1,71	2,70
M51	Economic viability	2,00	3,00	2,00	3,00	2,00	2,00	3,00	N/A	2,43
M52	Local ownership	3,00	4,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	2,00	3,00	1,00	2,75
M53	Policy support	3,00	4,00	2,00	3,00	3,00	2,00	3,00	2,00	2,75
M54	Institution building	3,00	3,00	2,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	2,63
M55	Socio-cultural adequacy	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	2,00	2,88
M56	Gender equality	4,00	3,00	4,00	4,00	3,00	3,00	4,00	2,00	3,38
M57	Technology appropriateness	3,00	3,00	2,00	4,00	3,00	3,00	4,00	3,00	3,13
M58	Consideration for environ. protection	3,00	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,00	2,00	N/A	1,00	2,00
TOTAL AVERAGE		2,70	2,93	2,55	3,22	3,21	2,18	2,53	1,90	2,65

4.3. General Description of Findings

Despite big differences found among the projects monitored, it can be stated that, overall, the programme has produced some very important results to date: all eight projects were on track at the moment of the monitoring visit and, to a wider or narrower extent; they had already developed most planned activities and achieved a certain degree of effectiveness. However, their overall impact is rather limited, and important questions are posed as to their self-sustainability.

Although scores are just indicative and may only be taken into account as an early warning, the EOWEL programme as a whole presents a number of problems that need consideration. In this sense, it might be worth noting that 45% of total scores are “c”, and the issues of relevance and efficiency of the projects (with five “c” each out of 8 projects) are especially in need of careful attention and respective action. Another very important observation is that the impact of the programme EOWEL as a whole, beyond the impact of each individual project, has not been as important as expected.

Contributing to changing organisational culture through multi-level interventions strategies: gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for the work on gender equality which requires that the gender and gender equality perspective be incorporated into public policies, planning and administration. Gender mainstreaming means that gender equality work is transposed into the mainstream instead of being relegated to the sidelines. Implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy has shifted the focus to gender quality work with a proactive approach instead of a reactive approach. Focus has thus shifted from changing inequalities once they have arisen to preventing them from arising. Moreover, it is no longer merely a question of special initiatives, but of working from a holistic approach that encompasses the gender perspective. The gender mainstreaming experience amply demonstrates that multi-level intervention strategies are required to have any chance of bringing about change in organisational culture (Women and Gender Knowledge Network, 2007). Working with MEDA authorities in contributing to changing organisational culture would have been a necessary step for a more strategic approach of the programme.

Some major observations by criteria are mentioned below:

Overall relevance:

The majority of the monitored projects are relevant in terms of the needs identified by the beneficiaries. However, their intervention logic often displays deficiencies (as reflected in an inadequate logical framework). The most important shortcomings are the lack of clarity reflected in several project purposes (PP), the design of not integral but partial solutions, also reflected in inconsistencies between OO and PP, the lack of coherence reflected in the inclusion of activities that will not necessarily lead to achieving stated results and objectives, and a lack of realism by identifying inappropriate OVIs. In some cases, it has also been detected that the design of the budget is not coherent with the needs and goals identified by the management units. Finally, it may also be noted that although the majority of the projects have, in the course of implementation, included new activities or cancelled those not very relevant, most of them did not adjust the project design when needed nor did they revise the Logical Framework during project lifetime.

Working with boys and men for male transformation

One of the major innovative ideas of the Cairo (1994) and Beijing (1995) conferences was the concept of “male responsibility”. Despite the academic debate around this concept, we can state that “male responsibility” is based in the idea that men are still the main decision-makers, and they need to learn to respect women and work with them towards a more equal society. This concept includes, therefore, the active involvement of men in promoting gender equality and resisting violence against women. A very interesting example in the EOWEL programme is to be found in the intervention developed by NISPED, where 4 out of 12 district coordinators trained by the project were men. CRTD.A has also included men as necessary actors of its intervention in Lebanon. However, these initiatives have remained marginal if we consider the magnitude of the EOWEL programme. It is to be regretted that almost none of the projects has included activities with men as a necessary component of gender-based transformation. The programme has remained mostly “economic”, and, despite the fact that women were the main target group, this

example shows that a more strategic gender component is missing.

Efficiency of the programme:

Five out of eight monitored projects experience efficiency problems. Together with relevance, efficiency is assessed as the weakest criteria. Among the most important deficiencies one can note the unrealistic activity and expenditure schedules, inadequate profiles for various project positions, insufficiency of human resources and, more important, difficulties in translating activities into results. All the projects have faced delays in the implementation of the activities that may lead to the conclusion that preparation phases were not sufficiently taken into account when defining the timeframe. In some cases, the difficult political situation was at the core of the delays suffered (Israel/Lebanon war, worsening of the Israel/Palestine conflict and Palestinian internal conflict), although this does not fully justify these delays.

The added value of relevant indicators: economic empowerment and the need to simultaneously increase women's autonomy, mobility, decision-making and power within the household

"Women's empowerment" has suffered from some of the same conceptual confusion as "gender mainstreaming" (though to a much less extent). Ultimately, while mainstreaming has intended to affect policy structures, empowerment is about changing power relations, and it has typically focused on households and communities. Improved education (including adult literacy) for women has clear positive effects for children's health, while income in women's hands through micro credit or other means has the potential for better family nutrition and health. However, what is really needed for this potential to be realized is simultaneous increases in women's autonomy, mobility, decision-making authority and power within the household. Without this, micro-credit may end up increasing women's work burdens without giving them greater authority or control. Although EOWEL partners are aware of this, interventions should have indicators so as to measure changes in the power relations.

Effectiveness to date:

It is hard to assess the effectiveness of a project when the relevant OVIs have not been properly set and/or objectively measured. Some problems faced by the projects are: over-estimation of the number of potential beneficiaries, inadequate definition of assumptions and risks and a management not able to adapt to external factors. Although the majority of the projects are indeed targeting the identified beneficiaries, their magnitude is sometimes over-estimated. In view of this fact, the achievement of the PP is, in most cases, only partial.

From the informal to the formal sector: the need for a deep analysis of social determinants of access to labour market participation

Women entrepreneurs of MEDA countries often start on the micro-enterprise level and operate below the micro-finance ceiling. Because they face gender barriers in society as well as in their households, many of these businesses do not grow to become small businesses, much less mid-sized or larger firms. Most women micro-entrepreneurs are self-trained and need support to improve their products and their management skills. Similarly, staff of micro-credit institutions is constantly in need of specialised training as the institutions evolve and services become more sophisticated. In this sense, the need has been identified for all management units to reinforce their team capacities.

Impact prospects:

The main problem when assessing impact prospects comes in relation to the lack of relevant assumptions and the quality of the Overall Objectives. Other deficiencies identified are the absence of coherence and the danger of excessive spreading out or atomization, the fact that projects are often not in line with the installed institutional capacity and the lack of complementarity with other interventions. Notwithstanding some exceptions, NGO projects tend to work isolated. In spite of the above, the overall assessment is positive (one "a", five "b" and two "c") due to the fact that most of the NGOs enjoy a high public profile in their countries, ensure visibility of the respective projects and are committed to continue their work with the target groups after the end of the projects, implying that the probability of contributing to the overall objectives increases. It must however be noted that the programme EOWEL as a whole has failed to ensure a wider impact in the targeted countries, and has not produced significant synergies among its 8 projects. This is due to different factors, such as the programme initial design (an addition of different interventions as opposite to one coherent initiative composed by complementary interventions) and the absence of a strategic perspective. In addition to

a deficient intervention logic of the programme as a whole, as it will be further analysed, the RWEL project, developed by the British Council, has not produced expected results in this sense.

The added value of an effective networking

In a conducive environment, the cooperation with different public and private organizations at the national, regional and local level is giving some unexpected positive results. An effective and committed steering committee where all the main stakeholders are present is an asset when it comes to eliminate underlying structural obstacles notably in policy formulation and planning.

Potential sustainability:

Most of the interventions are not economically or financially sustainable without further external support. Apart from few exceptions, there is a lack of attention paid to the economic and financial viability of projects (no “phase-out” strategies have been developed) and the majority of the management units rely on future external funding. Whilst this might be understandable because of the short timeframe of most projects, NGOs should start to consider sustainability as an integral component and as part of the planning, and not only take it into account in the final stages.

Women participation in the decision-making and planning process

Women's empowerment projects showed a wide range of quality of life improvements, including increases in women's advocacy demands and organizational strengths, enhanced services, and policy and government changes as a result of advocacy. In view of this fact, a stronger participation of the final beneficiaries in the planning and decision-making process (e.g. within the NGOs through the creation of women's committees) would be a powerful indicator of women's empowerment.



