



**The Syria Trust for Development
&
United Nations Development Programme**

INITIATION PLAN

Establishing a National Platform for Syrian NGOs

Brief description

The Initiation Plan (IP) aims at setting the framework for cooperation between the Syria Trust for Development and UNDP in establishing a National Platform of cooperation for development-based NGOs in Syria. The formation of the Platform would provide the space and capacity for NGOs to coordinate activities, share experiences, explore links and identify areas of cooperation in assistance to national development frameworks such as the National Millennium Development Goals Report and the 10th National 5-Year Plan. The project will address the following objectives: a) initiate a national dialogue to discuss the mechanisms of the Platform to gain a broad consensus and national ownership; b) Establish the Platform as a Unit under the auspices of the Trust; c) conduct a capacity assessment of the Trust; d) formulate capacity development strategies for the Trust to enable it to undertake its role in strengthening the capacities of NGOs within the National Platform; e) initiate the Platform and prepare the full-fledged project document.

Country: Syrian Arab Republic

UNDAF Outcome(s)/Indicator(s):

UNDAF Outcome 2: Efficiency and accountability of governance structures at central and local levels strengthened towards sustainable development by government, civil society organizations and the private sector.

Indicator:

Expected Outcomes/Indicators (CP outcomes linked to the SRF/MYFF goal and service line)

B.4: an empowered civil society involved in development and implementation of public policies, planning and programmes.

MYFF Goal: Goal 2. Fostering democratic governance

Service Line: Service line 2.5 - E-governance and access to information
Core results: Citizens' participation, especially of vulnerable groups, in policy dialogue increased through enhanced access to information

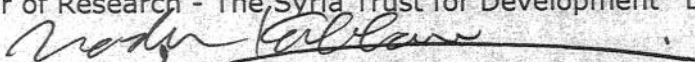
Expected Output(s)/Indicator(s):

Implementing partner: The Syria Trust for Development
(Designated institution/Executing agency)

Responsible Parties: The Syria Trust for Development

Programme Period: 2007-2011
Programme Component: Good Governance
Project Title: Establishing a National Platform for Syrian NGOs
Project ID:
Project Duration: 1 year (November 2007 – October 2008)
Management Arrangement: NGO Execution

Budget US\$200,000.00
GMS Fee: US\$0
Total budget: US\$200,000.00
Allocated resources:
UNDP TRAC: US\$200,000.00
Syria Trust: in-kind contribution.

AGREED BY DR. NADER KABBANI
Director of Research - The Syria Trust for Development Date: 18/10/07


AGREED BY MR. ALI AL-ZA'TARI
Resident Representative - UNDP Date: 18/10/07



1 The UN exchange rate prevailing at the signature date of the project is US\$ 1= SP 49.90

I) SITUATION ANALYSIS

The 2005 Arab States Millennium Development Goals Report gave a statistical and analytical description of the uneven state of development across the Arab States region, and gave insight into the roadmap toward achieving the MDGs by 2015. But development for the MDGs is inextricably linked to the general development context in this region, which provides myriad challenges, obstacles, and opportunities for achieving the MDGs. One of the challenges in the region is to enhance the coordination and networking among civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) so that they can promote an effective exchange of ideas, experiences, and capacities that can enhance development activities and promote development outcomes.

The cooperation between the United Nations and NGOs goes back to the foundation of the UN, and has expanded as the scope and mission of UN projects have also evolved. Following the UN's principles of pluralism and participation, NGOs have become an integral part of applying a new more dynamic people-centered approach to development, where NGOs can participate alongside government and the private sector in initiating projects to serve the social and humanitarian needs of their communities and acting as advocates for their communities to better articulate and direct development initiatives.

Partnerships with NGOs are pivotal for mobilizing public opinion and awareness for the MDGs. In countries across the world, civil society groups have a special interest in one or more of the MDGs. Many have a proven capacity for broad-based mobilization and delivering on development projects efficiently in support of government institutions— skills that will be essential to placing the MDGs at the heart of national debates and development priorities. The role of NGOs is crucial not only in campaigning for the goals, but in preparing the analysis for MDG reports, and monitoring progress to generate and sustain political momentum and public interest.

The capacity deficits of NGOs must also be addressed. Capacity deficits do not only characterize local government bodies but also organizations of civil society that have been isolated from participation. Capacity development (CD) is a means towards reaching development outcomes. It is the “how” of development and is at the heart of UNDP's mandate and functions. CD underpinned by the fundamental characteristic of national ownership, cuts across the results areas of UNDP practices, and informs the role of the UN development system in-country.¹

Capacity development is central to all endeavors in development programming, from research, policy, programming and strategy formulation, to implementation, management, as well as monitoring and evaluating the process and outcomes of development. Hence CD and ownership of national development strategies are essential for the achievement of the MDGs, and CD is now at the core of the UN's work at country level as the single most important service to its partner countries.

¹ Refer UNDG Position Statement on Capacity Development, 2006.

NGOs Capacities

According to recent reports, many NGOs in Syria are characterized by two aspects: a) their inability to function effectively due to an absence of institutions or organizations able to offer useful and practical support and b) their shortcomings in terms of their organizational management/structure and operative capacities.²

While NGOs in Syria exhibit the dynamism and motivation of young organizations, they are severely lacking in their professional capacities which places them at a great risk of faltering and failing if they encounter challenges in the medium or long term. Furthermore, even though, a number of NGOs have managed to attract some qualified young professionals with good educational credentials and experiences, there is still a lack of expertise in the kind of work normally performed by NGOs. There is thus an urgent need for capacity development of NGOs in Syria.

These internal management challenges are exacerbated by the fact that there is a scarcity of sources of technical support for NGOs. This leads to the conclusion, that there is an obvious need for establishing mechanisms for organizational and management expertise, as well as technical support provision to NGOs to overcome the shortage in expertise and to build their capacities.

Another challenge for NGOs is the weak coordination mechanisms among development-based organizations which leads in many cases to work duplication and impedes the optimal use of resources accessible to NGOs. This is not, by any means, unique to the Syrian context as it is a common observation globally that in many instances, NGOs perceive each other as competitors rather than partners. However, this is particularly critical for Syria as financial resources for NGOs are still quite limited.

