



Minutes of the Fifth Project Board Meeting

Project Name: NGO Empowerment Program for Poverty Reduction (Tadamon)

Project ID: 00122656

Output IDs: 00118161, 00119715, 00129408

Venue: UNDP premises, Istanbul

Date: 20 March 2023

Time: 10:30 – 13:00 – Istanbul/Jeddah time zone

Agenda:

Time (TBC)	Session
10.30	<p>General Opening by Chair:</p> <p>Gerd Trogemann, Istanbul Regional Hub Manager</p>
10.45	<p>Presentation of project progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on the progress with project and budget <u>delivery</u>: • Evaluation of achieved results and <u>impact</u> • Action working plan until end of the <u>2023</u>: <p>(Robert Pasicko, UNDP Project Manager for “NGO Empowerment” project)</p>
11:10	<p>Topics to clarify and discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Delivery • Evaluation of achieved results and <u>impact</u> • 2023 Focus Countries and new endorsements • TADAMON Platform (data accuracy) • Engagement event for Tadamon partners • Tadamon Accelerator update • 2023 Steering Committee Meeting • Thematic training programs (such as Green CFA) • Advisory Group for Islamic Finance



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of the scope of the program to food security (Robert Pasicko, UNDP Project Manager for “NGO Empowerment” project Lejla Sadiku, UNDP IRH Innovation Team Leader)
11.40	<p>Discussion and inputs from Board Members</p> <p>Gerd Trogemann, Regional Hub Manager, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub <u>Helina Tadesse</u>, Regional Specialist, UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa <u>Kawtar Zerouali</u>, Innovation Specialist, UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States Aafreen Siddiqui, Public Sector Innovation Specialist, UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and Pacific Oana Maria Rebedea, Partnerships Team Leader, UNDP IRH Lejla Sadiku, Innovation Team Leader, UNDP IRH Khemais El Gazzah, Senior Advisor to the Director General, ISFD Abdi Abdullahi, Human Development Division Manager, <u>IsDB</u></p>
12.15	Recommendations and conclusions
13.00	Lunch and discussion

Meeting Participants

Board Members

Gerd Trogemann, Regional Hub Manager, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub - Executive
Aafreen Siddiqui, Regional Engagement Lead, UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and Pacific – Beneficiary
Kawtar Zerouali, Innovation Specialist, UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, Beneficiary
Deborah Nkwanga Naatujuna, Innovation Specialist, UNDP RBA, Beneficiary
Oana Maria Rebedea, Partnerships Specialist, UNDP IRH - Executive
Lejla Sadiku, Innovation Team Leader, UNDP IRH - executive
Khemais El Gazzah, Senior Advisor to the Director General, ISFD - supplier
Abdi Abdullahi, Human Development Division Manager, IsDB - supplier

Quality Assurance

Abusabeeb Elsadig, RBM and Q&A Specialist, UNDP IRH

Observer

Ahmed Berthe, Global Management CSOs, IsDB
Eyas Ghreiz, NGO Empowerment Program Officer, IsDB
Ismail Mohamoud Mohamed, NGO Empowerment Coordination, IsDB



Morooj Safdar, Development Specialist, IsDB
Ahmad Ibrahim, Tadamon Administrator, ISFD

Project Team

Robert Pasicko, Alternative Finance Expert, UNDP IRH
Marina Petrovic, Alternative Finance and Technology Expert, UNDP IRH
Ben Thompson Coon, Mapping and Outreach Expert, UNDP IRH
Rawad Rizk, Crowdfunding Expert, UNDP IRH
Hajdana Rukavina, Crowdfunding and Communication Expert, UNDP IRH
Bojan Opacak, Website and Graphical Designer, UNDP IRH
Gamze Ergur, Project Associate, UNDP IRH
Ekin Celikyay, Campaign and Crowdfunding expert, UNDP
Burcu Mavis, Research and Data Analyst, UNDP

General Opening and Introduction

The main objective of the meeting was an annual update on implementation of the “NGO Empowerment” project. Discussing the proposed Annual work plan for 2023 and budget plan for 2023 and budget delivery in 2022.

Mr. Gerd Trogemann in his opening remarks, mentioned the achievements of the project and he thanked the board meeting participants. In addition, he highlighted the meeting that took place in February 2023 with ISDB senior management and UNDP Tadamon colleagues, and he added that he appreciates this partnership.

