



Project Brief:

“Civil Society Capacity Building and Leadership Development for Community Conflict Resolution”

Donor	Partners	Budget	Period	Countries covered	Language
Open Society Foundations	Tunisian CSOs/NGOs	\$800.000	March 2014 / Feb 2016	Tunisia	Arabic/English

Justification

More than two years after the Tunisian revolution and the ousting of the political regime, the social, political, intellectual and cultural situations are still unstable and moving into different directions and sometimes from one extreme to another. The struggle between the political spectra, doctrines, and intellectual and ideological trends in terms of values has increased and become more striking. Views of human rights and democracy-related concepts and principles – including equality, non-discrimination, fair opportunities, participation, and respect for diversity – have diverged.

Despite the great achievements Tunisian women have accomplished in relation to rights and equality, the issue of their empowerment and the full exercise of their political, civil, and economic rights, and the guarantees of justice and gender equality are considered among the most significant areas that require a further mobilization of efforts and more attention by policy makers, governments and civil society alike. Apart from the fact that this issue represents an extremely important target, it is a way to achieve the objectives of sustainable development in a region where women’s issues and fundamental rights as well as the continuous commitment to integrate those rights into development policies and strategies are dealt with less seriously because of the inherent cultural heritage and intellectual differences.

A prominent feature in the Tunisian scene today is that citizens, especially women, have, since the Revolution, become aware of the value of collective action within civil society in its new guise. They have become more and more convinced of the importance of working either within or with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in order to improve the human rights situation and advocate for change. This can be seen easily through the increasing enrollment of women and young people from different social categories in

associations and NGOs as well as their involvement in their projects and programs, preferring them to political parties; or through their immediate response to calls from civil society to intensively participate in movements in the field whenever the need arises.

Through this project, CAWTAR is aiming to contribute to the development of competencies of newly-established civil society organizations to be able to enhance the knowledge and performance of women and youth in exercising their political, social and economic rights, and to deal with difficult situations and conflict management on the basis of human rights and gender equality principles and using partnership methods and networking as part of the Competencies-Based Approach.

The transition stage experienced by many Arab countries today, including Tunisia, is characterized by the frequency of multifaceted conflicts: intellectual, value, political and social, especially with the diminishing opportunities for dialogue and confidence in political parties and official institutions which whose differences have increased and kept away from the concerns of citizens.

A number of studies carried out by CAWTAR and other entities have demonstrated that the newly-established associations are often faced with such situations inside them or within the circle of civil society organization they interact with, or especially, as part of the local and regional community in which they act, without having the necessary know-how and competence that help them contribute to solving those conflicts or mitigating them. Conflicts and clashes are related to domains such as job security, social relations, living conditions, social justice, health services, cultural and intellectual trends, behaviors and other, etc.

Even though this dimension is new and unknown to our societies in general and to civil society in particular, it represents today a community necessity and a tool that is supposed to be adopted and used especially that it has proven its efficiency in many countries outside the region, in addition to the United Nations which has been convinced of its utility and has adopted it for years.

The need for such process has been confirmed especially in the absence of a culture of dialogue in our societies today, the difficulty of accepting the other if it is different, and the intense and sometimes excessive of individual and collective reactions.

Considering that one of the main roles of civil society is to help provide appropriate conditions for a decent living, and help communities exercise their rights and necessary conditions for that; it is capable today, based on the level of confidence it enjoys, to contribute to absorbing conflicts and disagreements among and between the components of society civil as well as with community in which they act. It can play mediating and conciliating roles to help install dialogue as a principle and basis of interactions and accepting the others regardless of the differences with them, and work to establish

community peace that helps overcome the difficulties and challenges without clash and hostility.

In this regard, women, whether as individuals or members of women's associations, can play a distinct role in this area especially thanks to their nature and their communication and regulation capacities as well as the cultural heritage of our societies that accept the intervention of women in many issues, especially the most sensitive ones.

Outcome

- Collective and individual competences from exceptional associations pass their expertise and experience in the field of human rights with all its levels, gender issues, conflict management, partnership, networking, etc. to other civil society components.
 - Indicator 1: competences on Advocacy, social mobilisation & community conciliation passed from 20 experienced NGOs to 100 local NGOs
 - Indicator 2: women's issues & conflict management are part of 2 collective Work groups' AP
 -
- Leadership specificities for associations involved in the project have developed and their capacity in contributing to local community conflict resolution has been reinforced.
 - Indicator 3: 20 NGOs are active in social change conciliation and conflict resolution
 - Indicator 4:

Outputs

- Collective and individual (associations) capable of coaching, mentoring and training have passed their experience and expertise to other associations.
- Two alliances on conflict management and on women's issues at the democratic transition stage between a number of associations have been established and activated.
- Associations become active in social change through mediation to resolve conflicts, and the culture of dialogue
- Associations involved in the project have been provided with regular coaching and follow-up and using formulated tools

Target group

NGO/CSOs members