Syrian NGOs – the Legal Context

Charity organizations have a long and active history in Syria, some dating back to the eighteenth century. While charity organizations are sometimes counted among NGOs, today NGOs primarily refer to part of non-governmental organizations involved in development or advocacy. At present, according to the 10th Five Year Plan adopted by the Syrian government, there are roughly 626 charity organizations registered and working in the country. Development-based NGOs, in the contemporary sense, are a very recent addition to Syrian civil society organizations; most becoming formally established after the year 2000. In addition, although a number of organizations have been engaged in NGO-type activities during the past few decades, they are relatively marginalized compared to the government and for-profit sectors.

Several external challenges exist for NGOs in Syria, but most significant is the legal environment in which they function. NGOs legally operate under the stipulations contained in the Association and Private Societies Law (No. 93 of

² "NGOs in Syria: A Needs Analysis" British Council, 2004

1958), which centralizes all NGO activities through the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MoSAL). In accordance with this Law, NGOs must register with MoSAL and are placed under the Ministry's patronage and supervision.

In addition, the Law regulates NGOs operations and dealings with international organizations, which falls under MoSAL's jurisdiction, and most activities, particularly funding and cooperation with international actors, must be approved by the Ministry. As stipulated in the Law, NGOs must give the Ministry prior notification before partnering or cooperating with international organizations, and in the case of financial funding from international resources, NGOs must obtain additional clearances from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This has proven as a challenge to enhancing active involvement of international development actors, among them UNDP, with NGOs.

Certainly, while some NGOs in Syria might enjoy certain levels of independence from the government, substantial dialogue with decision makers remains weak. NGOs do not enjoy substantial organizational or functional autonomy, and are often restricted in terms of operations to charity or social work. Although this is certainly changing, as the critical role NGOs must play has been recognized at the national policy level, particularly in development efforts, NGOs remain an untapped resource for international collaboration in development projects and as government partners in development planning and dialogue.

Rational

In 2006, the Syrian Government initiated the 10th Five Year Plan (10th 5YP) which introduced a focused commitment to the empowerment of civil society, particularly in the area of social development. As emphasized in the Plan, Syria's development track is moving on transitioning from a centrally-planned economy into a social market economy through broad-based, long-term multi-sector reform. According to the vision of the 10th 5YP, the transition process will be guided and motivated by the inclusion of all levels of government, as well as the inclusion of the private sector and civil society organizations in the national development agenda. As such, there is a significant attention given to the role and the development of civil society organizations, and in particular to the NGOs sector, as a means to achieving increased citizens' participation in socio-economic development, localizing development efforts, empowering communities and enhancing social responsibility.

As part of the 10th 5YP, the Syrian government has recognized the need to increase the coordination and collaboration between organizations and associations in Syria. In the absence of formalized and effective structures, most organizations lack efficiency and well-functioning programs and/or projects. Innovative participation and collaboration, particularly with other local/national organizations or international organizations is weak and limited due to the legal and social constraints, leaving civil society organizations in a stagnation state, lacking both capacity and space to function as partners in development.

In addition, the 10th 5YP identifies several issues facing Syrian NGOs, mostly relating to weaknesses in their organizational and professional structures,

specifically in terms of their administrative and managerial systems. This is particularly relevant to cooperation and expansion of activities among organizations in Syria.

In light of this, the 10th 5YP recommended a series of short and long term goals to address the social and legal situation impacting on NGOs' effectiveness. Among the stated goals of the 5YP are the following:

- Providing supportive environment to the civil society to perform its role in the decision making process;
- Ensuring that civil society is participating in social justice and poverty alleviation programmes;
- Enhancing civil society participation in social and economic development process;
- Developing a networking system that links civil society, state and market.

Furthermore, and within the 10th 5YP, the role of NGOs in achieving the MDGs was emphasized. As recognized internationally, the MDG's are a people-based mechanism to achieving long term development goals. There is a stake for all to take ownership of the issues on a local grassroots level, and to ensure a greater broader-based participation encompassing all. There is thus a need to build a platform for coordination, discussion, cooperation and independence for NGOs to enable them to function efficiently, first to support civil society and secondly to ensure NGOs' long term ability to contribute to development.

In order to ensure that national development initiatives are yielding their expected results, synergies between the state, the private sector, and civil society organizations should be achieved.³ This synergy assumes that both the state institutions and civil society organizations have the capacity to organize and coordinate their efforts. While this is happening at the national level, impacting on the capacities of State institutions through on-going national reform initiatives, it remains absent when it comes to developing the capacities of civil society organizations, especially NGOs. Serious attention needs to be dedicated to developing the capacities of this sector to enable it to undertake an effective role in the national development process. In other words, it is important at this stage to focus on a rigorous capacity development process to up-scale the capacities of NGOs. This will enable NGOs to develop from strictly charity-based organizations into national partners in the development process undertaken by the Syrian government, in cooperation with UNDP and other partners.

UNDP/Syria Interventions

As part of its programs dedicated to good governance and community participation, UNDP aims to improve the capacities of NGOs in Syria to play a key role in the development process of the country. UNDP, through various programs and projects, establishes partnerships with NGOs in order to further facilitate the link between national development projects and civil society and to enlarge

³ Evans, P. (1996). Government Action, Social Capital and Development: Reviewing the Evidence on Synergy. *World Development*, 24 (6), 1119-1132.

NGOs function as direct entry points into local communities. In many instances, development projects are supported by NGOs instead of governments or international organizations. As a consequence, there is an increasing focus on developing the role of NGOs in society, enhancing the relationship between NGOs and government at both the national and international levels, and directing energy and resource towards capacity development and institutional strengthening of local NGOs to enable them to undertake their expanded and envisioned roles more efficiently.