Current situation

**1. RWEL
(British
Council -
BC)**

As a result of the problems faced by the management unit in relation to the weak intervention logic and the deficient allocation of resources, the RWEL efficiency is limited. To date, the project still presents certain weaknesses, which limit the quantity and quality of the results: (i) The Technical Assistance component has been very weakly developed for the EOWEL partners and practically non-existent for MEDA authorities. (ii) The establishment of a MEDA reflection group (policy advisor group) has been much delayed. (iii) The production of the Technical Studies documents has been much delayed as well. (iv) The Gender Equality Database for the MEDA region is not yet performing correctly. (v) The communication strategy for behavioural change and executive communication and promotion is under revision. As underlined, the major weakness detected, hindering the achievement of the project purpose, lies mainly in the choice of intervention strategy. Rather than focusing on strategic target groups and high impact actions, the BC team has concentrated the resources in time-consuming and report-demanding activities. As a result of having chosen that strategy, very few beneficiaries (according to those foreseen by the ToR) have access to the benefits and only a small number of those who have had access are using them. The contribution of the project in enhancing the role and impact of

MEDA public institutions to promote opportunities for women's economic participation remains very low.

**2. HBWW
(Planet
Finance
Morocco)**

Monitoring of the project took place one month before its end (30/10/07). The project had suffered serious delays and already a 4-month extension had been granted. Overall, main activities were completed or almost finished and there are important results at the end of the project: a Network of 7 cooperatives/women associations has been created in Morocco and a Cooperative was created in Ankara (the second women cooperative in Turkey) by 25 women who had gone through all stages of the project, the "Femmes artisanes" fair trade network with a user-friendly website -www.femmesartisanes.org- in English and French (provided with a logo and an attractive design) and the start-up of the commercialisation of the products (Morocco: through the shop "Sunny Side" in Casablanca; Turkey: the cooperative started opening some marketing channels). Main challenges to date include the soundness of both networks for sustainability (most probably, they will require the support of PFM and CWYF for some time after the end of the project), and to professionalize the "Femmes Artisanes" product (register the name as a trade mark, further develop their fair trade image), opening the marketing possibilities to other regions and internationally. Prospects for impact and sustainability are optimistic, but public support, remarkable in Morocco (Ministry of Tourism, municipalities), still needs strengthening in Turkey.

**3. Free to
work
(Tatawor)**

"Free to Work" relevance is mainly due to its intervention logic. The key of the project's success is that it simultaneously works with the supply and demand side of the labour market. At the same time, the chosen methodology to improve the capacities of women (Portfolio of Competencies) in being very well accepted by the intermediate and final beneficiaries. The choice of working in network with strategic partners such as the Chamber of Industry (JCI), the Jordanian Human Resources Management Association (JHRMA), the Arab Women Association (AWO) and Society Voice Association (SVA), is very appropriate and helps in approaching the complexity of the problem from different angles. The role played by the steering committee in the actual Jordanian environment is a very interesting approach as well. It proves that working with a wide range of organizations and beneficiaries is possible and effective, and substantially reinforces the future prospects of the project. To date, 60% of planned women beneficiaries have had access to the project services through the different partners. The level of satisfaction in relation to the Portfolio of Competencies tool is higher than expected. This tool happens to be a very good way of enhancing the capacities of women, helping them to develop their self-esteem, and contributing to their empowerment. However, this has not yet been translated into an increase in labour market participation. The management team is facing the obstacles derived from the social determinants of access to labour market participation. The most tangible impact to date is in the joint work among different civil society organisations, public and private institutions and their advocacy actions towards the improvement of women labour conditions.

**4. EERPW
(NISPED)**

Monitoring of the project took place 3 months before its end (01/01/08). The project suffered major constraints in relation to human resources (health problems caused the departure of NISPED and YEP managers, and YEP new manager was substituted as well). EERPW lost time and track of some activities due to these changes. Planned cost of training activities was severely underestimated (59,000 Euros were spent in year 1 instead of 16,800 planned); however, no addendum was requested to the EC. This over-spending also prevents the project to perform VT and skills training for all the women (only 17 out of 82), and duration of the first training ("needs assessment", "how to start your own business", and "principles of marketing") was shorter, although it delivered very good results among 82 beneficiaries. Both networking activities and contribution of the EU and Israel partners (Technical Assistance to the implementing organization - YEP) should have been better defined at the start, as they remain very limited to date: YEP took over more responsibilities than planned and should have required stronger support from its partners (and upgrading in the development of impact assessment tools). The building of ties with Italian and Israeli women seems limited to date: the outcomes of the Conference of November 2007 remain crucial. The creation of a network of 12 district coordinators is a very good result, and the dissemination of the project is remarkable in Palestine and the EU. The prospects for beneficiary women to open their own business are good for at least 5 who are seeking credit now, although it is crucial that the "12" will

support beneficiaries after the end of the project. Prospects for sustainability are doubtful without a commitment of the 12 and without the further support from YEP and the other partners to market beneficiaries' products.

**5. TBIIR
(CJAED)**

The implementation of activities suffers from a 3-month delay, and an extension is required to finish the last phase of the project (an addendum has been asked to the EC to extend the project until the end of March 2008). The coordination experience has been very successful, building on a previous partnership between CJAED and YEP. Main results to date include the training of 87 women in entrepreneurship, although the original target group of young educated women was changed by less educated women, sometimes rural, who showed more interest in the project: this does not constitute a relevant change in the intervention logic, as the initial target group was defined as "Palestinian women with a business idea". However, the stakeholder analysis should have been more detailed and well grounded, because the training courses needed to be simplified during implementation to target these women. Results to date are very good: 20 women have already developed a feasibility plan and requested credit and 15 trained consultants provide the beneficiaries with on-going business consultancy (87 women will develop their business plan by the end of the project). The establishment of (finally, one) businesswomen's network in Palestine is also delayed, but the project has already built strong relations with 6 women's cooperatives (400 members): challenges ahead include the election of a steering committee, define its mission, constitution and goals, assess funding needs, agree on an annual work plan. The project is very well embedded in grass-roots structures in Palestine and Israel, and their capacity to successfully find synergies with other projects - GTZ, USAID, Irfan Canada - allows for good sustainability predictions.

**6. FEM
(ENDA)**

In the search for improving their services to widen their impact on the standard of living for women, and their capacity to generate sustainable income, the six partners of FEM developed a highly relevant and well-designed intervention. The level of efficiency of the project is good in terms of achievement of results. Despite the socio-political disruption in summer 2006 in Lebanon, activities are implemented as planned with the needed adjustments. There are however, some shortcomings that affect the efficiency of the project. The increase in the demand for loans and BDS is overwhelming the personnel of the different FEM partners. BDS are in a certain way, revolutionizing some of the organizations. It is important to analyse the impact of the BDS in the FEM partners' internal structures. The combination of several services to be made available for women is contributing towards the achievement of quality results. However, the most effective combination according to the needs of the clients still has to be fine-tuned. Although all the partners are developing training in marketing, this is still the Achilles' heel for entrepreneurs, especially for Tunisian micro-entrepreneurs. The FEM partners exceeded the number of beneficiaries to be targeted by more than 30% and the achievement of the PP (to improve the standard of living and the capacity to generate sustainable income of 7676 women micro-entrepreneurs in the MEDA region) is most likely. The most significant impact, according to the mid-term evaluation, is in terms of women empowerment and improvement in their self-confidence. Apart from the economic and financial challenges, the sustainability of the project lies in the reinforcement of local capacities and in increasing the motivation (FEM partners acknowledge the added-value of the project to their organizations) and the level of ownership of the women. In this regard, and as far as the monitor is aware, no women's committee is present in any of the FEM partners or participating in the FEM meetings.

**7. GEESE
(EI
Mobadara)**

A deficient LF formulation is often correlated with weak intervention logic, with high risk of atomisation of activities, and this applies to GEESE project. The previous RWEL monitoring mission did not give any recommendations regarding the quality of the project design and its intervention logic. As a result of this, some of the weaknesses regarding the Logical Framework are still present. The "gender equality in employment" component of the project seems to be overambitious according to the capacities and means of the different partners. The strategic component of this project, the media (to support the recognition of contributions by women and to improve the image of women in the media), has been little developed. The role played by the Jordanian partner (initially in charge of the media component) has been minimal. El Mobadara, the Egyptian lead partner, has played the main role although the team did not have the required expertise. Forty-one

percent of planned beneficiaries have access to the project services (directly benefited by micro-credits) and 10% of planned women have been trained in leadership skills. Given the limited timeframe, the achievement of the objectives stated is overambitious and highly difficult to measure objectively. It should have been necessary to specify the project objectives, limiting it geographically and indicating an approximate number of beneficiaries. According to the Gender Impact Assessment Report, almost 80% of the clients in the study received loans one time only, and, more significantly, 68% of women included in the study sample do not receive any other (non-financial) services from the associations dealing with them in micro-credit. As for the actions related to improving gender balance among the NGO partners, long-term work is needed to gradually change the organizational culture.

