
HOW BALADI CAP IS HELPING CIVIL SOCIETY IN LEBANON

Building Alliances for Local Advancement, Development, and Investment – Capacity Building (BALADI CAP)
Management Systems International Inc. (MSI)

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OVERVIEW OF LEBANESE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE:

- Unstable political environment
 - Tensions between Sunni Muslim, Shia Muslim, and Christian parties
 - No official elections hosted between 2009 - 2018
 - Leadership hiatus between 2014-2016
 - Corruption and mismanagement
- Economic crisis
 - Rise in unemployment
 - Depreciation of the Lebanese pound (currency)
 - Debt to GDP ratio of 150%
 - (Owes more than what it is able to produce)



WHY HELP CIVIL SOCIETY IN LEBANON?

- Governance issues have been attracting an increasingly large numbers of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Lebanon to work on a wide range of issues including:
 - Municipal transparency and civic engagement, political representation, waste management and other public service management, monitoring of public spending, taxation laws, and others
 - **Current number of CSOs in Lebanon is approx. 6,000**
- Large numbers of CSOs = high competition
 - As a result, CSOs find themselves competing for resources and training in order to achieve the level of capacity required to receive big donor funding
- The fragmentation of the many CSOs + the unstable political environment makes it hard to get CSOs to come to an agreement and work together with corresponding networks, therefore reducing the impact their work has on the issues they want to change

WHAT IS BALADI CAP?

- Counterpart's *Building Alliances for Local Advancement, Development, and Investment - Capacity Building* (BALADI CAP) program funded by USAID and implemented by *Management Systems International* (MSI) to help CSOs in Lebanon
 - BALADI CAP builds on the work and findings their preceding *Promoting Active Civic Engagement* (PACE) program that took place between 2011 - 2014
- Key findings from PACE that BALADI CAP will focus on to help CSO's:
 - Training fatigue between CSOs
 - Existing capacity building programs host solely one-off workshops with no follow-ups to confirm that skills have been institutionalized
 - Existing capacity building programs use one-size-fits-all approaches that do not work given that every CSO has a different capacity, focus, and structure
 - CSOs haven't been sending the proper staff to training programs

HOW BALADI CAP WORKS:

- The BALADI CAP project is made up of three components:
 - 1) Capacity Building Component (CBC); 2) Civic Engagement Initiative (CEI); and 3) Civic Engagement for Democratic Governance (CEDG)
- The **Civic Engagement Initiative (CEI)** component is the main tool used by Counterpart's BALADI CAP program to address the development challenge in Lebanon
- The CEI tool *hypothesizes* that:
 - leading by helping the capacity building of non-political and non-religious affiliated CSO groups (rural and urban) will make a positive contribution to a stronger civic culture and a more democratic and inclusive governance of Lebanese citizens
- The CEI component works for good governance, corruption, transparency, and accountability in addition to building the capacity of CSOs
- The technical approach of the BALADI CAP program created the design that the program engaged in with three reinforcing activities within the CEI component:
 - 1) connection of CSO networks and coalitions between urban and rural CSOs to address power imbalances and bring national and local stakeholders together
 - 2) sustainability of project outcomes through facilitating CSO partnerships and building the capacity of one or more ISOs
 - 3) creation of local problem-solving groups around pre-identified critical areas of focus to foster collaboration between local governments, civil society and private sector stakeholders in addressing and resolving specific problems of common interest

Inclusive Social Accountability (ISA): A Counterpart Framework

- **What is Counterpart's ISA Framework about?**

- Approach that combines social inclusion and community accountability to improve quality of life for all
- Concerned with informing and enabling CSOs to have the ability to hold their governments accountable as well as be accountable for the needs of their citizens
- Allows vulnerable groups who have been marginalized or excluded from political processes to have a voice and make sure their needs are met

- **Examples of ISA integration in BALADI CAP:**

- The following organizations recently were awarded advocacy-related sub-grants:

- 1) **Soins Infirmiers et Développement Communautaire (SIDC) - Social Inclusion**

- committed to providing equitable access to healthcare and improving the quality of life of vulnerable populations especially marginalized women, people suffering from HIV, people with substance abuse issues, the disabled, youth at risk, among others

- this grant will allow this organization to continue their work and ensure that the special needs for each of these populations are considered and met

- 2) **NAHNOO - Accountability**

- this CSO leads a good governance network of CSOs, the INFAC network, which focuses on advocating for anti-corruption laws, access to information law, and engaging the public to push for them

- this grant will help this network achieve its goals of gaining government transparency and accountability

Successes

- The CEI component has achieved most of its output objectives including:
 - number of advocacy grants awarded
 - number of advocacy issue networks formed
 - number of CSOs engaged in advocacy
- Outcome indicators:
 - 76% of CSOs attained at least 75% of their required advocacy grants planned results, as compared to a target of 90%
 - Two of CEI's three ISOs have effectively delivered on their advocacy capacity-building plans, as compared to a target of all three ISOs
- Creating issue networks built capacity in CSOs that had a shared vision whether that be human rights, advocacy, governance, etc.

Challenges

- Attaining all required CSO advocacy and ISOs' training objectives, were more the result of national and intra-network politics than BALADI CAP's technical assistance
 - The issues being advocated on are politically sensitive
- Impact of CEI's advocacy initiatives, as well as the ability to create fully functioning advocacy networks, had the state of politics and policy-making in Lebanon in general, which also impacted these newly established networks
- CSOs and ISOs also felt pressured during the sessions to come to an agreement on the network-related issues imposed by the impending close out of the BALADI CAP activity which was scheduled to end in September 2020

Recommendations

- Many smaller and less-staffed CSOs are facing problems regarding their training. These include training exhaustion and having less opportunities to send the appropriate staff to attend.
- In order to address this issue, we recommend:
 - Help CSOs individually develop financial sustainability where they strong enough to receive funding whether domestic or otherwise
 - Building up each CSO individually first before forming their corresponding advocacy networks
 - This would increase each CSO's ability to form different clusters of CSOs based on similar advocacy issues
- Common cause of the advocacy network CSOs with similar priority advocacy issues should be built first and then move on to creating the networks amongst CSOs
 - This would be effective to make sure needs and rights of all social groups with a specific cause are part of the conversation and to make sure objectives are planned with adequate time
 - This way, CSOs would not feel pressured to come to a consensus

Thank you!

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