UNDP works through a variety of channels in various programs to improve capacities for both the private and public sector. Programmes and projects involving NGOs aim to improve dialogue between the government and NGOs, strengthen capacities of NGOs, promote networking and in-country dialogue among NGOs and support participatory, community-based development. UNDP has also worked to strengthen the capacities of the government to work with NGOs and has facilitated national debates and actions related to legal and regulatory frameworks for NGOs to operate independently and transparently.

In line with UNDP's strategy outlining cooperation modalities with NGOs, this project strives to highlight the importance of people-centered and participatory processes in Syria. As part of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2007-2011 (UNDAF), UNDP's partnership and accessibility to civil society is an important component of development strategies in Syria, and should be reflected at the country level. UNDP at a global level enjoys affiliation and collaboration with NGOs in programme implementation, and many country offices have taken significant steps in facilitating an enabling environment for civil society organizations' activities through dialogue with governments and various project partners. It is in the interest of UNDP to extend such partnerships into the Syrian context.

UNDP engages on capacity development in four defined areas of support: capacity assessment, capacity development response strategies, costing capacity development strategies, and capacity development monitoring and evaluation. UNDP has identified these four capacity development areas and drawn together case evidence in each of the areas to support countries in responding better to national and local capacity needs, and for making effective use of their capacity assets. These areas have been also prioritized based on undertaking study of norms and standards, good practices and data sources where available, and this informs us that these strategies have a positive and sustainable impact on the development and retention of endogenous capacity at the national and local levels.

UNDP's approach to CD emphasizes that "long-term development should be a nationally led and managed process that builds upon existing capacity in designing and implementing effective strategies to further boost capacity development."⁴ A more comprehensive, rigorous, and systematic approach to CD is being pursued to enhance "the ability of individuals, institutions and

⁴ Statement by Kemal Derviş, UNDP Administrator to the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA, 11 September 2006.

societies to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives in a sustainable manner.”⁵

II) PROJECT STRATEGY

The main long-term objective of this project is to establish a National NGO Platform that aims to strengthen the capacities of NGOs and enhance their contribution to and participation in development processes in the country. In order to achieve these objectives, and considering the weak capacities of NGOs, a core capable NGO must act as the host of the project to ensure that it actualizes this objective. In this regard, the Syria Trust for Development (the Trust) has been selected to host the Platform in its inception phase. To enable the Trust to undertake this role, the IP will focus on strengthening the capacities of the Trust and laying the basis for the establishment of the National Platform.

The **National NGOs Platform** will be an organized network composed of development-based NGOs in Syria. Membership would be open to NGOs registered with MoSAL working in the field of social and economic development at the grassroots, local and/or national level. The objectives of the Platform will be to enhance coordination and cooperation of Syrian NGOs in the field of social and economic development, to promote an effective exchange of ideas and experiences, to facilitate capacity development initiatives, to expand the contribution of NGOs to national dialogue on social and economic development, and to provide a broader networking space for the NGO sector. The Platform will promote dialogue on an inter-organizational level, internally discuss latest developments and issues of common concern and initiate common approaches and goal-oriented strategies in interacting with other stakeholders in the development process, namely government, the private sector and international organizations.

The Platform takes on a significant dimension given that the role of NGOs in Syria is often limited to charity and relief aid; but they are increasingly working as main partners in development. In this regards, the Platform can contribute to:

- Minimizing competition and duplication between NGOs and enhancing collaboration through group work.
- Enhancing the understanding of mechanisms for coordination and collaboration in decision-making process among NGOs and in various fields.
- Working together to face economic, political, social, and cultural challenges.
- Implementing an objective and comprehensive evaluation of development programs and activities.
- Empowering NGOs to participate in a process of capacity development and awareness building.
- Organizing joint advocacy campaigns and policy dialogue in the fields of socio-economic policies.
- Achieving a better management of human and financial resources.

⁵ UNDP definition of capacity and capacity development (see Capacity Development Practice Note, UNDP, 2006)

- Providing a facility for exchanging information and knowledge about needs, priorities, resources, solutions, and best-practices.
- Highlighting and strengthening common ground between member organizations.
- Elaborating a common and clear understanding of development.
- Elaborating a renewed comprehensive vision for the role of NGOs.
- Strengthening civil society in general, through finding spaces that are based on common aims, clear perspectives, and comprehensive approaches towards development.
- Enhancing NGOs abilities to attract funding from national and international donors.
- Progressing from a service provision role to a more development and social change oriented role.
- Facilitating access to thematic resources, e-libraries, and thematic discussion groups; access to information and facilitating contact with donors; advisory services on different issues and training

This project will be executed by the **Trust**. The Trust in its capacity as a large, credible and central organization of good standing will act as the initial national coordinator and secretariat of the Platform.

The Trust will serve as the organizational and logistical center of the National Platform during its inception phase, in which its expertise and coordinating efforts will be the epicenter of Platform's activities. It will also serve as the main liaison with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MoSAL), particularly on issues of funding and/or registration. In addition, it will cooperate with SPC to facilitate mechanisms for the engagement of NGOs in the planning implementation processes.

The Trust is well-placed to host the project. It is a non-governmental/non-profit foundation. It is a new legal entity, which was created after a number of smaller NGOs joined together to form one organization. This structure allowed the NGOs to pool their resources and to establish common shared services, such as their own research and communications divisions, as well as to develop other areas of synergy. The three broad types of programmes that form the work of the Trust are: Rural Development, Learning, and Culture and Heritage. Its activities are funded by corporate and charitable sponsorship and by grants from the government. The Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees and works independently or in partnership with the government, the private sector, international organizations, and other NGOs on programmes and projects aimed at empowering communities and individuals throughout Syria.

In its operations, the Trust selectively prioritizes its interventions. For example, it sponsors projects in areas where its intervention can achieve maximum results or if it can fill the void left by other development actors. It avoids projects that foster long-term dependency, and are better supported by the Government, or which compete with other bodies providing public services effectively and accessibly. Through its projects it supports two kinds of initiatives: a) projects that avail resources to population segments (i.e. a particular age group or social group); and b) projects that can be sustainable and are initially supported by the

Trust but have exit strategies where the project sponsors – be it communities or individuals – can later take over and manage independently.