8. SEOW - MENA (CRTD.A)

The implementation of activities suffers from very serious delays, and an extension is required to implement most of the central activities of the project (an addendum has been asked to the EC to extend the project until 30-09.08). The design had a major drawback: the absence of any quantification: target groups, beneficiaries, results, indicators of achievement (OVIs), etc, and the complex project structure (as demonstrated by the fact that the effective set-up of the partnership has taken too much time from the project – the last months have been crucial to strengthen the partnership in the 5 countries). The war Israel/Lebanon (mid 2006), the shortage of human resources in CRTD.A (BC reported), and the difficulties to find a project manager (reported by CRTD.A) were other reasons. Now, the project counts with sufficient staff, although it is unclear who develops the main bulk of activities apart from the Director, who needs to attend many other projects at the same time. Results to date are limited but of good quality: assessment reports and information sheets in 5 countries, training materials, literature review, ToT was implemented in Beirut (June 2007) and Egypt (September 2007) and will take place in Algeria and Morocco. A regional team of 4 senior trainers has been constituted. Phase III started in Lebanon (selection of study cases, training, and identification of field workers to develop community counselling centres) but not yet in Syria (absence of official authorization remains an obstacle) and Algeria. The intense progress of activities at this moment and the high profile of CRTD.A allow foreseeing a good contribution to the OOs (visibility of the project is a strong point), but critical results need to be obtained in the partner countries in the first place. In Lebanon, the ownership of local structures are good indicators for sustainability, although the absence of material results in the other partner countries does not allow for any sustainability prospect yet. It is crucial that CRTD.A will clarify reporting to the EC, following the description of the action (annex I to contract) and focusing on results and progress towards the OO, given the absence of quantification in the contract and the existing confusion as to the progress of activities.

4.4. Performance of Projects over Time

As mentioned in the previous sections, the Programme is monitored for the first time, so there are no monitoring data from the previous years that could be compared with the present exercise.

4.5. Strong and Weak Points by Criterion in 2007

The strengths and the relative weaknesses of the monitored projects are presented in Table 7 below:

Table 7: Strong and weak points per main criterion and sub-criterion (BCS)

Strong & Weak		P1 RWEL	P2 HBWW	P3 FTW	P4 EERPW	P5 TBIIR	P6 FEM	P7 GEESE	P8 SEOW	TOTAL
Project-visits		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
Strongest	Main Criterion	M4	M3 M4	M4	M3 M4	M3	M1	M5	M5	M4

	Sub-criterion	M34 M43 M57	M56	M42 M43 M52 M53	M56	M11 M24 M32 M33 M56 M57	M11 M12 M33	M11 M22 M54 M55 M56 M57	M56 M57	M11
Weakest	Main Criterion	M3	M1	M3	M2	M4	M2 M4	M3 M4	M2	M2
	Sub-criterion	M33 M52 M54 M58	M12 M21 M22 M24 M51	M24 M31 M32 M33	M12 M21 M22 M23 M34 M43 M51 M53 M54 M57	M22 M43	M51 M58	M12 M21 M23 M24 M31 M32 M33 M41 M42 M51 M52 M53 M58	M22	M58

The above table reflects some interesting remarks: relevance problems are mainly focused on sub-criterion M12 (quality of the intervention logic), while the relevance of the action (M1) and complementarity with EU and national policies is overall very satisfactory. Another important indicator is revealed by the fact that 4 out of 8 projects present, among their weakest points, efficiency problems (M2), of which the most common weakness is the low performance in the implementation of activities (M22), followed by less than expected quality of inputs (M23) and partnership management (M24). The most common shortcoming when it comes to effectiveness of the different projects is given by the low probability of achieving the Project Purpose (M3.3), whereas access to and use of benefits do not pose significant problems. Impact (M4) is a strong feature of 4 projects but it is among the weakest points of 3 projects, therefore it is difficult to reach an overall conclusion. However, as it will be analysed later, despite the good impact scores of some projects, the programme EOWEL as a whole lacks quality impact indicators and it has not managed to date to achieve significant wider impacts. With some relevant exceptions, sustainability (M5) faces problems, particularly as concerns the long-term financial viability (M51), although other indicators such as capacity building, technology (human and technical) transferred, public support and embedding in local structures are among the strongest points of most projects.

4.6. Analysis per MED Country

This section provides a country-specific outlook concerning three different gender gap sub-indexes of the synthetic index established by the World Economic Forum. It has been considered interesting to include as well countries from the north Mediterranean basin such as France and Italy as this nourishes the analysis and allows comparisons among different countries.

The first point worth highlighting is the position of Israel. It continues to hold the top spot in the Middle East / North Africa region, favoured by higher-than-average performances on economic participation (45), educational attainment (38) and political empowerment (41). According to the Gender Gap Report 2007(3) and as shown in the following tables, the Arab countries are constantly ranked last

³ There are three basic concepts underlying the Gender Gap Index. First, it focuses on measuring gaps rather than levels. Second, it captures gaps in outcomes variables rather than gaps in means or input variables. Third, it ranks countries according to gender equality rather than women’s empowerment. In the case of all subindexes, the highest possible score is 1 (equality) and the lowest possible score is 0 (inequality), thus binding the scores between inequality and equality benchmarks. An un-weighted average of each subindex score is taken to create the overall Gender Gap Index score. As in the case of the subindexes, this final value is bound between 1 (equality) and 0 (inequality), thus allowing for comparisons relative to ideal standards of equality in addition to relative country rankings. The equality and inequality benchmarks remain fixed across time,

among 128 countries. Most Arab world countries not only continue to perform far below the global average, but have also not shown much improvement over the last year, some even have deteriorated. Egypt's minor improvements on economic participation are offset by drops in both its health and education scores. In Morocco, the gap on estimated earned income worsens as does the gap between the percentages of women and men who are legislators, senior officials and managers and the gap between the enrolment of women and men in tertiary education. Turkey continues to rank well below the lowest ranking European countries and displays below average performance on all four sub indexes: 118 on economic participation and opportunity, 110 on educational attainment and 108 on political empowerment.

Cyprus (82) and Italy (84) continue to hold the lowest places among the European Union countries. France continues to be one of the six countries that hold the number one ranking on education and has made considerable progress overall, holding 51st position this year as compared to 70th position in 2006.

	Economic participation and Opportunity		Political Empowerment		Educational Attainment	
Israel	0.6707	45	0.1501	41	0.9951	38
France	0.6460	61	0.1040	67	1.0000	1
Cyprus	0.6021	81	0.0517	107	0.9893	60
Italy	0.5432	101	0.0872	80	0.9969	32
Tunisia	0.4740	111	0.1104	60	0.9590	88
Syria	0.5240	104	0.9274	99	0.0589	100
Jordan	0.4832	110	0.0476	112	0.9793	79
Algeria	0.4643	113	0.0495	111	0.9422	96
Egypt	0.4210	120	0.0218	123	0.9021	101
Turkey	0.4307	118	0.0516	108	0.8536	110
Morocco	0.4006	121	0.0530	103	0.8451	113

Source: *The Gender Gap Report 2007. World Economic Forum*

Economic Participation and Opportunity

Women's participation in the economy, as integral part to their empowerment, is a major challenge facing the MEDA-region, since women's labour market participation (LMP) is among the lowest throughout the world in these countries. In years 2000-2004, the MEDA region experienced an average annual GDP growth of 3.8 percent, reaching as high as 6 percent in 2004. Despite this growth, most countries of the region continue to struggle with high unemployment rates and women are disproportionately at risk. The biggest difference between male and female unemployment can be seen in Egypt, where 6 percent of men versus 24 percent of women were unemployed in 2002. However, Egypt's unemployment rate is believed to be higher than the official figures. Independent estimates locate unemployment at about 10 percent. Almost one-third to one-half of the labour force is believed to be under-employed. Unemployment remains especially high among women and workers under 20 years of age.

Political Empowerment

In most Arab, or more specifically MEDA countries, serious impediments to public participation by women persist. An important aspect of LMP fosters their involvement in society and, "creates a new social and political constituency – women empowered to question the bases of both patriarchal gender relations and the political-economic order".

Educational Attainment

allowing the reader to track individual country progress in relation to an ideal standard of equality. Furthermore, we hope that the option of roughly interpreting the final index scores as a percentage value that reveals how much of the gender gap a country has closed makes the index more intuitively appealing to readers (Gender Gap Report 2006 P.7, World Economic Forum)

The Government of Jordan (GoJ) spends more than 5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) on education and around 9 percent on health. These investments are higher than those made by other lower-middle-income countries and have been instrumental in improving Jordan’s literacy and health indicators. Women have been equal beneficiaries of these policies. In 2002, Jordan’s 90 percent gender parity in literacy placed it among the top five Middle East and North Africa countries. Literacy rates for adult females increased from 55 percent in 1980 to 86 percent in 2002 (compared with an increase of 82 to 96 percent for adult males). Despite impressive attainment in education, Jordanian women’s economic roles, in some ways, do not fit the pattern seen in similar lower-middle-income countries.