Presentation

During his presentation Mr. Robert Pasicko highlighted the below points.

Presentation of Project Progress:

- Budget Delivery
- Evaluation of achieved results and impact
- 2023 Focus Countries and new endorsements
- TADAMON Platform
- Engagement event for Tadamon partners and for CSOs
- Tadamon Accelerator update
- Thematic training programs (Green CFA)
- Advisory Group for Islamic Finance
- Expansion of the scope of the program to food security

2023 Activity Plan

- Lessons learned and bottlenecks in activities
- Discussion points



In brief he stated that, NGO Empowerment project reached 73% delivery out of approved budget end of the last year. He mentioned that the challenges were the capacity building, local partners, government focal points, and stated that project is active in 33 countries, and project team has an active communication with all of them through UNDP country offices, and that the project has UNDP focal points in most of them as well. The proposed budget for 2023 is 665,642.19 USD. And the main component is the capacity building and supporting trained CSOs to launch their fundraising and crowdfunding campaigns, along with finalization of the mapping process.

He also stated that in 2023 the main component for the Tadamon Accelerator output is the grants. Grant disbursement scheme was shared. In line with this plan, financial 6th disbursement request for the NGO Empowerment project has been submitted on 12 March 2023 and Tadamon Accelerator will be sent before the end of March for the 3rd Disbursement request.

Regarding capacity building, there are 21 capacity building programs either finished or in progress: plus, there are an additional 9 capacity building programs under preparation. 1489 CSOs are verified by governments and UNDP country offices. We have more than 1536 participants who attended NGO Empowerment Introductory webinars. Project original goal is to reach 500 CSOs and currently team is devoted to scale up this number to 5000. In the coming period, the project should focus more on the visibility and success stories (there are already 11 of them published on the website). Internal evaluation was performed with CSO interviews in 7 countries – where the team was able to get the information on the implemented results and activities. In 2023, the plan is to evaluate the results in an additional 7-10 countries. In every two-three weeks, project publishes new success stories online. Our strongest communication channel is the newsletter (with over 9000 recipients). One of the new improvements is CSOs see their profile on their dashboard and can easily find other similar CSOs to connect.

It was discussed that the project team can continue with the implementation in Turkey on (which was on pause). In addition, new thematic crowdfunding academies are ready to start (such as initiated with Green Crowdfunding Academy). It was discussed to explore further topics such as Empowering women and girls, and Tech for Food Security. Finally, said that Board could agree on Advisory Group for Islamic Finance and the next steps to follow, also mentioned about the Annual forum at the UN General Assembly to showcase the project in September 2023 (the date has been set from the UNDP system to September 29th, and UNDP team will draft the workshop concept – focused on showcasing the achieved results so far and bringing potential new partners on board).

Discussion Points:

Mr. Abdi Abdullahi in his remarks said that building alliances is the key. However, ISDB would like to see more effort from other partners that are in partnership with NGO Empowerment. The Tadamon program is reaching its 4th year. ISDB is pressuring the partners to focus on achieving and visibility of more concrete results. He highlighted the importance of mapping exercises. He said they have started in member countries partnership documents; these countries should bring more partners. He said that the booklet is good, and it should not exceed 10 pages of presentation and it should give the reader just a glimpse of the work. He stated that CSOs need to be more successful, both parties



need to strategize how we can help them, we can expand the call for proposals. Project needs to focus on more countries, member country strategy document.

On another note, he said that bringing CSOs together for an event is a very good idea. They would like to invite the CSOs to an event which will be hosted by the Bank.

Mr. Abdullahi also stressed focusing on matching funds, either through crowdfunding or with different donors and fundraising efforts from CSOs. CFA is an excellent training however the project needs to measure this by activating these CSOs to be more proactive in fundraising activities and making their work more visible and IsDB more visible as a supporter.

Finally, he commented that project can start the mapping exercise of Turkey in close coordination with our offices in Istanbul and Ankara.

