



November 20, 2018

MENA MDTF: Program Council Meeting

Dear Partners,

This newsletter is the second quarterly update that we are using to keep you, our partners, up to date on the MENA MDTF. We are delighted to have this opportunity to communicate with you more regularly on our latest accomplishments, challenges, and plans.

The 8th Program Council Meeting (PCM) was held in Helsinki, Finland on October 18, 2018. The Donors indicated strong support for the activities under the 2nd Cycle which are now much more aligned with the four pillars of the MENA Strategy, notably Renewing Social Contract; Refugees & Resilience; Recovery & Reconstruction; and Regional Cooperation.

The 2nd Cycle comprises a total of \$8 million, of which \$6.1 million has been allocated and \$3.3 million has disbursed for 21 activities as of September 30, 2018. An additional \$1.9 million is pending allocation by June 2019. The PCM included presentations from multiple Teams receiving MDTF support: *Developing Innovative Practices for Improving Social Cohesion between Lebanese and Syrian Refugees Living in Host Communities; Supporting the Implementation of Key Economic Reforms in Tunisia: Thinking and Working Adaptively; Support to Deepening Decentralization and Improving Social Inclusion in Tunisia; and an overview of the Iraq portfolio of activities focusing on Women and Jobs for an Inclusive Labor Market, Emergency Housing Reconstruction, Education Development Support, and Technical Assistance for Peacebuilding, Security and Development.*

Decisions reached at the PCM include: (i) attempt to identify at least one Recipient-executed activity with available funds; (ii) revise Operating Principles and share with Donors for review; (iii) revamp the website; (iv) hold quarterly teleconference calls with Donors; and (v) scale-up outreach to new Donors. A Mid Term Evaluation of the MENA MDTF is currently underway and is scheduled to be shared with Donors for comments by January 2019.

We look forward to keeping you updated and engaged in the MENA MDTF. The implementation of the 2nd Cycle offers an incredible opportunity to fully leverage the Bank's experience, capacity, and responsiveness, at the service of our shared goal of peace and stability in MENA.

Sincerely,
The MENA MDTF Team

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With thanks to our partners:



United Kingdom



Norway



Finland

STORIES FROM THE FIELD



On-the-Job-Voucher Training – Jordan

Grant amount: \$250,000

Timeline: 2016-2018

Although there are numerous youth-oriented labor policies in Jordan, these have never been reviewed or studied, leaving their efficiency and efficacy unknown. To avoid repeating mistakes or funding costly programs with minimal or negative impacts, the MDTF funded a comprehensive assessment of selected labor market interventions. These interventions were examined for effectiveness towards building a labor market that improves job readiness, job placement opportunities, and school-to-work transitions for unemployed young graduates.

The impact evaluation surveyed more than 2,100 participants of the Government of Jordan's Active Labor Market Program, (ALMP). It found that one of the project's interventions, providing on-the-job training, had produced no significant positive effects on employment or earnings, partially due to governance and implementation challenges and demand-side constraints. However, the qualitative study provided further insight: that the life-skills and employability training increased self-confidence and job search intensity, particularly among women.

Jordan continues to have one of the lowest female labor force participation rates in the world. The labor market segmentation across genders, nationality and formality has become more acute in Jordan over the past decade. An improved understanding of the dynamics and constraints is required to unleash women's economic potential. The insights provided by the MDTF's impact evaluation will inform future operations in Jordan and the Region.

“...Youth employment interventions like those offered by the project can have an effect, if only at the margin. But the margin can be wide enough. This requires that they are driven by effectiveness (when attempting to change behavior), efficiency (with no giveaways including during the implementation stage) and efficacy (so that the objectives are achieved rather than having unintended effects)”.

Independent evaluator of the ALMP

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Elevating Client Dialogue on Water Scarce Cities

Grant amount: \$120,000

Timeline: January-December 2018

The MENA MDTF has helped advance transformative knowledge, dialogue, project preparation and implementation in Lebanon, Oman, and in the region.

At a MDTF-funded workshop in February 2018, Parliamentarians issued recommendations for improving Lebanon's water sector, including enabling private sector participation, improving system efficiencies, building resilience, and improving information sharing for decision making.

A regional workshop in April 2018 assembled water practitioners from Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Algeria, and Morocco, all of whom work in fast-growing, water-scarce urban areas. Participants discussed examples and integrated approaches to manage water resources and service delivery in water scarce cities. The workshop also covered financing for development in the water sector to build knowledge on options and medium-to-long term strategies for utilities to become more creditworthy.

Another convening workshop was held in June 2018. This time the MDTF crossed sectors within a single country, Oman. The binding constraint for the water sector there was governance, both groundwater and water allocation system design and implementation. The workshop brought together the Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources, civil society and other stakeholders, such as the Association of Farmers. The Ministry is currently organizing a ministerial-level meeting to build on the results of that dialogue.



STORIES FROM THE FIELD



Realizing Education's Promise in MENA

Grant amount: \$100,000

Timeline: October 2017 – June 2018

Education has large, untapped potential to contribute to human capital, wellbeing and wealth in the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA). However, while MENA has shown significant progress in terms of expanding school enrollment, learning levels remain very low. This is true for many countries around the world, and the World Development Report (WDR) 2018 - LEARNING to Realize Education's Promise – cautions that these learning deficits mark a global learning crisis.

The WDR 2018 explores critical dimensions of this learning crisis and crucial policy actions needed to place learning at the center of education systems to equip children and youth for the future, build human capital and spur economic growth. The MDTF supported the WDR's regional MENA launch in three national launch events in Tunisia (October 24, 2017), Jordan (December 14, 2017) and Lebanon (December 15, 2017). These events were instrumental in putting education at the center of human development policy discussions in the region.

