

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic
&
The United Nations Development Programme

Project Title:

Empowering Young Journalists in Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Project number SYR/07/006

Brief Description

The project aims at empowering young journalists to actively participate in the development process and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Executed in partnership with young journalists, the project will focus on building knowledge, skills and good citizenship principles among the this group of Syrian youth to become active citizens by supporting a youth-based network that connects them continually. Within a national execution, the project will target this group as the upcoming generation in the media sector to better foster an active national dialogue that supports civic education for youth and future generations that will lead Syria into the coming years to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

COMPONENT 1: COVER PAGE

Country: Syrian Arab Republic

UNDAF Outcome(s)/Indicator(s)

Outcome 2.1: Policy and decision-making supported by quality information and analyses, especially taking into account population dynamics, reproductive health and gender and children’s issues. Mechanism in place for evidence-based policy making and resource allocation.

Outcome 2.2: Outcome 2.2: Accountability of executive bodies reinforced, towards the general public and in relation to committed UN conventions and treaties.

Expected Outcome(s)/Indicator (s):
MYFF Goal 2. Fostering democratic governance,
Service Line 2.4 E-Governance and Access to Information

Expected Output(s)/Annual Targets: CPAP Outcome B.2: Accountability of executive bodies reinforced, toward the general public and in regard to committed UN conventions.

Implementing partner: Ministry of Information (Mol)
Other Partners: State Planning Commission (SPC)

Programme Period: 2007-2011
Programme Component:
Project Title: Empowering Young Journalists in Achieving the MDG’s
Project IDSYP/07/006
Project Duration: 12 months
Management Arrangement: National Execution (NEX)

Total Budget \$ 100,000
Allocated resources:
• UNDP TRAC \$ 25,000
• Donor \$ 71,429
• Total F&A \$ 3,571

Agreed by H.E. Abdullah Dardari, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Economic Affairs
On behalf of the Syrian Government and the State Planning Commission.

Signature: Date:

Agreed by H.E. Mohsen Bilal, Minister for Information,
On behalf of the Ministry of Information, the Implementing Partner.

Signature: Date:

Agreed by Mr. Ali Al-Za'tari, Resident Representative, UNDP.

Signature:

Date:

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Part I: Situation Analysis

Internationally there is no generalized definition of the term “Youth”. According to the United Nations definition (United Nations, 1992), youth comprises young people aged between 15 and 24 years, a definition which will be used for the purposes of this project document.¹

The “Lisbon Declaration”² recognizes “that the formulation and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes and actions in favor of young women and young men are the responsibility of each country and should take into account the economic, social and environmental diversity of conditions in each country, with full respect for the various religious and ethical values, cultural backgrounds and philosophical convictions of its people, and in conformity with all human rights and fundamental freedoms.” Therefore it is important that young people participating in decision making represent those most affected by the decisions taken. The World Youth Report 2007 defines effective youth participation as “the active and meaningful involvement of young people in various aspects of policy and programme development. When effective, the engagement satisfies the right of young people to participate in their own development, makes productive use of their perspectives and experiences, and fosters respectful exchanges in which both youth and non-youth stakeholders increase their understanding of each other’s abilities and limitations.

Syrian youth constitute 36% of the general population with a rising annual population growth rate of 2.58%.³ Although, according to research made by Shell-Studies, the age under which young people are classified is changing, and becoming longer. This prolonged period of youth can be divided into two stages. The first stage consists of adolescence, during which young people occupy a neutral position in employment

Within this context, active and meaningful involvement of this population group in the country’s development has become a national strategic necessity. While youth focused human development awareness programmes have not made their needed impact Syria, government sponsored civic education programmes in regards to health and drugs, violence, HIV/AIDS and information technology. Nevertheless, according to the 10th Five Year Plan; the transition of Syria into a social market economy requires an enhanced public participation in policy formulation. Nevertheless, a bigger challenge arises: the preparation of the upcoming generations to become in-tune with the national goals of development that have been set in

¹ Furthermore since this publication is discussing employment issues, 15 is referenced as the lower cut-off for the youth age bracket as that represents the minimum age of work as per the ILO Convention 138 pertaining to Minimum Age (1973).

² The Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes, 12 August 1998 was the outcome of the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth, convened by the Government of the Portuguese Republic in cooperation with the United Nations, gathered in Lisbon from 8 to 12 August 1998.

³ UNDAF Syria 2007

2005 is in need since the current youth population will be most impacted as such development goals and plans become operational.