The following Table 8 summarises the picture of projects in the various beneficiary countries, as illustrated through the monitoring activity.

Table 8: Situation of the monitored projects in the various MED countries

Country	P2 (HBWW)	P3 (FTW)	P4 (EERPW)	P5 (TBIIR)	P6 (FEM)	P7 (GEESE)	P8 (SEOW)
Egypt						☹	
Israel			☹	😊			
Palestine			☹	😊			
Jordan		😊					
Lebanon							☹
Morocco	☹						
Tunisia					😊		

Legend: 😊 Good, ☹ Room for improvement, ☹ Problems

4.7. Analysis per Type of Partner

This Programme is mainly implemented by NGOs with the participation of some other partners. The projects generally monitored in the MED region are mainly falling under the following generic categories:

- National Authorities
- NGOs
- Universities
- Public Sector Institutions
- Private Sector entities
- International Organisations

Depending on the scientific, technical and business project context, the involvement, motivation and effectiveness of each partner type may vary significantly, this also depending on the capacity of each individual partner institution. The type of partners for the monitored projects is presented below in Table 9.

Table 9: Type of Partners of Projects

Type of partner \ Project	Role of women in economic life	HBWW	Free to work	EERPW	Turning Business Ideas into Reality	Femmes entrepreneuses en Méditerranée	Gender Equality in Employment and Small enterprises	SEOW-MENA
National Authorities								
NGOs		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Universities, research Institutes	✓	✓						
Public Sector Institutions			✓					
Private Sector Entities (non-profit)	✓		✓	✓				✓
International Organisations (UNDP, Others)								



5. SPECIAL ISSUES

5.1. Deconcentration

Deconcentration aims at ensuring direct contact between the EC management of projects and the projects themselves in the region. The EOWEL programme was partially deconcentrated, as the management of the 7 NGO projects was transferred to the EC Delegation in Lebanon, while the management of the support project (British Council) remained in AIDCO Headquarters (AIDCO A3).

This decision, although intended to bring the donor closer to the implementing organisations, might have not been the most efficient in terms of management, and has even proved to be counterproductive in some respects. Some of the main constraints are explained below:

- The division of EOWEL management duplicates efforts to follow-up the programme at EC level, as two EC services are responsible of different parts of the programme, the 7 NGO projects and the BC contract being part of an indissoluble whole: it is necessary to closely follow-up the 7 projects to properly monitor the BC, and vice versa. It would have seemed therefore logical to place all the contracts under the responsibility of the same EC service. As an example of inefficiency, the BC reports to Brussels, therefore all monitoring reports are submitted to AIDCO responsible, who forwards them to the EC Delegation in Lebanon, manager of the NGO contracts. However, EC Delegation in Lebanon does not have the direct authority to request clarifications from the BC, and the establishment of a direct link with the monitors is difficult, undermining the value of the cooperation. In addition, the “double management” of the programme brings confusion to the contractors, as it has been perceived during the ROM visit.
- The EC Delegation in Lebanon does not have the means to ensure close monitoring of the 7 NGO contracts in the 9 partner countries: no specific budget is allocated for field visits and there is a specific obstacle in the case of Israel/Palestine, which cannot be visited by diplomatic staff based in Lebanon. EC Delegation develops a close follow-up of projects' progress compared to the contract on the basis of the BC monitoring reports and the study of the documentation (technical and financial reports, materials, publications, etc) produced by the projects, but is not in the position to evaluate results through field visits. While a heavy administrative load is placed on the EC Delegation, the programme is missing opportunities of strategic partnership with the beneficiary organisations. The added value of the deconcentration is therefore questioned, given that only the 2 projects which have a part of their intervention in Lebanon can be directly albeit partly followed by the EC Delegation.
- In the last place, this situation has not fostered involvement of the EC Delegations in the respective countries, which would have been appreciated by the projects as well as useful for the EC to build partnerships with civil society: the role of all relevant EC Delegations could have been very interesting in promoting the regional gender dialogue.

In conclusion, despite the efficient management of EOWEL programme both by AIDCO/A3 and EC Delegation in Lebanon, the overall system has an important drawback resulting from the decision to deconcentrate only a part of the programme.

5.2. Cooperation of Thematic Projects with Technical Assistance (British Council) and Follow up on Recommendations

This is the first time that EOWEL programme has been subject to a ROM Monitoring exercise. However, one of the main tasks of Project 1 (RWEL), awarded to the British Council in partnership with the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies in Cyprus, was to perform monitoring of the progress of the seven NGO grant contracts. Therefore, it has been deemed relevant to include a general analysis of cooperation of all contractors with the BC and on the follow-up of the main recommendations coming out the monitoring reports.

2. HBWW (Planet Finance Morocco)

Cooperation with the British Council has been smooth and productive. Two Monitoring visits took place in June 2006 and January 2007 and one more is planned after the project end. Main recommendations of the monitoring reports which were properly followed by the management include:

- *Efficiency*: clarification of the disbursement planning with the Turkish partner; development of a list of training sessions per category and organisation.
- *Effectiveness*: translation of training materials into Arabic; extension of the training to most disadvantaged women in Turkey; further explore marketing channels.
- *Impact*: strengthening of the lobby towards national authorities, particularly in Turkey.

Other recommendations have not been implemented yet, although the management agrees they should be of use (e.g. the crucial issue to follow-up the ToT training with the cooperatives in Morocco to ensure the replication of the training). BC monitors also suggested developing a good practice report to highlight the achievements of the project, including lessons learnt and success stories: the management is considering drafting this document at project's end. The translation of the website into Arabic to ensure its wider dissemination among project beneficiaries has been considered too expensive by the project management, which does not have the necessary funds at present.

3. Free to work (Tatawor)

In February 2006, the first RWEL monitoring visit to the project took place with damaging consequences to the relations between the British Council and Free to Work. The management unit firmly contested the monitoring report. As a result of these discrepancies, the administrative process between Tatawor and the EC was paralysed for months, delaying the second EC transfer. Free to Work management team estimates having lost three months of work because of its incapacity to pay salaries and providers. The situation is now back to normal and activities are being implemented as foreseen. The relationship with the British Council has also improved as has its assessment of the project progress. The technical assistance mission conducted in July 2007 has given more constructive results. The following was recommended for the project's strategy for the next six months by the BC consultant. These recommendations have already been discussed between the BC consultant and Tatawor and they are being implemented:

- Setting up a lawmakers' committee: Free to Work partners should set up a committee of parliamentarians to prioritise and take forward the recommendations from the project's consortium: the latter has made numerous recommendations on how demand for and supply of female labour can be matched in Jordan. Although many of these recommendations are important and necessary for advancing on this key objective, some appear too general, unwieldy and unrealistic. It is suggested that Free to Work partners prioritise the most appropriate and realistic at this stage for negotiation with the parliamentarians and decide on a joint strategy on how to take these forward. They could include: legal protection for victims of sexual harassment; Subsidised transport; Flexible working hours and home-based working for women workers, should they want it; Regular inspection of companies to ensure that health and safety and national minimum wage regulations are adhered to.
- Motivation workshops for long-term unemployed women: In view of the current worker demoralisation, Free to Work partners in association with the project's stakeholders should run workshops, separate or as part of the portfolio and TOT training, which aim to motivate the long-term unemployed; women who had found work through the project should be invited to speak at these workshops about the difference the new employment has made to their lives.
- Using the experience of Wadi al-Ryan as a case study: Free to Work partners should use the experience and learning from Wadi al-Ryan as a case study to highlight the specific opportunities and challenges faced by women workers in Jordan today; the case should be followed through and documented at each stage of its development, demonstrating achievements as well as setbacks and how the project endeavoured to overcome the obstacles.
- Summarising the findings of the observation posts, selecting and enhancing

those that would especially enrich the current priorities such as the matching of demand for and supply of labour.

It is suggested as well that Free to Work partners carry out a risk assessment of the situation in Gaza; this should highlight how realistic it would be for the partner in Gaza to accomplish the goals of the project within the next six months.

4. EERPW (NISPED)

The good cooperation terms of the project management with the BC were unfortunately deteriorated by a conflict arising from EOWEL regional coordination meetings, organized by the BC in the framework of their contract. Two coordination meetings have taken place to date (Cairo and Morocco), to which the Israeli partners of the two projects taking place in Israel/Palestine were not invited, allegedly, in order to avoid the massive absence of other projects' partners. Israel was therefore represented by their Palestinian partners in such meetings. NISPED protested to the EC against this situation, which they found discriminatory and against the spirit of the Barcelona Process. Since then, no other coordination meetings have taken place.

