Minutes of Project Board Meeting

Project Name: NGO Empowerment Program for Poverty Reduction (Tadamon)
Project ID: 00122656
Output IDs: 00118161, 00119715
Venue: Online
Date: 20 October 2020
Time: 11.30 am-13.20 pm, Istanbul time

Agenda:

Time	Session
11.30	**General Opening and Strategic Direction: Agi Veres, Deputy Regional Director, UNDP Europe and the CIS** **Chair: Gerd Trogemann, Istanbul Regional Hub Manager**
11.45	**Presentation and discussion on project progress** • **Presentation of project progress and plans by output, as well as presentation of workplan for 2020** Robert Pasicko, Alternative Finance Expert
12.10	**Discussion and inputs from Board Members** Gerd Trogemann, Regional Hub Manager, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub Abdullah Alkulaib, Regional Specialist, UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa Francesca Nardini, Partnerships Specialist, UNDP Regional Bureau for Latin America Countries Kawtar Zerouali, Innovation Specialist, UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States Karen Takeuchi, Regional Program Coordinator, UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and Pacific Ivan Zverzhanovski, Partnerships Team Leader, UNDP IRH Lejla Sadiku, Innovation Team Leader, UNDP IRH Mariana Gonzales, Partnerships Adviser - International Financial Institutions, UNDP Khemais el Gazzah, Senior Advisor to the Director General, ISFD Abdi Abdullahi, Human Development Division Manager, IsDB
13.00	**Recommendations and conclusions**

Meeting Participants

Board Members

Gerd Trogemann, Regional Hub Manager, UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub - executive
Kawtar Zerouali, Innovation Specialist, UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States - beneficiary
Aafreen Siddiqui, Regional Engagement Lead, UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and Pacific - beneficiary
Berna Bayazit, 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

Ekaterina Paniklova, Chief, Country Office Solutions and Regional Programme Coordination, UNDP IRH
Abusabeeb Elsadig, RBM and Q&A Specialist, UNDP IRH

Senior Executive

Agi Veres, Deputy Regional Director, UNDP Europe and the CIS

Observer

Waleed Alwaheeb, Director General of the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD), IsDB
Lokman Hamkafalo, Technical Assistant, Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development
Mohamad Mustafa Jawabreh, Senior Program Management Specialist, Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development
Eyas Ghreiz, NGO Empowerment Program Officer, IsDB

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
Yelda Bakar, Project Associate, UNDP IRH

General opening and introduction

'Save the Date' e-mail for the meeting of the Project Board for the NGO Empowerment for Poverty Reduction Program were sent out by email on 18th of October. The major objective of the meeting was to review and approve progress of the Project and AWP for 2021. Opening Speeches are given by Agi Veres, Deputy Regional Director, UNDP Europe and the CIS and Waleed Alwaheeb, Director General of the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD), IsDB.

Presentation and discussion

1. Project progress was presented. As a summary to the presentation, due to COVID19 constraints some of activities such as ecosystem mapping missions are

realized digitally. Crowdfunding Academy is redesigned to be digital as well. The new cooperation opportunity on designing Pandemic Accelerator will be hosted on Tadamon platform.

2. Regarding the budget, planned budget at the beginning of the project was USD 788,000 for "NGO Empowerment" and 35,000 for AFAB project (in total 823,000). However, USD 523,000 is budgeted for 2020 and USD 300,000 will be allocated to 2021 because of the delays in the funding and also effect of pandemic.

3. First Training of Trainers (ToT) for 8 countries in UNDP RBAS organized in order to address COVID-19 Response, and as a first exercise of digital training on alternative finance. Second ToT was open to all countries (up to 200 participants from IsDB, UNDP, governments and CSOs) composed of five webinars and focusing on capacity building on crowdfunding and innovative finance and also strengthening the focal points as future mentors.

4. It is discussed how to get on board the member countries which are not interested to register to the program and have not sent Endorsement letter to IsDB. As a result, it is agreed the decision by member countries who does not want to join to program should be respected.

5. Timetable, roadmap of activities for 2020 and 2021 including targets and results is requested to be shared. Revised Progress Report will be shared by November 15th with all Project Board members.

6. For the activities that have been done already, documents are requested to be shared (which are already not part of the Progress Report should be included). In revised Progress Report which will be shared by November 15th, all documents that are currently not there will be attached by links.

7. More reporting on mapping is requested such as categorization, screening of those countries which had mapping exercise so from the collected data it is clear which CSOs are signing up on Tadamon. All CSOs are preapproved before they are supported by ISDB or by UNDP. They go through due diligence process before they are being awarded with grants or supported through capacity building. First Program ask focal points in countries to give feedback if they have a list of CSOs that governments or UNDP don't work with due to past experiences. After elimination, with the remaining CSOs, due diligence process is applied. However, the number of NGOs are increasing. We have to make sure there is an agreed process on applying due diligence in selecting NGOs and how we best do this. This activity would be link to the process of establishing Steering Committee to support due diligence process.