Empowerment of Youth in Syria for Human Development:

Like all developing countries, young people in Syria are a vital social group that allows the sustainable continuation and development of society. While every successive generation has characteristic features that make it different from previous generations, it develops under the influence of the economic, social, ideological and political situation and events of the day. Increasingly, Syria is looking to its people and its youth to take greater control of their lives and social systems. While active citizenship means greater direct individual responsibility and involvement it further manifests itself in environmental or social activity such as volunteering, pro bono public work, the forming of interest groups and knowledge communities and the engagement in wider public debate on issues. Such engagement creates value politically, economically, socially and technologically. Although current state and non-state institutions already exist to facilitate public forums and caucuses for youth, enhanced facilitation is needed to encourage interactions among them within the broader state. Currently, there are limited public funds allocated to empower Syrian youth in becoming more engaged within public forums,, nevertheless, the government has facilitated the establishment of privately funded youth development groups. Such groups have exerted extensive efforts in building the capacity of youth in becoming more active not only as an age group within the population, but also as future adult citizens. Complementary to the state sponsored youth groups, such independent NGOs have also focused on creating opportunities for young people by developing the leadership skills, social responsibility, fellowship, and entrepreneurship necessary to create positive change..

While civic education is in place within primary and high school curriculum, the work of NGO's for the benefit of youth significantly contributes to the country's development. Future government programmes declared in the 10th Five Year Plan forecast the production of special educational curriculum for children and implementing a work plan within the cultural institutions aiming to improve their skills. Most importantly, the plan also envisions the encouragement of media institutions to address national socio-economic challenges of citizens. Nevertheless, the plan stresses the need for capacity building for journalists particularly the upcoming generations in providing the general public with updates on the socio-economic progress of the country. Such a direction is strategic taking into consideration the many recommendations put forth by the UN Final Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Youth and the MDG which recommends supporting youth-media initiatives including technology tools, training and financial resources. Also, the facilitation and creation of networks to allow sharing of stories and cross-pollination of reporting would increase audiences and enhance influence and impact. Emphasis was also suggested on providing them with education that bridges a youth's experience with youth media with involvement in mainstream independent journalism.

While there is an existing gap within civic knowledge among the 5.2% Syrian youth who are identified as illiterate⁴, the civic dispositions become necessary to connect civic facts and concepts to the responsibilities of citizenship are directly related to the human development engine. As human development occupies a prominent goal in Syria, the efficient communications of its concepts and challenges particularly among and by the upcoming generations is in demand. Because it expands people's choices, active participation in human development requires an enabling environment, and the lack of general knowledge of its subjects creates a disabling environment for all the different stakeholders to participate in the decision-making process.

Part 2: Project Strategy

The United Nations Development Programme has identified many existing key actors that are promoting areas of civic knowledge and education which include the media and youth. Because the media is an important shaper of public opinion and has the potential to contribute significantly to the effectiveness to MDG focused Civic Education programmes, building the capacity of young journalists to develop and/or produce Civic Education messages geared towards the achieving the MDGs becomes a key element that drives national development processes. Within this framework, the project will be working to empower young journalists in achieving the MDGs through civic education. This broad aim will be worked through building the capacity of young journalists to stress the significance of their information intermediary role in mediating information flows between the public, government, the private sector and UN agencies in their coming years of career development. In addition to technical journalism training, the project will be focusing on providing a MDG packaged civic education training for young journalists will enhance creative energies to better contribute to human development. This strategy goes in line with the recommendations put forth by the UN Final Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Youth and the MDGs, which recommends supporting youth-media initiatives to allow young people to engage in discussion and action around the MDGs⁵.

As the project will focus on strengthening the involvement of young journalists in the development process, its outputs will be focused on building knowledge, skills and good citizenship principles among these young journalists, while providing them with technical training that allows them to report and advocate human development. Through the set up of a national network for young journalists, members will be able to collectively address Syria's development challenges not only as skilled journalist, but as citizens. By utilizing UNDPs existing strong relationship with the local private and government media institutions, the project will seek to provide young journalists with forums within those institutions to advocate human development and the achievement of the MDGs.

⁴ UNDAF Syria 2007

⁵ (<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/youthmdgs.pdf>)

The project will be building on already existing facilities such as ongoing training for young journalists by supporting an enabling environment to foster an active dialogue by this group. The project will further place particular emphasis on capacity development for young journalists that focus on reflecting the interests of the poor. Because capacity development is an ongoing process, the project will identify entry points in investing into further interventions within the area of civic education through media to broaden the choices of the poor and unemployed who are estimated to be at 24.9%⁶. The project will explore ways in using civic education through media as a method for literacy promotion, gender equity, poverty eradication, environmental protection especially within the scope of the Millennium Development Goals. The project will also utilize the necessary existing communication infrastructures such as the newly established radio channels and publications targeting youth to promote civic involvement within the overall development process of Syria.

The project takes into consideration within its strategy in advocating effective willingness of government to facilitate discussion and act upon the issues likely to arise from Civic Education interventions. The project will work to engage the government not only as one of a number of potential partners but as the pivotal actor in order to guarantee solid basis of future desired impact on the ability of Civic education programmes to function and produce results.