The Trust has the comparative advantage in that it possesses managerial capacity and adequate staff to undertake such an endeavor. It is one of the largest development-based NGOs in the country, with around one hundred staff members, and has the capacity to act at the national coordinator. The Trust was initially formed to coordinate the work of four pre-existing NGOs, namely FIRDOS, SHABAB, MASSAR and WorldLinks Syria. The Trust therefore has developed a level expertise in coordinating and coaching the developmental efforts of existing NGOs. It is expected that the Trust will bring this expertise to the Platform in its initial capacity as the national coordinator.

PROJECT COMPONENTS:

In this IP the project will focus on the following components:

1. Establishing a National NGO Platform and developing its structure.
2. Assessing the Capacities of the Trust and formulating CD strategies.
3. Implementing the CD strategies.
4. Initiating the dialogue for the establishment of a National Platform that will bring together national NGOs through a Preparatory Meeting and a National Dialogue Workshop.
5. Laying the ground-work for the second phase of the project when it is developed from an IP to a full-fledged project. Within this second phase, it is envisioned that a capacity assessment of NGOs will be carried out and CD strategies to strengthen the capacities of NGOs in Syria will be developed and implemented.

COMPONENT 1: ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL NGO PLATFORM AND DEVELOPING ITS STRUCTURE

The main objective of the project is to establish an umbrella platform that brings together NGOs as active participants in the socioeconomic development of the country and helps to develop their capacities. The platform's "Unit to Enhance the Capacities of NGOs" will function as the governing body for the project's implementation.

COMPONENT 2: CONDUCTING A CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

The IP provides an overview of the proposed Capacity Assessment to be undertaken for the Trust during the IP and later for the NGOs who will join the Platform in the second phase of the project. The Capacity Assessment (CA) utilizes UNDP's "default" capacity assessment (CA) framework, intended to serve as a starting point for capacity assessment exercises. The IP includes a detailed discussion of the key dimensions of the framework, and provides guidelines for managing an assessment, from mobilizing an assessment team, designing the assessment approach, conducting the assessment, interpreting its results and eliciting lessons learned during the process.

Objectives of the Capacity Assessment

- To produce an initial "capacity baseline" grounded in an agreed set of performance standards meeting international good practice criteria
- To help analyze and recommend areas of intervention, through strategic capacity development initiatives and targeted quick impact actions
- To derive "areas for improvement" across all areas of operation,
- To identify a small set of priorities for initial systemic CD that could enable the achievement of a credible platform on which performance improvements at all levels could be predicated.
- Bring rigor and a systematic method for assessing capacity needs
- To establishing priorities and sequencing of interventions (as opposed to wishful shopping lists)

COMPONENT 3: FORMULATING & IMPLEMENTING THE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Conceptualizing and formulating organizational and development-related strategies and programmes require analyzing a range of development parameters that may affect needs and performance in a given area; exploring different perspectives; long-term strategizing; and setting objectives.

Pointers for Capacity Development:

- Helping to develop appropriate skills and attitudes, as well as methodologies, to support dialogue processes among stakeholder groups
- Encouraging harmonization of analytical work
- Aligning resources, as much as possible, with planning and budgeting processes
- Helping to identify sensible quick impact initiatives

Once the capacity development strategies have been identified and costed, these strategies are implemented through training, mentoring, etc. Training materials and experts need to be identified for the implementation of the CD strategies.

COMPONENT 4: A PREPARATORY MEETING AND A NATIONAL DIALOGUE

The Platform will introduce and promote logistical, technical and material support to member NGOs, foster their operational and institutional capacity, as well as develop the cooperative mechanism between NGOs themselves. It aims to simplify and boost inter-organizational contact and dialogue on the local and national level and ultimately collectivize and energize the NGO sector to facilitate partnerships and links with other stakeholders and/or donors in Syria's socio-economic development. In order to brainstorm on the mechanisms and objectives of the Platform, a preparatory meeting will be held with selected NGOs to discuss these issues. Based on the recommendations of this initial meeting, a larger national dialogue workshop with NGOs (based on identified selection criteria) will be organized during the life of the IP as follows:

A) PREPARATORY MEETING

The focus on national NGOs would begin by organizing a Preparatory Meeting of selected development-based NGOs in Syria. Criteria for selection of NGOs will be formulated jointly by the project management, UNDP and the Trust. The selection should be based on commitment to national development objectives; a proven track-record in implementing development projects, and so on. Representatives of international organizations, Government and other stakeholders would be invited to participate.

The objective of this Preparatory Meeting is to identify the main framework for the establishment of the National NGOs Platform. The second meeting will be the National Dialogue Workshop.

B) NATIONAL DIALOGUE WORKSHOP

A national dialogue workshop will be organized to introduce the National Platform proposal to NGOs on a wider scale. During the workshop, NGOs will have the opportunity to discuss whether this platform is needed, its objectives, operating mechanisms, main interventions it will sponsor and criteria for membership in the Platform. NGOs fulfilling the criteria established during the preparatory meeting will be invited to join the Platform.

The objective of the Workshop would be to:

- Discuss the modality, mandate, mission, and framework of the National Platform.
- Identify the type of governing body that would be most effective for the Platform.
- Solicit the willingness of participating NGOs to join the National Platform
- Finalize main recommendations for the establishment of the Platform and its working modalities.

Incentives for joining the platform include:

- Accessibility to needs analysis and capacity building.
- Workshops/training for capacity strengthening.
- Guidance on managerial and technical expertise.
- Resource sharing/best practices.
- Collective approach to working with the government.
- Better ability to attract funds from national and international donors.
- Support in gaining accreditation with ECOSCO.

C) NGO NETWORK

The creation of a Network for NGOs involved in the project through participating in the Platform is essential. The objective of this network would be to promote a better understanding of the concept of Sustainable Human Development and MDGs and on their implications on the short and long terms, and to provide a medium for NGOs to exchange lessons learned and best practices.