8. Information requested on crowdfunding, what are the resources mobilized so far? How that can be translated to Tadamon platform? As per the presented figures, supported 5 campaigns collected USD 200,000; while 7 campaigns done as a part of first Training of Trainers in RBAS collected USD 700,000. As capacity building program for CSOs in just starting in 7 pilot countries, more concrete results are expected in 2021.

9. Planning for choosing the next priority countries for mapping is requested – which is connected with Endorsement process. Which countries will we focus on next mapping?

10. A discussion followed, focusing on how to attract donors and partners. UNDP and ISDB/ISFD can discuss how to upgrade the platform to respond the rapidly changing CSOs and donors as well.

11. There was a request to emphasize more marketing for the program. The objective is to have as many reliable and credible NGOs in ISDB member countries registered in this database. These NGOs can have a sort of accreditation or membership to UN NGOs. Participating in UN bodies like ECOSOC would give them more visibility worldwide, help them access to finance and improve their capabilities. More NGOs reached in our member countries, the bigger and reliable is our database. Objective here is to have sort of a reference that would bring most of credible NGOs to our platform. How we can reach these NGOs through marketing or campaign or through regional hubs, etc?

12. Regarding partners to the program, many international NGOs signed declaration to join the program. Some efforts needed to be done to bring these INGOs on board and to involve them in our action and to give them more ownership to this program. Program needs to have an action plan to bring more INGOs on board. This is expected to happen as a part of the Crowdfunding Academies – capacity building processes in target countries.

13. Regarding the coordination of activities, any activity under the program and platform should be coordinated and worked jointly with ISDB and ISFD.

14. UNDP has very strong system of quality & assurance based on seven criteria which applies to all projects. Criteria and points to be taken into consideration for this specific Project are as below:

   a) **Strategic**: Based on this what is the future strategy in 2021?
   b) **Relevance**: CSOs that are going to be involved are intended in the Project? Another question if project generates knowledge and lessons learned? Where are the documents and information stored, how can be accessed?
   If project is scaled or have potential to scale up? It will be expanded to other countries and will not stay limited with 7 countries.
   c) **Principled**: where project address gender and inequalities. Project team and project itself has gender dimension in activities with CSOs. Quality Assurance Team of UNDP would encourage the project to develop its own gender strategy.
   Governance mechanism: Quality Assurance Team recommend board to meet at least once a year. There is a stress to have coordination and very transparent communication. It is recommended to have steering committee or other group on selecting and ensuring due diligence on selection of CSOs.
   d) **Efficiency**: it is important to have a look how much resource mobilized and put in project strategy for the future.

e) **Effectiveness**: Is the project is on track to deliver its expected outputs. Have there been regular reviews of the work plan to ensure that the project is on track to achieve the desired results. Yes, there have been regular updates and review of the working plan – and the latest version will be included in Progress Report. Project is delayed for 3-4 months, otherwise on track.

f) **Management and monitoring**: in the project report, there are very ambitious targets set for this year. Considering it is prepared in August, there can be some other developments. Thus, progress report and monitoring table can be updated so we can understand progress and priorities for this year.

g) **Sustainability and national ownership**: do national partners only participate activities and be informed or fully engaged which means being involved in systems? How sustainability is achieved with NGOs, should be more emphasized in the report.
Another question is whether the project needs to adjust its structure, its capacity, its coordination in order to be successful as there is a change happening around.
Project could be less descriptive and more result oriented in emphasizing the impact and results achieved throughout different activities and outputs.

15. RBAS and RBAP are very happy with this collaboration. COs in RBAS have been benefiting from this partnership. Working with civil society and mapping of CSOs are not common in Arab region. Tadamon platform gave them a voice which they needed to empower them. RBAS and RBAP is happy to support our counties and partners on this issue. RBAS and RBAP are happy to support project in the achievement of its goals.

Recommendations and conclusions endorsed by the Project Board:

- Progress Report will be updated based on the updates and taking a more result oriented approach
- In order to execute capacity building program in 7 pilot countries, UNDP will process USD 25,000 (for each) payment. A separate discussion will be held to agree which countries will be selected next year as pilot countries.
- Steering committee will be founded at technical level and convening more often in order to strengthen the flow of information, setting up criteria and due diligence process for organizations joining Tadamon.
- Tadamon Pandemic Accelerator has received support from representatives of UNDP Regional Bureaus present and will be closer discussed on the role of UNDP and the way forward.
- In order tom increase the project visibility, project team will be meeting THIQA team before end of the year 2020 (as one of the continues meetings between teams).
- Next board meeting will be held in first quarter of 2021.

Prepared by: _Yelda Bakar_ Yelda Bakar Delice, Project Associate, Istanbul Regional Hub

Cleared by: _____ Lejla Sadiku, Innovation Team Leader, Istanbul Regional Hub

Approved by: _Gerd Trogemann_ Gerd Trogemann, Manager, Istanbul Regional Hub
Chairperson of the meeting