One monitoring visit took place in February 2007, and the report, while acknowledging the value of the project, points out some crucial issues that would require attention. These recommendations, although very valuable, were not shared by the management and not followed:

- *Relevance*: give a precise definition of "rural women" to better define the target group (in this sense, the ROM report recommends to analyse the socio-economic characteristics of the final target group and include them in the final report).
- *Relevance/Efficiency*: the transfer of responsibilities towards the Palestinian partner (YEP) should require extra support from NISPED and the EU partners (TA in terms of management tools, transfer of knowledge).
- *Efficiency*: the 12 district coordinators should be further supported by consultants in offering advice to project beneficiaries, given that, despite their high qualifications, some of the coordinators did not seem ready yet to perform these activities on their own. In this case, the project followed this piece of advice but the consultants are not involved any longer after their contract finished. However, the recommended re-visit by the BC to provide with technical assistance was never implemented.
- *Effectiveness/Impact*: development of a marketing study (Israel, Middle East, and Europe) for the products of women beneficiaries, and EU and Israel partners should support marketing in their countries through concrete measures.
- *Impact*: raise the project public profile in Israel and in Europe through a stronger involvement of the mass media.

5. TBIIR (CJAED)

CJAED, an Israeli organisation, was represented in the EOWEL Coordination meetings by its Palestinian partners (PMDI and JWA), but in this case, this situation was not a source of conflict with the British Council. Cooperation has been smooth and the Monitoring report (February 2007) is very positive. No specific recommendations are given in the report, since the project was progressing according to the plan. The only suggestion (to develop a "best practices" documents and widely disseminate it, to increase impact), will take place after the end of the implementation period, to maximise the usefulness of its content.

6. FEM (ENDA)

The monitoring visit took place between November 2006 and February 2007. The overall assessment of the project was very positive highlighting the partners' capacity to reach beneficiaries and the value that the development of non-financial services supposed to the different teams. The FEM members welcomed the report as well as the recommendations. However, they suggest that report could be shorter and in possible in French so as to be disseminated to all the members of the team. The main recommendations for the lead partner, which are being followed now, are:

Lead Partner: ENDA Inter-Arabe/Tunisia

- Develop a strategy to ensure that credit officers are informed about the details of FEM Project activities and impart information about ENDA's non-financial services to potential and active micro credit clients.
- Study the possibility of training selected credit officers in TOT to widen the pool of trainers for non-financial services and activities beyond the FEM Project.

- Regularly update the FEM Project documents list and share with British Council/Cairo as part of information dissemination.
- Share information on the FEM website with other RWEL Partners with the aim of sharing best practices in training materials and reporting formats, as well as avoiding duplication of efforts.
- Specifically study the possibility of developing a generic training module package to be used by FEM Consortium Partners as well as other RWEL Partners.
- Assume a more active role as Lead Partner of the FEM Consortium in cooperation with BATIK International in the management of partnerships.

7. GEESE (EI Mobadara)

The relationship between BC and EI Mobadara is fluent and constructive. The monitoring visit carried out by the two BC consultants took place in November-December 2006. Consultants identified 30 recommendations. Although the Lead Partners agree in their content and have tried to implement some of all of them, it seems that GEESE needed a sound revision of the methodology to implement the majority of the recommendations. Below are some of the most relevant suggestions that still have to be strengthened:

- Formulate guidelines for a strategy for accessing, collecting and analyzing information on the market and labour market conducive to achieving expected outcomes in respect of female entrepreneurship
- Consider establishing contact with the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies/ Cyprus via the BC/TAT to exchange information and experiences on gender and economic empowerment, as well as gender and the media.
- Providing up-to-date market-relevant advice to existing and potential women entrepreneurs.
- Training women to match skills with market demand.
- Given the changing donor context in Egypt, address the challenge of sustainability of the GEESE activities beyond project completion
- Ensure that GEESE staff's time is fully allocated to the project.
- Organise a meeting for husbands and male kin of women who have participated in the project activity on women's legal rights as part of soliciting their support.

8. SEOW - MENA (CRTD.A)

One monitoring visits took place in February 2007, and one more visit is planned before the end of the TA contract (it will finish before the project, given that the project will be extended until the end of September 2008). The MR was strongly contested by CRTD.A, who submitted to the EC a 10-page paper refuting the arguments and recommendations of the MR.

- *Efficiency:* the most important aspect in the MR was the statement that CRTD.A had allocated insufficient human resources: this was not shared by the management, but the clarifications submitted to the EC in this sense were insufficient. However, the management started a thorough process of recruitment and it counts now with sufficient staff. Also, the suggestion to re-orient the establishment of consultation units (too ambitious according to BC) was not followed, since the timeline is about to be expanded in 9 months (requested extension). Still, this activity remains very ambitious and it is not clear whether inputs are sufficient to allow for its completion. Apart from this activity, the BC judged that the multiple activities of the SEOW project are too ambitious to be carried out in 5 countries, but the management has not re-oriented the project in any country to date. Reporting needed, according to the BC, extra information on the activities developed by the partners: this recommendation has been followed by the coordinator, but still needs strengthening. The MR also recommended requesting for an extension of the project, which was done.
- *Effectiveness/Impact:* The BC monitors recommended to strengthen the website and to translate all publications and training materials into Arabic, started by the project management.

The BC acknowledged that publicity and dissemination of the project are remarkable, but recommended the translation into Arabic of SEOW-related documents (other than the training modules), such as newsletters, brochures, country-assessment reports, etc to ensure wider impact among grass-roots organisations and final beneficiaries. The

management of the project did not react to this recommendation.

General comments:

Most NGO projects have welcomed the recommendations from the British Council, with few (although remarkable) exceptions, where the conflict arisen has undermined the usefulness of the monitoring exercise. However, all projects agree that the monitoring of the British Council should have been more technical assistance oriented. The management of the different projects states that substantive, constant support and recommendations to improve the quality of results would have been of much use to them.

Some of the EOWEL partners find the monitoring reports too long and not very practical. Additionally, some partners argue that the regional meetings could have been much more productive by developing working groups and substantial cooperation mechanisms. The tools for the exchange of information among all the participating NGOs are perceived as insufficient by most partners. Most of the partners do not use the website either for consultation or exchange information.

Regarding the quarterly fact sheets, some partners consider them useful tools, although most judge that they are extra administrative work of little help for the monitoring of the projects. As it will be further analysed, the ROM monitors consider the fact sheets should have been more adapted to PCM criteria in order to maximize their usefulness. The template should have been ready at the beginning of the project and should have been discussed with the different partners before its implementation.

5.3. Logical Framework Approach

All projects followed a logical framework approach, keeping the logic of PCM analysis, although some of them had serious deficiencies in their design (EERPW, SEOW-MENA, GEESE and RWEL see 7.1 below and ROM Monitoring Reports).

While all projects had developed Logical Framework Matrix tables, the ROM monitoring team acknowledges that the LFM were generally not used as management tools by the projects' management, nor as monitoring tools. Also, problematic issues were found at the level of some LFM's design, of which the most common were:

1. The absence of proper quantification of inputs, activities, results (SEOW-MENA, GEESE);
2. Confusion among the different levels: results/specific objectives/overall objective (SEOW-MENA, EERPW, GEESE, RWEL);
3. Insufficient Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVIs) and Sources of Verification (SoVs), qualitative and quantitative, or vagueness of others (TBIIR, EERPW, HBWW, GEESE, RWEL);
4. Confusion at the level of assumptions, since sometimes results are wrongly considered "assumptions", and some critical assumptions are not included (SEOW-MENA, TBIIR, HBWW, EERPW, RWEL, GEESE)

It is to be regretted that the Monitoring exercise performed by the British Council did not focus on LFA and PCM criteria. Further support to the projects in this sense would have been very beneficial, incidentally including a training session on PCM and developing LFM.



6. SUCCESS STORIES

As reported in section 4.1, a number of projects have received only “a” and “b” scores; they can thus be considered as successes. Among them, the following projects are successes:

- Economic Empowerment for Palestinian women: Turning Business Ideas into Reality - TBIIR (CJAED)
- Femmes entrepreneuses en Méditerranée - FEM (ENDA)

However, all the projects monitored have already had some very good results and some success stories are narrated below (Chapter 6.3).

6.1. Background

TBIIR (CJAED):

This project is based on CJAED’s Women’s Unit successful experience in developing women entrepreneur training programmes and networks to increase women’s economic participation in Israel, and aims to adapt the experience to Palestine, taking into account the socio-economic differences.

FEM (ENDA):

The project is based on the replication of a successful experience developed in Morocco; the development of business services as non-financial facilities has brought about very successful experiences and increased the level of satisfaction of micro-credit clients in previous interventions.

6.2. Reasons of Success

The main reasons of the projects’ success are as follows:

TBIIR (CJAED):

- A sound and cooperative partnership among 3 organisations built on ties of trust, and building on a previous experience in Israel which proved successful.
- A well structured project design, with a very strong training component, very focused on a crucial needs assessment, a sound intervention logic based in PCM methodology.
- The embedding in local structures and successful building of synergies with other donors and partnerships.
- The high profile of implementing organisations in Israel and Palestine and political interest they have raised.