Networking between NGOs represents a major means for exchange of information and knowledge about needs, priorities, resources, solutions, and best-practices. It also represents a means to strengthen the position of NGOs generally through finding common ground in their missions and unifying positions. A national NGO network would help member organizations in their capacity-development efforts as well as in enhancing their organizational (programme) outcomes through continuous coordination and cooperation.

By establishing the Network, an intra-link will be formed between non-governmental organizations in Syria to facilitate communication, resources and knowledge sharing as well as the exchange of innovative methods/tools in enhancing productivity. This will transcend the organizational strength of individual NGOs and impact civil society as a whole. This will also function within the UNDP CPAP results to empower civil society towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Network members will discuss issues related to the implementation of the 10th 5 year plan and how they can contribute; cutting-edge knowledge and innovations; best practices and resources for data and research aiming to build a participatory-consensus. Each of the network target audience has a particular role to play. The work of the actual network will largely take place in the second phase of the project (when it becomes a full-fledged project).

COMPONENT 5: TOWARD PHASE TWO - FORMULATING A PROJECT DOCUMENT

During the last quarter of the implementation of the IP, a full-fledged project document for NGO Capacity Strengthening should be formulated and resourced. This project document is planned in order to ensure the sustainability of the IP and an effective exit strategy. The project document will be based on a review of the lessons learnt from the IP's implementation and recommendation of modifications if needed. Once the project document is formulated and approved by the Project Board, a resource mobilization and partnerships strategy should be developed for the funding of the full-fledged project.

III. LINKAGES AND PARTNERSHIPS

The IP will be implemented through partnerships with key national and international partner organizations. At the national level, the key partner will be the Syria Trust for Development.

These national and international partnerships will also serve as the basis for the project's development and implementation and exchange of experiences across different institutions to facilitate learning on capacity development for sustainable development. The partnerships at the different levels will also serve as a key instrument to raise awareness and advocate on sustainable development challenges, priorities and approaches relevant to NGOs involvement.

IV. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Initiation Plan will be nationally executed by the Trust. The Trust (referred to as the implementing partner) will be responsible for the overall implementation of the project and for ensuring that the day-to-day activities are implemented in accordance with the work plan. It will also be responsible for supervising the project staff and consultants in coordination with UNDP, ensuring that the proper equipment is in place and for coordinating events encompassed in the project (TORs in Annex 1).

Throughout implementation of the IP and during the formulation of the full-fledged project document, the Trust needs to ensure maximum coordination with other concerned government institutions, mainly the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MoSAL), which is responsible, by virtue of the Association and Organizations Law number 93 of 1951, for coordinating the work of all NGOs operating in Syria, and the State Planning Commission (SPC) in its capacity as the coordinating body with all ministries. It was agreed that the Trust will determine the appropriate coordination mechanism and time to start involving the Ministry of Social Affairs as well as SPC and throughout the implementation stage of this IP. It was confirmed that the Trust has made the appropriate preliminary arrangement with MoSAL to sign the IP between the Trust and UNDP.

A Project Board (PB) will be established to monitor the project's progress towards results. This PB, or Steering Committee (SC), is charged with making executive management decisions for the IP project when guidance is required by the National Project Coordinator (NPC), including approval of project revisions. The PB will consist of senior representatives from the Trust and UNDP. *It has been agreed that the Trust will ensure coordination and information sharing with MoSAL and SPC on the IP's progress and activities.*

The PB members should meet at least twice during the implementation of the IP, the first upon the launch of the project and the second at the end) (TORs in Annex 2)

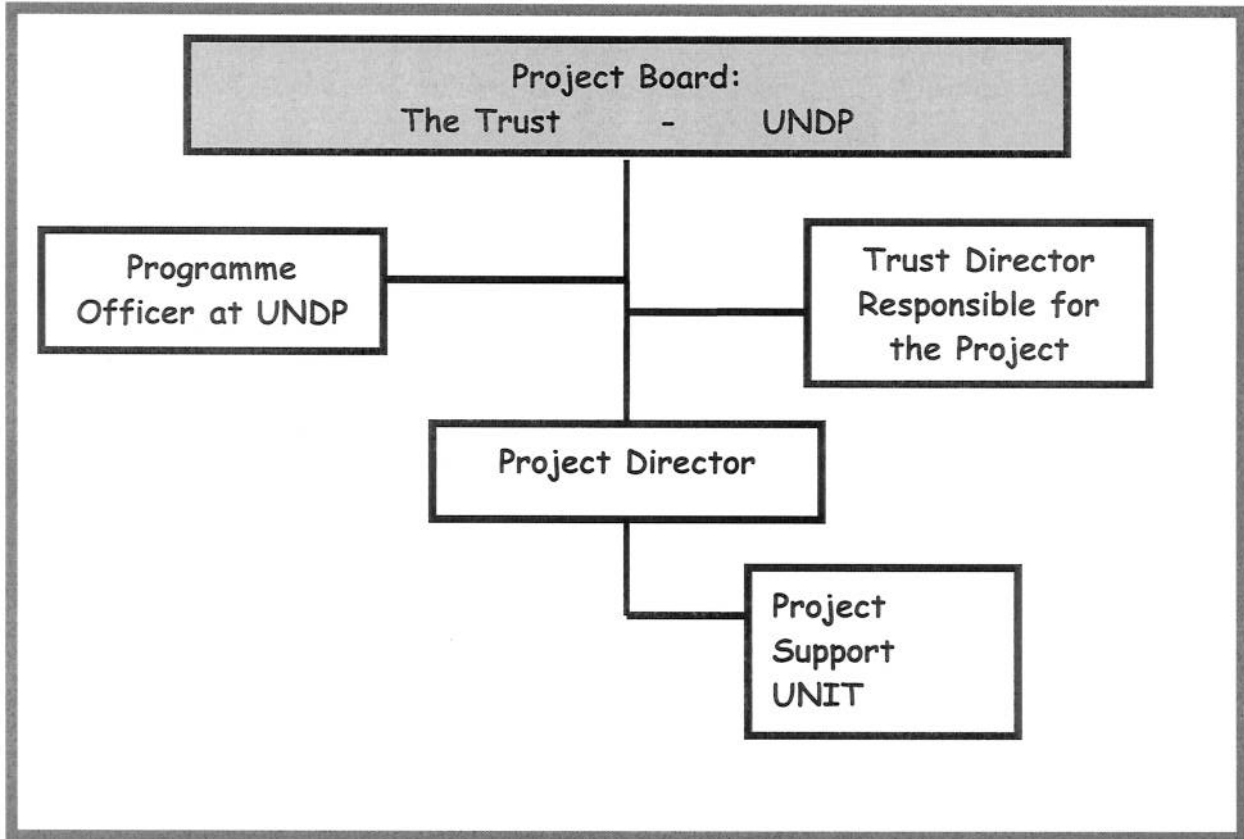
A National Project Coordinator (NPC) will be recruited in accordance with UNDP's rules and regulations (TORs are attached in Annex 3). The NPC will be accountable for the implementation of all the activities of the project, coordination among the different stakeholders, ensuring adherence to and application of acceptable financial management systems and monitoring and evaluating the project's overall progress. S/He will be accountable to the Project Board, and any changes in the milestones and outputs of the project will be discussed with and agreed upon by the PB.