In his remarks Mr. Khemais El Gazzah stated that we are at the 4th year of the implementation of the program. In ISFD, they had in mind to serve local NGOs, capacity to raise funds, impact, and change. ISFD thought UNDP would be the best fit to implement the program. At that time, they were thinking who the different stakeholders are, they had 30 or more international partners, therefore he thinks that this must be more visible in presentation and approach. Project needs to put more visibility to those. In that regard, he thinks that project has achieved many results that they are proud of. Especially, bringing these number of CSOs, and the number of countries endorsed the program. However, there are areas where the project needs improvement; first, the project needs to show more success stories, more concrete picture that Tadamon can achieve. The Tadamon platform itself should be the main source of information. Database of the CSOs, verification should be clear and displayed on the platform.

They are aiming to put more emphasis on the above, they believe that to measure deliverables by the number of projects, number of CSOs, like Tadamon Accelerator. ISFD would like to give the CSOs an opportunity to raise funds. They would like to focus on improving lives on the ground whether for refugees, for women, which they are ready to support. He recommends checking out LLF program of the bank, where project can find international partners as donor or facilitator to involve helping to building experience. He stated that topics such as green/climate, women, digitalization, food security are the areas we should focus on. He also mentioned the Annual Forum, which will take place in New York, and he thinks that it will be a good way to showcase Tadamon.

Ms. Deborah Naatujuna stated that at currently we have more countries from Africa, within the service center. There is a growing CSO network within African countries, and there is no duplication of efforts. For the next phase it would be good to connect more with UNDP Accelerator labs, we need to be more active in mobilizing partners.

Ms. Afreen Siddiqui; commented on resource mobilization and said that she expects that the next phase of the project will be more promising for Asia/Pacific region by having more countries endorsing the project, and that there are more activities in the future in the region. UNDP in the region is connecting NGO Empowerment with similar activities such as regional Youth Co:Lab.

Ms. Kawtar Zerouali said that in the Arab region the NGO Empowerment project has been busy with UNDP country offices and most of them are active in the project implementation. Arab countries are getting stronger through the project, and crowdfunding academy processes and ecosystem building activities has been very positive. She stated that scaling up the Tadamon Accelerator is very important for the other thematic areas.



Ms. Oana Maria Rebedea expressed that UNDP Partnership team is proud of this partnership with ISDB and ISFD. She mentioned that expanding the partnership in the region is very important, and unlocking new countries where there is no current cooperation with UNDP country offices. As Partnership side, they are discussing with other partners, for example they have strategic dialog in Qatar, there are a lot of similarities, for example they would like to invest on food security. She suggested having an action plan to include more partners.

Mr. Ahmed Berthe said that it is important for the bank that how we can evaluate what we are doing. How we can add more resources for the project, to include blockchain elements and diaspora, project should investigate it in more detail. It is important for the Bank to leverage this initiative.

Mr. Ismail Mohamoud Mohamed mentioned that the project needs to have a guide in terms of branding and visibility, we need to work on making the results more visible and communicate the success stories.

Mr. El Gazzah mentioned that it would be good to share the Progress Report with other stakeholders and suggested that the project delivers progress reports every 6 months, and an annual report at the end of the year. Mr. Trogemann responded that the project needs more budget to deliver these additional reports.

Mr. Eyas Ghreiz, suggested to have a workshop to identify the partners.

Mr. Mohammad Jawabra; mentioned that KPIs we are highlighting on the website and through the work should be aligned with the platform and the Program in general. And has mentioned importance of having success stories and visibility.

Mr. Abusabeeb Elsadig briefly explained the quality assurance process at UNDP. He said that assessment looks at seven quality standards: Strategic, Relevant, Social and Environmental Standards, Management and Monitoring, Efficient, Effective and Sustainability and National Ownership. The overall rating for the Project is "Highly Satisfactory", as the Project is of sufficient quality to continue as planned. However, needs some improvement which was caused due to lack of payment at the due date.

Ms. Lejla Sadiku in her remarks mentioned that partnerships can be revisited and strengthened, generating more value for the Project, and adding to resource mobilization. Matching funding is very important and to avoid layovers we need to work on these closely. She said that we need to create different types of new opportunities for our stakeholders, such as on visibility. On visibility, we need to look at communication action plan and existing plans and strengthen it together. She highlighted that team did all this without providing financial incentives to CSOs, also talked about the engagement with African Crowdfunding Alliance. She said that from our perspective achieving results is connected to all activities that need to be aligned, from mapping to visibility and training programs; and she added that by end of the next year our pipeline of developed project proposals from CSOs will be 25-30 million dollars. So, putting the right incentives for these CSOs is important in order that as many CSOs from this pipeline implement the project. She also mentioned the Google Impact Accelerator opportunity that expressed the interest to work with us closer on joining forces; as Google reached out to us and showed interest to work with us, we could do something with them.