FEM (ENDA)

- The high quality of its intervention logic, reflected in a complete and coherent Logical Framework.
- Effective response to the needs of the target population. The needs of the informal sector concern not only the access to credit, but more importantly, the access to business development services (BDS) which reinforce women’s management, marketing, and innovative skills.
- The emphasis given to the empowerment of women through professional development and social activities.
- The consortium really works as a means of learning from others’ experiences, which is well-managed and fully operational.
- All FEM partners very positively value the experience of the consortium.
- The sustainability of the project lies in the reinforcement of local capacities and in increasing the motivation (FEM partners acknowledge the added-value of the project to their organizations) and the level of ownership of the women.

6.3. Some Women's Success Stories

Assia Goura – Testimonials

Assia belongs to the association Benslou, at 30km from Marrakech. She is 34 years old and creates trimming on different products. During the selection process of the project, Assia was making tricot and house linen. At the beginning of the project, the products were created according to her taste and sometimes according to her neighbour's requests. Before the project, Assia had no knowledge of selling, marketing, or customer services. After a few months, benefiting from PFM trainings, she decided to be more active in her life. Now, she is more confident in herself and her capacities, as some people outside the village are interested in her work and her production. During the training sessions, she was always alert, self disciplined, and active. In the exhibitions, she always tried to apply what was learnt during the trainings: product display, customer service, etc. Before taking part in our project, Assia never had the opportunity to sell her products outside her village due to the geographical position and cultural gaps (women not being easily allowed to travel on their own). Thanks to this project, Assia could meet her customers through the several exhibitions organised. She also had the opportunity to meet other women facing the same problems as hers. During the exhibition in Marrakech, in July 2006, she made many contacts, one of which gave her the chance to take part in an exhibition in Toulouse, France, where she got to sell a lot of products, build up links and make many contacts. She was grateful to the team for the opportunities and the training provided as it helped her much in her organisation and behaviour during this exhibition. Assia's income increased and her behaviour towards her activity and customers changed. Besides, she is working on professionalizing her activity. In order to help her in this process, PFM team offered her a computer for a more efficient organisation of her micro enterprise. Assia is optimistic about the future. She wants to develop her micro enterprise with products matching the market demand, and interacting with the different actors in the sector.

→ Assia Goura participated in "HBWW", coordinated by Planet Finance Morocco

Khawla Al Sheikh decides to work as a plumber

Khalwa Al Sheikh called the project coordinator in June 2007. She had heard about the Free to Work project through her volunteering with the Jordanian Business Women Association, which has been an active and supportive partner throughout the project. She decided to contact Tatawor after having read an article that was published about the project in Venture Magazine in June 2006. Khalwa needed help, but was not sure what is it exactly that she needed, or where she should start. Khawla's story started after she had finished her high school. She married immediately, and did not have the chance to finish her education or develop any professional experience. When her children got older, she decided that she was ready to do something with her life. So she volunteered with the Business Women Association to sell a gadget that would help households in saving water. When she went inside the houses, she realized that women cannot save water because they have lots of plumbing issues. Khawla decided to become a plumber; she took a basic course in plumbing and with the support of her husband managed to become a plumber. She contacted Tatawor Association to take part in the portfolio of competences training course. During the course, and while going through the personal life experience section she realized that she has training and animation skills that she developed through supporting her children during their schooling years. Once she reached the personal project, Khawla expressed her wish to train women to become plumbers, either to take it as a profession, or to be able to fix their plumbing issues at home. Once she had that in mind, she started looking for funding, under the supervision of Tatawor staff. She found a tender to train women that was provided by an International NGO. She asked Tatawor staff to help her write the proposal. Khawla won the tender, even though she was competing against the national training centre, and another private leading training organization. Today, Khawla is working with Tatawor staff towards starting her own private centre that complies with all the international training standards.

→ Khalwa Al Sheikh participated in the project "Free to work" (Tatawor)

Faten Kayali – from thinking of retiring to leading the Municipality HR department

Tatawor staff first met Faten Kayali in April 2006, when she took part in the first Portfolio of Competences that targeted the Municipality of Amman. By that time, Mrs. Kayali had finished her service years at the municipality and was thinking about retiring and discovering what she wants to do next with her life. Through this course, we noted that she has good training skills; therefore, we invited her to take part in the Training of Trainers (TOT), where we thought she could be valuable in training

other women at the municipality. Mrs. Kayali decided to try the new skill in her daughter's school. She volunteered at a high school, where she helped young women through the portfolio of competences to explore their abilities in handicrafts. This experience turned out to be very successful, since these young women, ended up taking part in a school bazaar, where they sold all their artefacts. The revenue of the bazaar went towards buying new furniture for the school to the admiration of the local community. Mrs. Kayali was encouraged after the school experience to apply this training at her department (HR department) at the Municipality. She invited her colleagues to take part in the training. Her activities in training were noticed by the Head of Department, who asked her to apply for the Head Deputy position that had just opened up. Mrs. Kayali has cancelled her retirement plans, and is leading the HR department at the municipality. She has incorporated the portfolio of competences in all the Municipality training courses as one of her first achievements in the new role.

→ Faten Kayali participated in the project
"Free to work" (Tatawor)

Um Khaled – Depending on charity is left behind

Um Khaled heard about the project Free to Work through Mabarrat Um Al Hussein which is an orphanage in which she leaves her youngest son. She was invited to take part in the portfolio of Competences training course. Um Khaled is a widow; her husband left her with five children and lots of debts. She was completely dependent on hands out from charities and NGOs. She is an illiterate woman, who has never been through any education or has never worked. When her husband died, she found herself unable to feed her children, so she married off her two teenage daughters to the first suitors. A year later one of her daughters got divorced, and went back to her mother with her newborn child, and the year after her other daughter was abandoned by her husband and went back home with two children. By the Time Um Khaled was part of the programme, she was in a very desperate condition. When Um Khaled expressed her desire to make money to feed her children, it was agreed that her skills were suitable to work for one of the factories in the area (the factory was one of the beneficiaries of the Free to Work project, it was found through the HR plans). However, the problem was that she did not have the concept of work, since none of the women in her environment has ever worked. Also, when she expressed her desire to work and to get her daughters to work as well, she faced a fierce resistance from her brothers, who considered women work as a form of prostitution! Tatawor staff, with the help of the Mabarrat staff, talked to a local priest asking him to interfere. Today, Um khaled managed to overcome the resistance from her family; she has accepted the job offer... her two daughters work as well in the same factory, increasing the family standard to a better level.

→ Um Khaled participated in the project
"Free to work" (Tatawor)

Wafa gains confidence and knowledge: a successful market analysis opens the door to a new business

Wafa is an ambitious woman entrepreneur that has a boutique in El Eizariyah (West Bank). She participated in the program to gain more skills on how to run her business more efficiently. The training course gave her higher skills in financial analysis and book-keeping. On top of that, it encouraged her to think of other resources she has but she might not have sufficiently considered before, and she started to look to the potentialities of the market around her. She decided to start a gym for women in El Eizariyah, the only of its kind in the area. She developed 100 detailed quantitative questionnaires and asked women about additional ideas they would like to see in the gym. The high demand on the services was an encouraging factor. In addition, she received many good ideas from the women who filled the questionnaires such as the need for a day care for their children, the need for an internet café due to the lack of this kind of service in the area. Thanks to this project, Wafa is currently developing her detailed project and business plan, identifying partners, and she expects to open her new business very soon.

→ Wafa participated in the project "EERPW" (NISPED/YEP)

The successful business story of Molouk Amro

Moluk Amro comes from Hebron and is 36 years old: she was among the first women that applied for the project as she wanted to start a Skin Care Centre. Molouk has one year education in skin care and works as an employee since two years. Molouk joined the training course in Hebron on micro-enterprise management. After the training, she was assisted in developing the visibility study for her project.

The developed visibility and work plan advised the following:

- To start good opening a Skin Care Centre and not to include providing training in the first two years.
- A location at entrance of Dora village would be suitable since there is no such service in the area because of the living standard in the area: however, the centre should be in the mid-level in prices.
- No loan is needed: she has 2000 USD, sufficient to pay the rent for the first three months and cover the location preparation course, while the equipment can be bought on hire purchase.

Molouk received three months of consultancy through which she obtained her license, and was also helped in contacting a company from Ramallah to buy the equipment on monthly payments Molouk opened her Centre in September 2007 and as of now, she is economically self-sustainable.

→ Molouk Amro participated in the project "TBIR" (CJAED/PMDI/JWA)

6.4. Best Practices

In line with the EOWEL overall objective, the MED monitoring team has considered worth mentioning the following initiative undertaken in the framework of Free to Work project. Indeed, this best practice is a good example of measures to eliminate underlying structural obstacles notably in policy formulation and planning.