The NPC will produce monthly monitoring reports on progress of activities including timeliness of delivery. S/he will also produce quarterly progress reports and one Annual/Terminal Report at the end of the IP.

The NPC will be supported by a capacity development expert/programme officer (TORs in Annex 4) and an Administrative/Finance Assistant who will also be

recruited in accordance with UNDP's rules and procedures (TORs are attached in Annex 5).

Planning and management of implementation will be governed through approved annual work plans, with schedules defined either monthly or quarterly. The annual work plan, once approved by the Project Board, will be the instrument of authorization to the NPC to implement.



V. MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

The Project Management Team will be responsible for delivering the outputs of the project, the implementation, input management, and sound administrative management. The NPC will develop and submit a detailed project work plan, a procurement plan at the outset of the project, quarterly financial reports, and quarterly progress reports to the UNDP country office. The report should include two sections, namely project implementation and project performance. It should receive inputs from Deliverable Descriptions, Outputs Definitions, Quality Log, Issues Log, and Risks Log. Additionally, one annual progress report (APR)/final project review report at the end of the IP will be submitted to UNDP. These documents will provide critical information and lessons learned regarding the effectiveness of the implementation strategy and the delivery of outputs and

recommendations for the full fledged project, both in terms of substantive and management aspects.⁷

During the IP, the SC will meet at least for two review meetings during this Initiation Plan; one six months after implementation and the other at the end once all deliverables are achieved. This second meeting will discuss achievements, results, and lessons learned, and will provide initial comments as inputs to the formulation of the full-fledged project document. The project is subject to auditing once in its lifetime, in accordance with NGO Execution rules and procedures.

VI. LEGAL CONTEXT

This IP shall be the instrument referred to as such in Article 1 of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Nations Development Programme, signed by the parties on 12 March 1981. The host-country implementing unit shall, for the purpose of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement, refer to the government cooperating agency described in that document.

The following types of revisions may be made to this project document with the signature of the UNDP Resident Representative only, provided he/she is assured that the other signatories of the project document have no objections to the proposed changes:

- Revisions in, or additions of, any of the annexes of the project document.
- Revisions which do not involve significant changes in immediate objectives, outputs or activities of the project, but are necessitated by rearrangement of inputs already agreed to, or by cost increases due to inflation; and mandatory annual revisions, which re-phase the delivery of agreed project inputs or experts or other costs due to inflation or to take into account expenditure flexibility.

Schedule of payment: the full contribution of UNDP will be paid in accordance with UNDP's financial rules and regulations.

⁷ These reports will be prepared in line with the UNDP updated rules and regulations and the templates included in the user guide 2006 (<http://content.undp.org/go/userguide/results/project/>)

Results and Resources Framework II (IP) (2007-2008/ 1 year):

Project Title:

Project number: SYR/07/

Intended Outcome as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resource Framework:

An empowered civil society involved in development and implementation of public policies, planning and programmes.

Intended Outputs as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resource Framework:

MYFF Goal: Achieving the MDGs and reducing human poverty.

Service Line: Empowering civil society organizations.

Key areas proposed for interventions:

1. Establishing the structure for the National NGOs Platform.
2. Assessing the Capacities of the Trust and formulating CD strategies.
3. Implementing the CD strategies.
4. Initiating the dialogue for the establishment of a National Platform that will bring together national NGOs through a Preparatory Meeting and a National Dialogue Workshop.
5. Laying the ground-work for the second phase of the project when it is developed from an IP to a full-fledged project. Within this second phase, it is envisioned that a capacity assessment of NGOs will be carried out and CD strategies to strengthen the capacities of NGOs in Syria will be developed and implemented.

Intended Outcome:

Enhanced capacities at national and local levels and to NGOs to manage development processes through:

- Umbrella Institution that brings together development-based NGOs to be engaged in the actualization of socioeconomic development & participation
- Capacity to supplement the role of the government in MDGs and 5 year plan, reaching the community and grass-roots.

Outcome Indicator:

Enhancement of the ability of local development-based NGOs to coordinate their activities, exchange ideas and information, develop their capacities, and cooperate in supporting and promoting development objectives.