In brief, she highlighted the importance of incentives, having stronger partners and capitalizing the branding.

Finally, she noted that project needs to receive the funds on time, since it effects project's delivery directly.

Board Decisions

Gerd summarized the discussion points and highlighted three main discussion points to work on:

1. **Partnership, new donors, resource mobilization:** and how the Project needs to communicate and work with the project partners. More space is opening on a country level (where UNDP country offices can bring local and international partners onboard) as well as on regional and global level. It could be good to jointly develop the Partnership action plan, connected with the core strategies of ISDB and ISFD and align it with UNDP.
2. **Focus on collecting data, and measuring achieved KPIs, success stories;** Clarity on data would be helpful. Measurement needs to be clear for both parties.
3. **Process would benefit from updating:** In the current framework, projects activities are too slow because of the delay in some processes. He suggested performing the external evaluation to conduct midterm review for the project, with the participation of experts from outside the UNDP. In the end, the results could be shared with all by 29th September 2023 before the side event in New York. UNDP will provide the first draft of Term of Reference (ToR) that could be used.

Closing Remarks

Gerd congratulated the team for the work. Mr. El Gazzah thanked the team, he said that what has been achieved so far was satisfactory. He mentioned that in 2024 ISFD can go to their board to approve Tadamon phase 2.

Mr. Abdullahi thanked and congratulated team members in terms of concrete results, he stated the importance of showcasing Tadamon's significant impact. He again stressed the importance of bringing more partners. He mentioned that this program is very important and strategic. Lastly, he agreed with Mr. Trogemann regarding mid-term review, which will give the project a right picture and project can take it forward, and that ISDB will proceed with carrying it out, and wait for the TOR draft to be provided by UNDP.


Conclusion


Board also agreed on having a Mid-term evaluation which will give the project an idea about the second phase.





Progress report for 2022 was endorsed by the Board. Annual working plan for 2023 got the provisional approval of the workplan subject to the further discussions and conclusions as mentioned bellow:

- I. The importance of putting an action plan to engage the International partners and INGOs who have signed the declaration at the launch of TADAMON, to advocate to bring new partners for TADAMON, and well define the role of each partner (UNHCR, ADB, Islami Chain, KIZILAY, Generation Blue, Social Responsibility regional network, Ensani Global Berhad, WATAN, World Congress of Muslim Philanthropists,...) – this will be jointly developed by UNDP and IsDB team;
- II. A plan to improve the performance of the program in relation to resource mobilization and achieve the target of \$20m set under the TADAMON;
- III. To set up the Methodology that will provide clear definition for technical terms used under TADAMON Platform which are needed to validate the deliverables and confirm the achievement of KPIs (Countries Endorsed and countries included, CSOs Mapped, CSOs trained, CSOs Graduated, CFAs Completed, TOTs delivered, Amount crowdfunded).
- IV. Improve the data visibility and create more success stories on TADAMON Platform and ensure consistency with the Progress Report;
- V. The NGOs Empowerment first open call outcomes for Tadamon Grants - (The open call was cleared by the Steering Committee, and the winning CSOs were selected, while these results are not mentioned in detail in the Report, as the task is currently still not cleared by IsDB/RCA);
- VI. Prepare a concept note to conduct a midterm review of TADAMON phase1 and to show the results achieved so far during an event with partners on the margin of the UNGA meetings in September 2023 in preparation for launching TADAMON Phase 2;
- VII. Prepare TORs for hiring a consultant to conduct the midterm review – first draft will be prepared by UNDP and shared with IsDB;
- VIII. Prepare a Concept Note for launching the CSOs forum at the launch of TADAMON Phase2;
- IX. Enhancing the visibility of TADAMON globally and the partners – UNDP will share the communication plan until the end of the project.
- X. Closure of existing phase for AFAB project with ISFD (Alliance for Fighting Avoidable Blindness), while the new phase is being discussed.

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 Chairperson of the meeting