Sexual Harassment Law in Jordan

The development of the Sexual Harassment Law in Jordan deserves a special mention. Through its position as observation officer, Free to Work has observed everything that has to do with social development and social cohesion in the first phase. In the second phase, it was required for the observer to go on a field study and observe differences between what was proposed on paper and the reality of the situation. Through this study, the observer officer realized that the Jordanian labour law did not include any articles regarding sexual harassment. Since the observer officer is on the committee that approves new project laws, he decided to put this forward for Parliament's approval. Today, this project has been passed and is waiting to be approved by the senators.



7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Overall Conclusions on the Programme, as Implemented

Although relevant in relation to the need of the target groups, the EOWEL Programme presents several deficiencies in relation to the quality of the intervention logic as well as with the level of efficiency of the different projects. It has to be also noted that the majority of the interventions have difficulties in reaching the number of beneficiaries planned. There are some exceptions to this, mainly the FEM project and TBIIR. Finally, the sustainability presents weaknesses as well, especially because of a lack of sound analysis of the quality factors.

A summary of key issues identified by the Monitors is presented below:

▪ **Project Design**

A deficient LF formulation is often correlated with weak intervention logic. This has been the problem of several projects. It would have been of much help for the projects (including the RWEL project); to have a workshop on PCM so has to revise the LF initially presented to the EC. An exception to this rule is the FEM LFM. Not only it is being used as a management tool but also as a monitoring tool. The mid-term review is based on the OVIs identified and assumptions are discussed by the different partners. In the case of the other quality LFM (TBIIR project), the LFM is however not used as a management tool in practice. Generally, the other projects had deficiencies in the quality of their intervention logic, which was the source of implementation problems.

▪ **Project Duration**

In relation to the expected results identified or the goals envisaged, the timeframes of most projects were sufficient as designed. However, implementation problems made it necessary to ask for time extensions, very remarkably in the case of CRTD.A (SEOW-MENA), the delays of which were only partly due to the Israel/Lebanon war, and which has needed a very exceptional 9 month extension to be able to produce critical results (implementation of this project is well behind all the rest). Half of the projects have applied for a non cost extension and the majority of them consider continuing with the activities once their grant contract will expire.

▪ **Reporting**

Most of the projects' reporting is insufficient in terms of linking to their contract and to the initially targeted objectives, as well as to the focus on results. Reporting for all projects generally needs to be clarified, related to the LFM and PCM criteria (results, level of attainment of objectives, assumptions, effectiveness, impact, sustainability) and always referring to the contract.

▪ **Absence of Impact Assessment Tools**

The EOWEL Programme lacks sufficient impact assessment tools. Most of the projects are not sufficiently concerned about the impact of their intervention in the wider environment, and have not developed the necessary instruments for it. In the case of gender programmes, this is of the utmost relevance, as the economic empowerment of women is only one side of the coin, through which women can reach respect in society, independence and self-assertiveness, thus, reducing the gender gap. It is believed by the monitors that this analysis is missing, among other reasons, because of the absence of strategic focus of the programme as a whole.

▪ **Sustainability Prospects**

Projects under EOWEL are not economically or financially sustainable without external support. Some exception to this rule might be the Free to Work project. Because this intervention is very much embedded in local authorities and institutions, the institutional sustainability reinforces the overall sustainability of the intervention. It is also significant to note the project HBWW, which has managed to create a network (Morocco) and a cooperative (Turkey) with good sustainability prospects. The embedding in local structures seems to be one of the strong points of this and some other projects, such as TBIIR and SEOW-MENA.

▪ **Consortia Issues**

With the exception of TBIR and FEM, which are examples of good cooperation, all the Consortia have proved to be problematic in some respect, undermining the added value of the regional partnerships. The rest of the projects have found difficulties in coordination and monitoring, and uncertainty of financial arrangements has been crucial in some cases (HBWW). In the case of SEOW-MENA, the multi-country scope of the project has proved to be a serious slow-down factor: the building of effective partnerships has taken very serious efforts from the Coordinator but results in the partner countries (except for Lebanon, basis of the Coordinator) are still very limited. The added value of the partnerships is not clear in the case of EERPW, where the Palestinian partner has assumed most of the activities, without all the necessary support from the Israeli coordinator and the European partners. The same can be said of HBWW, where two very different interventions in two very different countries do not seem to bring about expected synergies.

▪ **Insufficient Gender Focus**

With the exception of EERPW and SEOW-MENA, the EOWEL projects have not sufficiently used basic gender concepts, nor have they targeted men as necessary actors of gender strategies. Besides, the monitoring exercise questions the contribution to the gender equity of some interventions which, although working mainly with women, do not question their role in the society or they do it to a very minor extent. Women empowerment is a goal in itself but also a means to overcome gender inequality and inequity. Paradoxical though it may seem, working with women might not necessarily imply working for the equity and equality of men and women, unless explicit actions are undertaken. Basic gender concepts such as “male responsibility”, “gender mainstreaming” on one hand, and women economic empowerment on the other hand, have been used but not sufficiently implemented. The projects are missing a more strategic focus and gender issues expertise.

▪ **What is ... EOWEL?**

Despite the existence of a coordination project (RWEL, see below), we might argue that the EOWEL programme as a whole has lacked the necessary personality and strategy to achieve a wider impact. In this respect, it has to be noted that the design of the programme (reflected in an incomplete and non fully coherent LF) was not very well conceived to achieve the overall purpose of creating a Euro Mediterranean dialogue involving different actors (Governments, NGOs, academia, business sector, etc) and of supporting measures to eliminate underlying structural obstacles, notably in policy formulation and planning, including gender impact analysis of macro-economic policies. In order to contribute substantially to this goal and have a relevant impact at regional level, more resources should have been allocated to such a programme and a more strategic approach should have been undertaken by the EC. Also, the synergies among the different projects and among EOWEL projects with other EC interventions in the countries are very limited. Therefore, it seems that EOWEL is a list of projects without a sound umbrella and relevant interconnections, which would have been very interesting in order to achieve a wider impact.

▪ **RWEL: a Missed Opportunity?**

As already mentioned the RWEL project has not been able to deliver all expected results in time and with the quality requested. It has very limitedly brought about a wider impact to the EOWEL programme. Unfortunately, RWEL has invested much of its time in reporting, very time consuming activity with little added value. In effect, the monitoring component has not focused on PCM criteria and has limitedly helped the projects. The project has remained very much activity oriented. The RWEL team is aware that the website developed is insufficient, since the information displayed is not detailed enough as to the projects implemented, best practices, gender studies, news. Also, it leads to confusion, seeming that the BC is the implementing authority of the whole programme - there is also a confusion in the website between the RWEL Project (contract with the BC) and EOWEL programme (the overall programme integrating RWEL and the 7 grant contracts). On the other hand, and very importantly, it is true that the advocacy and technical assistance to MEDA authorities component of RWEL has not been developed, undermining much of its initial added value. In the absence of a sound EOWEL programme intervention logic, the fact that RWEL has not been able to contribute to the effective build-up of synergies among projects, to multiply the impact of the different interventions, and to create a self-nurturing Euro-Mediterranean gender dialogue, is to be regretted.

7.2. Lessons Learnt

The experience gained through the monitoring of the Programme in 2007 has shown the following:

- **Strategy:** A regional programme of the kind of EOWEL needs a sound intervention logic and to be strategy-oriented. The programme is missing some focus as to how to influence high level dialogue and policy debate in the MEDA region, for which a series of scattered projects does not seem enough. Eventually, a stronger allocation of funds would have been required for the programme to be able to contribute to its ambitious overall objective. In this sense, the British Council project has not served to cover these strategy failures.
- **Design/Intervention logic:** Attention should be paid to the design and the quality of the intervention logic of civil society actions. Projects need to make a better use of the LFM both as a management and as a monitoring tool. Quantity and quality of expected results, Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVIs), Sources of Verification (SoVs), and sound assumptions should be put in place during formulation phase of the project. This is also applicable to the EOWEL programme as a whole, which did not include sound intervention logic with expected results and related activities/inputs in order to achieve the project purpose.
- **Technical Assistance:** A more strategic technical assistance support, more oriented towards added value activities and impact interventions is required. The ToR of the contract with the British Council need to be more precise as to the technical assistance component, which should have been stronger, and as to the monitoring mechanisms, which should be related to PCM and LFM analysis (e.g. the quarterly fact-sheets are lists of activities with little focus on results achieved). The frequency and duration of the monitoring visits also seems insufficient to provide the necessary technical assistance.
- **Effective steering committees:** NGOs tend to work alone. However, when the steering committees and the partnerships agreements are solid and productive, the probability of increasing wider impact increases rapidly. It is also true that even though working in team is better in terms of impact and sustainability, we must also note that inducing this type of arrangements might also have unexpected negative and paralysing consequences.
- **Management:** Reinforcement from the beginning of the management units especially when it comes to defining relevant and measurable OVIs. Appropriateness of human resources inputs (quantitatively and qualitatively) needs attention since the project start.
- **EC support:** the improvement in the development of the Programme since the new RWEL Task Manager assumed this responsibility needs to be noted: this is a good indicator of the value of a strong EC support in this kind of interventions.
- **Focus on results:** Future projects need to adopt a more result oriented approach instead of activity oriented ones.
- **Gender Expertise:** Gender expertise is required in implementing organisations (e.g. the assistance of gender experts, or the support by the TA in focusing in gender, would be required) to ensure the projects take into account all aspects of the socio-economic condition of women in MEDA and use the gender-specialist analysis.
- **Sustainability:** it is to be considered since the beginning of the project, already in the design, more strongly than in the present interventions.