Outputs	Output Targets	Indicative Activities	Responsible Parties	Inputs
An umbrella Unit that develops and brings together NGOs as active participants in socioeconomic development is actualized	1. NGOs capacities and role in supporting the role of the government in achieving the MDGs and the 10th 5 year plan is initiated through the National Platform Unit within the Trust.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishing linkages with MoSAL and approval of the project's objectives. ▪ Establishing the National NGOs Platform Unit within the Trust. ▪ Defining the institutional Framework (Bylaws, Mandate; Objectives; Values) ▪ Management structure: Project Board composed of the Trust and UNDP; ▪ Contracting of staffing ▪ Reshaping within the TRUST to undertake new role ▪ Equipment for the Unit. 	Trust UNDP	National Project Coordinator Programme officer Project Assistant Equipment Sub-total: \$42,000
	2. Capacity Assessment of the Trust.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarify objectives and expectations of the CA with the Trust ▪ Identify and engage stakeholders throughout the Process ▪ Define the scope and the scale of the CA. ▪ Determine data collection and analysis approach and how the CA will be carried out. ▪ Conduct the CA of the Trust ▪ Define desired capacities and capacity levels. ▪ Articulate questions to understand existing capacity assets. ▪ Summarize and interpret results ▪ Define progress indicators for CD strategies ▪ Cost CD strategies ▪ Ensure feedback from stakeholders on CD strategies 	CA experts UNDP CDG Trust	International Experts (2): \$12,000 National Experts: \$2,000 Travel: \$4,000 Sub-total: \$18,000
	3. Formulating & Implementing CD Strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finalization of the CD strategies to be implemented. ▪ Identification of training materials and implementation modalities. ▪ Implementation of the CD strategies. 	Trust UNDP	International consultant: \$6,000 Travel: \$4,000 Printing: \$10,000

					Workshops: 36,000 Sub-total: \$56,000
	4. Governing body's mission and mechanisms of operation for the project's implementation established and the validation of proposed umbrella's objectives and membership achieved through National Dialogue Workshop to agree on modalities of National NGOs Platform.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organize a Preparatory Meeting of selected development-based NGOs in Syria and identify the criteria for selection of NGOs. ▪ Based on the recommendations of the Preparatory Meeting, formulate the concept paper for the national dialogue workshop (objectives of the envisioned Unit: to get NGOs more involved as efficient development partners; networking best practices, avoid duplication, CD, and linked globally). ▪ Organize the National Dialogue Workshop. ▪ Finalize the outcome of the Workshop to be used in the second phase of the project. Have working groups identify the mechanisms of establishing and working modalities of the project mechanisms for the Umbrella to be effective; Identify the criteria for inviting NGOs based on thematic operations; credibility, and legality. In addition, invitations to the UNCT, international organization. 	Trust UNDP	Training: \$54,000 Printing: \$5,000 International Consultant: \$6,000 Travel: \$5,000 Sub-Total: \$70,000	
Full-fledged project document for NGOs' Strengthening and formulated and resourced.	5. Project Document prepared to ensure the sustainability of the IP and an effective exit strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review the lessons learnt from the IP's implementation and recommend any modifications if needed ▪ Present the findings and recommendations to the Project Board. ▪ Prepare a draft of the full-fledged project document ▪ Finalize and gain approval of the project document from the SC. ▪ Formulate & implement a resource mobilization strategy to ensure the funding of the project document. 	Trust UNDP	International consultant: \$8,000 Travel: \$3,000 National consultant: \$3,000 Sub-total: \$14,000	
Total					US\$200,000

Annual Work Plan

OUTPUTS	ACTIVITIES	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	
		C	O	E	A	E	A	P	A	U	U	R	A	
		T	V	C	N	B	R	R	Y	N	L	G	P	
1. NGOs capacities and role in supporting the role of the government in achieving the MDGs and the 10th 5 year plan is initiated through the National Platform Unit within the Trust.	Establishing linkages with MoSAL and approval of the project's objectives.	X												
	Signing of the IP by UNDP	X												
	Establishing the National NGOs Platform Unit within the Trust.		X											
	Defining the institutional Framework (Bylaws, Mandate; Objectives; Values)		X											
	Management structure: SC consisting of the Trust and UNDP			X										
	Contracting of staffing		X	X										
	Reshaping within the TRUST to undertake new role			X										
	Equipment for the Unit.		X	X										
	2. Capacity Assessment of the Trust.	Clarify objectives and expectations of the CA with the Trust				X								
		Identify and engage stakeholders throughout the Process				X								
Define the scope and the scale of the CA.					X									
Determine data collection and analysis approach and how the CA will be carried out					X									
Define desired capacities and capacity levels.					X									
Capacity Assessment of the Trust						X								
Articulate questions to understand existing capacity assets.						X								
Summarize and interpret results						X								
Define progress indicators for CD strategies						X								
Cost CD strategies						X								
3. Formulating &	Ensure feedback from stakeholders on CD strategies					X								
	Finalization of the CD strategies to be												X	

BUDGET

EXPECTED CP OUTPUTS and indicators including annual targets	PLANNED ACTIVITIES List all activities including M&E to be undertaken during the year towards stated CP outputs	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET			
			Source of Funds	Budget Description		
An umbrella Unit that develops capacities and brings together NGOs as active participants in socioeconomic development is actualized	1. NGOs capacities and role in supporting the role of the government in achieving the MDGs and the 10th 5 year plan is initiated through the National Platform Unit within the Trust.	TRUST	UNDP	71400 National Project Coordinator (Contractual Services – Individ (NPC))		
		TRUST	UNDP	71400 Programme Officer (Contractual Services – Individ (programme Officer))		
		TRUST	UNDP	71400 Project Assistant (Contractual Services – Individ (Admin & Finance Assistant))		
		TRUST	UNDP	72200 Equipment for the Unit		
				72800 Information Technology Equip		
				72400 Communication & Audio Visual Equip		
		SUB-TOTAL				
		2. Capacity Assessment of the Trust.		TRUST	UNDP	71200 International Experts (2) (International Consultant)
				TRUST	UNDP	71300 National Experts (Local Consultant)
				TRUST	UNDP	71600 Travel (DSA + Ticket)
				SUB-TOTAL		
		3. Formulating & Implementing CD Strategies.		TRUST	UNDP	71200 International Experts (2) (International Consultant)
				TRUST	UNDP	71600 Travel (DSA + Ticket)
TRUST	UNDP			74200 Printing (Audio Visual & Print Prod Costs)		
TRUST	UNDP			72700 Workshops (hospitality)		
SUB-TOTAL						
4. National Dialogue Workshop to agree on modalities of National NGOs Platform.		TRUST	UNDP	72700 Training (hospitality)		
				72500 Stationary		
				73100 Rental & Maintenance-		