“Schooling without learning is not just a wasted opportunity, but a great injustice.”

World Development Report 2018

The regional MENA launch in Jordan was hosted jointly by H.E. Dr. Omar Razzaz, former Minister of Education of Jordan, the Queen Rania Foundation and the World Bank. The launch was attended by over 50 dignitaries (including ministers of education) and received extensive media and online coverage throughout the region with almost 40,000 viewers watching the event via livestream. In addition, over 38,000 viewers watched the Facebook live interview with H.E. Dr. Tarek Shawki, Minister of Education of Egypt.

The national launch events in Tunisia, Jordan and Lebanon helped bring learning to the center of national policy dialogue and renewed governments' commitment to education. High-level panel discussions, including H.E. Marwan Hamadeh, Minister of Education of Lebanon, H.E. Dr. Omar Razzaz, then Minister of Education of Jordan and H.E. Fadi Yarak, Secretary General, Ministry of Education in Lebanon received extensive national media coverage.

The MDTF funded launch events of the WDR 2018 were instrumental in shedding a light on the large, untapped potential of Education in MENA and called for urgent action to put learning at the center of education reforms.

Financial Summary

2nd Cycle 2018-2021

USD MILLIONS

Allocations
/ Contributions

\$6.1M

\$8.0M

Disbursed
/ Contributions

\$3.3M

\$8.0M

2nd Cycle Active Portfolio

September 30, 2018

PROJECT		DISBURSED / ALLOCATED (\$)			
Jordan on-the-Job Program	Jordan	242,263	/	250,000	97%
Transforming the Road Sector in Tunisia	Tunisia	583,669	/	909,000	64%
Catalyzing the Private Sector Role in Recovery and Reconstruction in Yemen	Yemen	105,121	/	250,000	42%
MENA Regional Youth Platform	MENA	289,183	/	445,000	65%
Support to Deepening Decentralization and Improving Inclusion	Tunisia	132,655	/	300,000	44%
TA for an Incremental Home Improvement Program	Djibouti	146,231	/	150,000	97%
Understanding Child and Adolescent Skills Development	Tunisia	108,110	/	250,000	43%
Women Economic Empowerment - EmpowerHer	Tunisia, Morocco	159,798	/	325,000	49%
Developing Innovative Practices for Improving Social Cohesion between Lebanese and Syrian Refugees Living in Host Communities	Lebanon	201,741	/	250,000	81%
Women and Jobs for an Inclusive Labor Market in KRG	Iraq/KRG	223,879	/	330,000	68%
Addressing Health Needs of Syrian Refugees	MENA	266,149	/	280,000	95%
Water Scarce Cities Initiative	MENA	97,701	/	120,000	81%
World Development Report 2018 Regional Events	MENA	99,852	/	100,000	100%
Household Expenditure & Income Survey 2017/2018	Jordan	99,957	/	100,000	100%
Supporting the Implementation of Key Economic Reforms in Tunisia: Thinking and Working Adaptively	Tunisia	47,042	/	360,000	13%
Economic Analysis of Refugee Returns in Syria	MENA	273,854	/	300,000	91%
Preparation of Emergency Electricity Supply Improvement	Libya	14,413	/	250,000	6%
Iraq Natural Gas Market Framework TA	Iraq	45,278	/	350,000	13%
Iraq Emergency Housing Reconstruction and DNA Iraq Education Development Support Operation, TA on Peacebuilding, Security and Development	Iraq	213,463	/	400,000	53%
Iraq Education Development Support Operation	Iraq	30,240	/	400,000	15%
TA on Peacebuilding, Security and Development	Iraq	5,195	/	400,000	3%

2nd Cycle Status of Outputs

September 30, 2018

Activity name	OP1: Analytical Reports		OP2: TA Products		OP3: Events	
	Actual	Projection	Actual	Projection	Actual	Projection
Jordan on-the-Job Program	1	1	1	1	0	0
Transforming the Road Sector in Tunisia	1	2	0	0	2	6
Catalyzing the Private Sector Role in Recovery and Reconstruction in Yemen	0	3	0	0	0	4
MENA Regional Youth Platform	7	7	8	8	11	11
Support to Deepening Decentralization and Improving Inclusion	2	2	2	3	0	1
TA for an Incremental Home Improvement Program	0	1	0	0	1	2
Understanding Child and Adolescent Skills Development	0	2	0	2	0	1
Women Economic Empowerment - EmpowerHer	0	0	0	0	1	3
Developing Innovative Practices for Improving Social Cohesion between Lebanese and Syrian Refugees Living in Host Communities	3	3	1	3	0	1
Women and Jobs for an Inclusive Labor Market in KRG	3	4	2	4	0	3
Addressing Health Needs of Syrian Refugees	5	5	0	1	5	7
Water Scarce Cities Initiative	0	0	0	0	1	1
World Development Report 2018 Regional Events	1	1	0	0	1	1
Household Expenditure & Income Survey 2017/2018	0	0	0	0	4	4
Supporting the Implementation of Key Economic Reforms in Tunisia: Thinking and Working Adaptively	3	9	5	7	0	2
Economic Analysis of Refugee Returns in Syria	0	1	0	0	0	7
Preparation of Emergency Electricity Supply Improvement	0	0	0	6	0	3
Iraq Natural Gas Market Framework TA	0	0	0	2	0	2
Iraq Emergency Housing Reconstruction and DNA Iraq Education Development Support Operation, TA on Peacebuilding, Security and Development	0	1	1	1	0	1
Iraq Education Development Support Operation	0	1	0	0	0	1
TA on Peacebuilding, Security and Development	0	4	0	3	0	3
Total	26	47	20	41	26	64