7.3. Recommendations

Because the majority of the projects have finished or are about to finish in few months, the main recommendations are oriented towards the achievement of a wider impact and of a certain degree of sustainability. Following the above analysis, the following recommendations are presented for the consideration of the relevant EC Services:

1. EC might consider requesting a sustainability plan to each of the management units. It might be useful to request whether they will apply for external funds for the continuity of the intervention or if a phase-out strategy will be defined.

2. Enhance the personality and visibility of EOWEL as a programme, and not just as a series of projects, to achieve a wider impact. The website needs improvement.
3. In order to improve the wider impact, RWEL should consider prioritising advocacy activities with MEDA authorities. The dissemination of studies would be a good occasion, other events (to be decided together with the task manager) might be proposed as well.
4. Final reports should be focused on results and PCM criteria: the management units should pay attention to this aspect.
5. If consortia are to be assessed positively in future calls for proposals, the EC might consider previous experience among partners as an asset, as it has been proved that the best experiences in EOWEL were departing from a previous cooperation.



ANNEX I

Monitoring Reports produced in 2007

Monitoring Reports Produced in 2007

C/N	Project Data						Monitoring Data			Conclusions					Action Points
	Ref. No	Title	Country	Primary Commitment	End Date	Project Authority	Mission No.	Report Ref.	Monitor	Design	Efficiency	Effectiveness	Impact	Sustainability	
1	113240	Role of Women in Economic Life (RWEL)	EGYPT	1.781.100	31/12/08	British Council	ME4	10457.01	Lourdes Cantarero	c	c	c	c	c	EC DEL: 1) Together with the management unit, revise the dissemination activities schedule planned for the coming year and analyse how the MEDA authorities' participation is foreseen. If needed, increase the MEDA authorities' active participation. 2) Consider the option of allocating more resources to more events. Together with the management unit, analyse the resources available (especially for the "provision for incidental expenditure" budget line). RWEL Management Unit: 1) Along with the second amendment, request a proposal for optimising the resources allocated in the "provision for incidental expenditure" budget line. 2) Considerably improve the website and enhance its usefulness for the wider population; gradually place it as a reference site for women economic empowerment in the region.
2	112878	Creating new opportunities and networking facilities for marginalised home-based working women	MOROCCO	298.504	30/06/07	Planet Finance Morocco (PFM)	ME4	10450.01	Maria González Mata	c	c	b	b	b	Project management: Final report should acknowledge the swift on the PP. Clarify added value of the partnership, where both interventions (Morocco, Turkey) have been complementary, bringing about synergies. Focus reporting on results and objectives attained, referring constantly to the numbering of the Annex I to the contract. Register the name "Femmes Artisanas" as a trademark. Further exploit the "fair trade" image, which is its main added value for export. Improve website (better display of products, try to start internet sales, quality certificate from the Ministry of Tourism, possibility of Arabic translation). Develop a good practice report to highlight project achievements. Morocco: establish a system to follow-up ToT, another to follow-up women's progress, individually. Turkey: strengthen lobby of local authorities.
3	112872	Free to Work	JORDAN	33.026	28/12/07	Tatawor Association, Jordan	ME4	10451.01	Lourdes Cantarero	b	b	c	a	b	To Free to Work Partners: 1) Consider the development of actions related to the promotion of women enrolment in tertiary education. 2) Whenever possible, contemplate the possibility to work in a more systematic and explicit way regarding gender issues with men, especially in a traditional context. 3) Use the LF as a self-monitoring tool to follow and measure achievements. These tools are important not only for results-based accountability, but also for a more strategic long-term approach built on evidence-based information on what works, what does not, and why. To EC: Free to Work experience deserves to be thoroughly studied so that it might be replicated with the needed adaptations in other contexts. Special acknowledgment and encouragement would be very appropriate.
4	112880	Economic Empowerment of Rural Palestinian Women: a joint Palestinian, Israeli and European Project	ISRAEL	360.025	39448	Negev Institute for Strategies of Peace and Development (NISPED)	ME4	10542.01	Maria González Mata	c	c	b	b	c	EC: Check eligibility of expenditure in budget lines where the project overspent. PM: Ensure the Conference will be adapted to beneficiaries' real needs; evaluate success. Develop action plan to support new businesses after project end and continuation of training (phase-out). Develop (EU, IL partners) concrete measures to market products in Israel and Europe. Develop strong impact assessment tools. Prepare a report on media coverage and dissemination in international fora as best practice. Final report should: follow the activities as per Annex I to Contract, focus on results and progress towards OO; clearly state sustainability prospects; add reference to socio-economic status of beneficiaries; analyze the partnership added value (how EU partners experience served Palestinian beneficiaries' needs).
5	112894	Economic Empowerment for Palestinian Women: Turning Business Ideas into Reality	ISRAEL	300.044	28/12/07	Center for Jewish Arab Economic Development (CJAED)	ME4	10453.01	Maria González Mata	b	b	a	b	b	EC: grant 3-month extension to expand support to new businesses and finalize networking activities. Project management: Provide the EC with a detailed work plan to justify the extension. Upgrade project's website with urgency (and upload the training manual). Closely follow-up and back the formation of the Network, including the design of a sound business plan and resources needs assessment. Upon project completion, draft a comprehensive report detailing project process, outcomes and best practices.

Monitoring Reports Produced in 2007

C/N	Project Data						Monitoring Data			Conclusions					Action Points
	Ref. No	Title	Country	Primary Commitment	End Date	Project Authority	Mission No.	Report Ref.	Monitor	Design	Efficiency	Effectiveness	Impact	Sustainability	
6	112907	Femmes Entrepreneuses en Méditerranée (FEM)	TUNISIA	485.841	30/06/08	ENDA Inter Arabe	ME4	10454.01	Lourdes Cantarero	a	b	b	b	b	To the FEM partners: 1) Deliver, as soon as possible, the mid-term reviews and during the next FEM meeting, revise the relevance of the OVI especially at the PO level as well as the results in the different MEDA countries. 2) Improve the process of consolidation of balances among FEM partners. 3) Develop a phase-out (or project extension) strategy that includes learning from the mid-term review. 4) Fine-tune the expert strategy by linking the informal with the formal sector. 5) Consider also designing gender-awareness activities for men clients. To the EC: 1) Use the FEM LF as a model for future interventions and if still possible, try to organize a meeting with all the EOWEL partners to reinforce planning and monitoring capacities based on the PCM methodology. 2) Use the FEM consortium as good practice of added-value for its exchange process and for the role played by the European partner.
7	112916	Gender Equality in Employment and Small Enterprises (GEESE)	EGYPT	349.751	27/12/07	El Mobadara, Egypt	ME4	10455.01	Lourdes Cantarero	c	c	c	c	c	To Project Management: 1) To define a phase-out strategy (or a handover one in case the organisations will receive extra external funds to continue with the implementation of the actions) that will analyse the different quality factors (economic and financial sustainability, level of ownership by the project beneficiaries, level of political support provided, project contribution to the institutional and management capacity, appropriateness of the methodology and techniques introduced, consideration of environmental aspects, etc). 2) For future interventions, a better use of the Logical Framework as a management and monitoring tool has to be considered along with a definition of appropriate IOV and the identification of assumptions at all levels of project intervention.
8	112927	Sustainable Economic Opportunities for Women in the MENA region (SEOW-MENA)	LEBANON	499.999	29/12/07	Collective for Research and Training on Development Action (CRTD.A)	ME4	10456.01	Maria González Mata	c	c	c	b	b	EC Delegation: Grant 9-month extension requested to allow for the project to finish activities, once the action plan has been clarified and the mid-2007 report provided. CRTD.A: Clarify reporting to the EC, following the description of the action (annex I to contract) and focusing on results and progress towards the OO. Submit mid-2007 progress report, together with upgraded action plan 07-08 (including activities with reference numbers, and reference to the description of the action and the report, quantification of target groups and expected results). Ensure participation of the identified Syrian partner. Develop planned SEOW-MENA website as soon as possible.