EXPECTED CP OUTPUTS and indicators including annual targets	PLANNED ACTIVITIES List all activities including M&E to be undertaken during the year towards stated CP outputs	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET	
			Source of Funds	Budget Description
				Premises
				74200 Audio Visual & Print Prod Costs (Translation cost)
		TRUST	UNDP	74200 Printing (Audio Visual & Print Prod Costs)
		TRUST	UNDP	71200 International Experts (2) (International Consultant)
		TRUST	UNDP	71600 Travel (DSA + Ticket)
		SUB-TOTAL		
		TRUST	UNDP	71200 International Experts (2) (International Consultant)
		TRUST	UNDP	71600 Travel (DSA + Ticket)
		TRUST	UNDP	71300 National Experts (Local Consultant)
		SUB-TOTAL		
Full-fledged project document for the NGOs Strengthening project formulated and resourced.	5. PD prepared			
GRAND TOTAL				

ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE SYRIA TRUST FOR DEVELOPMENT

The Initiation Plan will be nationally executed by the Trust. The Trust (referred to as the implementing partner) will be responsible for:

- The overall implementation of the project
- Ensuring that the day-to-day activities are implemented in accordance with the work plan.
- Supervising the project staff and consultants in coordination with UNDP,
- Ensuring that the proper equipment is in place
- Coordinating events encompassed in the project.
- Ensuring the implementation of its activities and input management,
- Ensuring sound administrative management is applied.
- Ensuring that the Project Board conducts it review meeting.
- Ensuring that the project is subject to auditing once in its lifetime, in accordance with NEX rules and procedures.
- Ensuring maximum coordination with other concerned government institutions, mainly the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MoSAL) and the State Planning Commission (SPC).
- Overseeing that the planning and management of implementation is governed through approved annual work plans, with schedules defined either monthly or quarterly.

ANNEX 2: TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Project Board (PB) will be established to monitor the project's progress towards results. This SC is charged with:

- Making executive management decisions for the IP project when guidance is required by the National Project Coordinator (NPC), including approval of project revisions.
- Meeting at least twice during the implementation of the IP (upon launch of the project and at the end). The first meeting is six months after implementation and the other at the end once all deliverables are achieved. This second meeting will discuss achievements, results, and lessons learned, and will provide initial comments as inputs to the formulation of the full-fledged project document. The project is subject to auditing once in its lifetime, in accordance with NEX rules and procedures.
- Membership: senior representatives from the Trust and UNDP.
- Approving planning and management of implementation through the annual work plans, with schedules defined either monthly or quarterly.

ANNEX 3: TERMS OF REFERENCE

NATIONAL PROJECT COORDINATOR (NPC)

- A National Project Coordinator (NPC) will be recruited in accordance with UNDP's rules and regulations. The NPC will perform the following tasks:
- Be accountable for the implementation of all the activities of the project,
- Coordination among the different stakeholders,
- Ensuring adherence to and application of acceptable financial management systems
- Monitoring and evaluating the project's overall progress.
- Accountable to the SC and any changes in the milestones and outputs of the project will be discussed with and agreed upon by the SC.
- Develop and submit a detailed project work plan and a procurement plan at the outset of the project,
- Develop and submit quarterly financial reports, and quarterly progress reports to the UNDP country office. The report should include two sections, namely project implementation and project performance. It should receive inputs from Deliverable Descriptions, Outputs Definitions, Quality Log, Issues Log, and Risks Log.
- Formulate and submit one annual progress report (APR)/final project review report at the end of the IP to be submitted to UNDP. These documents should provide critical information and lessons learned regarding the effectiveness of the implementation strategy and the delivery of outputs and recommendations for the full fledged project, both in terms of substantive and management aspects.
- Is responsible for the planning and management of implementation which is governed through Project SC's approved annual work plans, with schedules defined either monthly or quarterly.
- Produce monthly monitoring reports on progress of activities including timeliness of delivery.
- Produce quarterly progress reports and one Annual/Terminal Report at the end of the IP.

ANNEX 4: TERMS OF REFERENCE

PROGRAMME OFFICER

- Involvement in the design and planning phase of the project
- Supervising the recruitment of appropriate staff for the project
- Supervising the contracting of appropriate consultants for the project
- Coordinating project progress with the host institution and other stakeholders in the project
- Mobilizing funds for the second phase of the project.
- Orienting the project towards coordinating with other related projects being implemented through UNDP or other agencies
- Contributing to the proper orientation and guidance of the project
- Organizing regular TPR meetings including the final one
- Participating to the regular TPRs organized for the evaluation of the project
- Providing necessary information on administrative and other issued that could be beneficial to the project
- Providing regular follow-up on the progress and feed back on the outcomes
- Providing liaison between the project manager and the UNDP mainly the financial department
- Reviewing regularly the performance indicators and comparing the outcomes to the intended objectives

ANNEX 5: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Administrative/Finance Assistant

The project Assistant will work under the supervision of the National Project Coordinate and will be in charge of the following:

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Manage and administer the day-to-day operations to ensure the effective implementation of the project's activities under the guidance of the National Project Coordinator (NPC).
2. Prepare detailed work plans at the outset of the project, a procurement plan, and quarterly work plans necessary for implementation of the project activities.
3. Prepare regular progress, financial and narrative reports and a terminal report to UNDP.
4. Coordinate the work and implementation of the projects' activities;
5. Identify difficulties and constraints encountered and report directly to the NPC
6. Ensure the smooth and timely implementation of the projects' activities in accordance with the set work plan.

Qualifications:

A mid-level career candidate is sought with the following qualifications:

- Undergraduate degree in Social Sciences, economics, development studies or related disciplines.
 - Proven management experience of development projects in government, non-profit organizations, international agencies, etc. with at least 6-7 years of experience.
 - Previous experience in organizing events.
 - Ability to work with budgets and handle project finances.
 - Excellent oral and written skills in English and Arabic.
 - Very good communication skills and team work.
 - Excellent organizational skills
 - Timeliness and responsiveness.
 - Proficiency in using computer software and Internet.
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