⁶ UNDAF Syria 2007

Part 3: Annual Work Plan Budget Sheet

Annual Work Plan Budget Sheet
Year 2007

| EXPECTED CP OUTPUTS and indicators including annual targets | PLANNED ACTIVITIES <i>List all activities including M&E to be undertaken during the year towards stated CP outputs</i> | TIMEFRAME | | | | RESPONSIBLE PARTY | PLANNED BUDGET | | |
|---|---|-----------|----|----|----|---------------------------|-----------------|---|------------|
| | | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | | Source of Funds | Budget Description | Amount USD |
| National Debates on MDGs related topic with youth journalists in rural and urban settings | Activity 1: 1 st MDG forum for Syrian Young Journalists | X | | | | UNDP and executing agency | TTF | Hall, facilitators and trainers | \$5,000 |
| | Activity 2: Five training workshops on the promotion of MDGs through i) Print journalism ii) Television iii) Radio iv) Photography v) cartoons | X | | | | UNDP and executing agency | TTF | Hall, facilitators, equipment, trainers | \$35,000 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------------|--------------|---|---------|
| | Activity 3: Field Trips for each group of journalists covering Syria. *with the aim of covering UNDP and UN field projects | X | | | | | TTF | Transportation, Equipment, facilitator | \$3,000 |
| National network of youth journalists assisted to work on MDG themes as a means to enhance good citizenry practices | Activity 1: Website for Young Journalists Created | | | X | | UNDP and executing agency | TTF and TRAC | Design, hosting | \$3,000 |
| | Activity 4: Organize a plenary MDG focused youth conference covering the wide network of youth organizations and NGOs working to benefit youth | | | | X | | TTF and TRAC | Hall, Facilitators | \$3,000 |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| Civic Education in School programmes advocated for future integration | Activity 1: MDG Curriculum designed for primary school, elementary and high school | | X | | | UNDP and executing agency | TTF and TRAC | National consultants, international consultants | \$7,000 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|--|---|---|---|---|--|---------------------|---|-----------------|
| | Activity 2: Integrating MDGs into children's programmes in collaboration with Syrian TV and Children's NGOs | | | X | | | TTF and Track | Trainers, equipment, editing | \$10,000 |
| | Project management | X | X | X | X | | TTF and Track | Project Director Project Assistant, equipment and miscellaneous | \$25,000 |
| TOTAL | | | | | | | | GMS cost: 5% | \$95,000 |

Part 4: Expected Outputs

Complementing the emerging role of the state as a *facilitator* of development, there is a growing need for building national capacities to support citizen participation in decision-making and human development process. With such need in mind, citizen's participation depends on citizen's knowledge and comprehension of their rights and roles within the realms of the state and society (as needs assessment). Building on the recent UN experience in building national media capacities media to become more active in human development, the project aims to continue the path by working with young journalists as strategic partner and target group that is in need of attention. Therefore, the project outputs will be executed in line with the expected UNDAF (Outcome 2.1) Policy and decision-making supported by quality information and analyses, especially taking into account population dynamics, reproductive health and gender and children's issues. Mechanism in place for evidence-based policy making and resource Allocation and Outcome 2.2 which aims at reinforcing accountability within executive bodies towards the general public and in relation to committed UN conventions and treaties.

The projects will consist of three expected outputs each in line with the CPAP outcomes and expected outputs.

1) B.2: Accountability of executive bodies reinforced, toward the general public and in regard to committed UN convention

2) Civic Education in School programmes advocated for future integration supporting CPAP output B.3.2 which is dedicated to support the implementation of National programmes on civic education.

CPAP Benchmarks;

- Dialogue between the government and civil society enhanced through media and access to information
- Training availed to 60 journalists about human development issues
- Civil society increasingly sensitized about human development issues and challenges
- Assessment of school and university curriculum conducted
- Support mechanisms in specific areas provide

Part 5: Management Arrangements

This project will be implemented using the National Execution modality (NEX). Through NEX operational arrangement, the UNDP country office along with cooperating government Ministry assumes responsibility, and accountability, for the management and implementation of the project. The project is planned to run for 12 months, from March 2007 to March 2009. The project will operate in accordance with UNDP regulations, including those for procurement and accounting.

Steering Committee:

The Project Board will function as an oversight body to ensure that activities are on track and results are achieved in accordance with the project work plan. The Project Board must approve annual work plans and quarterly plans and any variations that alter the project outputs or overall budget figure. Additionally the Project Board will make policy recommendations to improve project implementation and provide advice to project staff.

The Board will be convened at the launch of the project and subsequently meet quarterly and will be composed of:

A representative of the Ministry of Information (MOI)

A representative from the State Planning Commission (SPC)

A representative of UNDP

Other stakeholders, such as representatives of the Youth NGOs, or active donors may participate in the work of the Steering Committee upon request and invitation.

The Project Director will act as secretariat for the committee, being responsible for convening the meetings, preparing the agenda, overseeing preparation of materials for presentation to the meeting and for preparing and distributing minutes of the meetings.

Role and Responsible of Each Party

The project will be implemented and executed by the Ministry of Information under the NEX modality.

UNDP Syria will formulate light management structure through a project team headed by a National Project Director who will be responsible for the full management of the project through recruiting international and national experts, public relations and administration staffs observe the activities to be implemented by the team, and coordinate the communication between the team and other stakeholders. The project director is responsible, among other things, for preparing and revising work plans; planning and organizing project review meetings; providing technical feedback to senior management; ensuring that project activities are carried out within the financial limitations of the budget; supervising the technical and administrative support personnel and coordinating project activities with stakeholders.

The programme officer in charge is in close coordination with the project manager reporting the progress and outcomes to the CO management, UNDP head quarter and the development partners.

Project Team

Composed of international and national experts, and under the supervision and guidance of the National Project Director and UNDP Syria, the team will undertake the role of actual implementation of the activities. It will develop a detailed work plan and design the activities in line with the project concept in the beginning stage of the project, conduct a research/analysis, preparing reports, designing and conducting trainings, networking activities etc. The project director is responsible for overall team activities, coordination of members, and reporting to UNDP Syria will be assigned within the team members. Administrative staff will support all logistic of the implementation including accounting.

Part 6: Monitoring and Evaluation

The project will be subject to the standard UNDP review, monitoring and evaluation guidelines. Monitoring and evaluation will focus on outputs and their contribution (together with partnership efforts) toward the intended outcome. UNDP Syria will have overall responsibility for reviewing quarter project progress reports to be prepared by NPD.

The NPD will provide the Steering Committee with an Annual Project Report (APR) in accordance with the new APR format and quarterly progress reports to assess the progress against the Work Plan and outputs targets. Additional reports may be requested, if necessary, during the project. Information from monitoring and evaluation will provide the basis for making decisions and taking action.

Regular reporting and financial audit should be shared with all counterparts in order to be monitored, discussed and evaluated. An independent (external) evaluation will be conducted at the end of the project. Describe briefly how the key corporate principles for monitoring, measurement and evaluation will be applied for the project in terms of a Communication and Monitoring plan (C&M plan) that describes which activities and outputs will be monitored, reviewed and evaluated, how and by whom should be prepared. The plan should articulate the types of communications and associated scheduling required during the project, as well as methods of communications with stakeholders. The plan should be developed as part of overall Country Programme monitoring and evaluation. The following AWP Monitoring Tool should be used for the project review purpose

Part 7: Legal Context

This project document shall be the instrument referred to as such in Article 1 of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the Government of the S.A.R. 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 based on the progress requirement of the project with the signature of the UNDP Resident Representative only, provided he is assured that the other signatories of the project document have no objections to the proposed changes:

- a) Revisions in, or additions of, any of the annexes of the project document.
- b) 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
- c) Mandatory annual revisions, which re-phase the delivery of agreed project inputs or expert or other costs due to inflation or take into account expenditure flexibility.

Part 8: Project Results and Resources Framework

| Intended Outputs | Indicative Activities | Responsible Parties | Inputs |
|---|---|--|---|
| National Debates on MDGs related topic with youth journalists in rural and urban settings | Activity 1: 1 st MDG forum for Syrian Young Journalists | Journalists ages (20-30) | Hall, facilitators and trainers \$5,000 |
| | Activity 2: Five training workshops on the promotion of MDGs through i) Print journalism ii) Television iii) Radio iv) Photography v) cartoons | Journalists ages (20-30) | Hall, facilitators, equipment, trainers 35,000 |
| | Activity 3: Field Trips for each group of journalists covering Syria. *with the aim of covering UNDP and UN field projects | Journalists (20-30) | Transportation, Equipment, facilitator \$3,000 |
| National network of youth journalists assisted to work on MDG themes as a means to enhance good citizenry practices | Activity 1: Website for Young Journalists Created | UNDP Syria and Ministry of Information | Design, hosting \$3,000 |
| | Activity 4: Organize a plenary MDG focused youth conference covering the wide network of youth organizations and | | Hall, Facilitators \$3,000 |

| | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|--|--|
| | NGOs working to benefit you | | |
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|---|--|--|---|
| Civic Education in School programmes advocated for future integration | Activity 1: MDG Curriculum designed for primary school, elementary and high school | | National consultants, international consultants \$7,000 |
| | Activity 2: Integrating MDGs into children's programmes in collaboration with Syrian TV and Children's NGOs | | Trainers, equipment, editing \$10,000 |
| Project Management | | | Project Director 15,000 Project Assistant 7,200 Equipment, and miscellaneous 3,000 |