



External Evaluation Final Report

By Lama DCA

MediAction

A project implemented by
Search for Common Ground (SFCG) Morocco

Supported by
British Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO)
Initiative Nationale pour le Développement Humain (INDH)

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Executive Summary

In March 2010, Search for Common Ground (SFCG) Morocco concludes the implementation of a project entitled MediAction. The project has been implemented in partnership with the *Initiative Nationale pour le Développement Humain* (National Initiative for Human Development, referred to here as INDH) and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) through the British Embassy in Rabat, which is the main funder. Its overall objective has been “building the capacity of youth for the promotion of a culture of mediation, dialogue and peace in marginalised neighbourhoods, and to reinforce social cohesion”. MediAction has lasted for 27 months, from January 2008 to March 2009, with an additional three-month no-cost extension. It included three main activity components: 1) the training of young mediators in Rabat, Marrakech, Fez, Meknes, and Sale; 2) the creation of five mediation centres in partnership with INDH and local associations in each of the five cities; and 3) awareness-raising campaigns on mediation at the local level.

This evaluation is intended mainly for learning purposes. In order to maximise its learning potential, data collection has been mainly qualitative, although quantitative data regarding the activities’ advancement was also taken into consideration for accountability purposes.

The present evaluation found MediAction to have been a largely successful project as:

- The vast majority of young mediators feel that the programme has positively changed their life. Most of the young mediators feel that their self-esteem has grown remarkably as a result of joining the programme.
- The training component provided participants with useful mediation skills and relevant notions of conflict transformation.
- Although the outreach campaign was organised differently from city to city, it has generally been successful in setting up mediation as an alternative method for solving disputes in target communities.
- MediAction has great potential to foster inter-generational dialogue throughout target communities. As shown by reported cases, young mediators can act as agents of change and help



their peers relate to adults, despite the fact that adults do not always accept mediation performed by youth.

- Young mediators often act as agents of change, reintegrating people at risk in the community.
- Beneficiaries appreciated mediation as a faster and less expensive means to solve disputes. Moreover, when this approach was compared to the court system, parties in conflict saw that mediation gave them the opportunity to express themselves freely in a safe and confidential space, unlike the court system.

Challenges

However, the MediAction project was not without shortcomings, such as:

- Mediation centres are often hosted in places considered inadequate by young mediators;
- The heavy administrative procedures of INDH funds have delayed the projects in all five locations;
- The role of young mediators is not clearly defined by law;
- Young mediators need more supervision to effectively intervene in disputes; and
- A general lack of communication with local institutional partners has often delayed the project. In terms of project planning, although the project has a logical framework with some information regarding activities and indicators, it doesn't clearly state the expected results.

Yet in no way do the shortcomings described above diminish the positive contribution of the project. Every stakeholder interviewed expressed a positive reception to, and appreciation of, the project implemented by SFCG. The project has given new hope to youth, not only allowing them to realise their own potential as contributors of positive change within their communities but also providing them with the skills to lead their communities towards social stability and harmony.

Below are recommendations for future improvements to the project's implementation:

- It is important for SFCG and its partners to enable continuity of the project. It would be a mistake to end the project and leave the youth in a limbo at the beginning of their proactive role as agents of change in their communities.



- The evaluation team recommends enhancing the project's ownership of implementing partners. In MediAction the local associations mainly had a logistic role. If the implementing partner had more ownership, sustainability and quality of the performance would increase dramatically. The evaluation team also strongly recommends including SFCG's coaching sessions in further programming.
- The evaluation team recommends involving all partners during the planning phase with start-up seminars and planning meetings, which should be used to develop a shared vision.
- The evaluation team suggests discussing an exit strategy with partners at the beginning of the project in order to create ownership and sustainability from the outset.
- SFCG should find creative solutions to better define mediators' social status. The evaluation team suggests creating an 'umbrella' of organisations that recognise mediation as a practice for solving disputes. Mediators could also create a symbol or wear t-shirts that make them recognisable in the community.



I. Introduction and Project Overview

The purpose of this document is to present the findings of the MediAction project evaluation. MediAction is a project implemented by Search for Common Ground Morocco (SFCG-M) with the financial assistance of the British Embassy, and in collaboration with the *Initiative Nationale pour le Développement Humain* (National Initiative for Human Development, referred to here as INDH). The project aims to “build the capacity of youth for the promotion of a culture of mediation, dialogue and peace in marginalised neighbourhoods, and to reinforce social cohesion”. The project targets five cities across the kingdom (Rabat, Marrakech, Sale, Fez, and Meknes) and its main activities are: 1) the training of young mediators in each of the five cities; 2) the creation of five mediation centres in partnership with INDH and local associations; and 3) awareness-raising campaigns on mediation at the local level.

There are many different partners involved pertaining to both institutions and civil society organisations. Below is a brief summary of the ongoing project partnerships in each of the five locations:

- In Rabat the institutional partnership is the local representative of the INDH. The implementing partner is *Alliance des Associations* (ADA).
- In Meknes the institutional partners are local representatives of the INDH and of the *Entraide Nationale (EN)*¹. The implementing partner is the *Organisation Marocaine pour l'Enfance et la Jeunesse* (OMEJ).
- In Fes, partnerships were established with the INDH and the EN at the institutional level. The implementing partner is the Chouala Association for Culture and Education, which established partnerships with other local associations in order to create mediation cells in difficult neighbourhoods. These associations are *Association Biladi*; *Le Centre Ahli pour les Enfants en Situation Difficile*; AMEJ Fes; and *Dar Echabab El Bathae*.
- In Sale the institutional partner is the INDH. The implementing partner is the *Association Marocaine pour l'Enfance et la Jeunesse* (AMEJ).

¹ The *Entraide Nationale* is a publically-funded private agency whose mission is to provide all forms of help and assistance to the Moroccan population and to promote family and social development.



- In Marrakech the institutional partners are the Delegation of the National Education Ministry and the INDH, while implementing partners are Association Sidi Youssef Ben Tachfine, and *Association d'Initiative pour le Développement Humain*.

Search for Common Ground

Since 1982, Search for Common Ground (SFCG), an international non-governmental organisation, has been working to transform the way the world deals with conflict: away from adversarial approaches and towards co-operative solutions. Its philosophy is “Understanding differences; acting on commonalities”. SFCG is engaged in a long-term process of incremental transformation, which it facilitates by making long-term commitments. It aims to seek cross-cultural integration of indigenous and international concepts of conflict prevention. SFCG is currently working together with local partners in 19 countries across the world in order to strengthen local capacities to deal with conflict.

SFCG in Morocco

Since 2001, Search for Common Ground Morocco (SFCG-M) has worked with Moroccan society to transform the manner in which people and institutions resolve conflicts and to develop a culture of mediation. In order to reduce the risk and cost of disputes, SFCG-M enhances the capacity of individuals and institutions to resolve conflicts co-operatively, while developing a culture of dialogue by bringing together key actors in civil society, government, and media institutions.

II. Evaluation Objectives

The evaluation is intended principally for learning purposes, although accountability is also taken into consideration. For this purpose, all relevant findings, lessons and recommendations should be shared with key stakeholders of the project and used to inform future programming with respect to social and community mediation.



The evaluation addresses the overarching goal and objectives of the project while assessing the relevance and effectiveness of implemented activities regarding the set goals. Two main objectives have been identified for the evaluation:

- A. To assess the performance of the project along the following criteria: impact, sustainability, linkages, relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency. Among these criteria impact, sustainability and linkages are considered priority.
- B. To identify the strengths and weaknesses of the project and identify findings, lessons and recommendations to guide and inform future programme work, with special focus on community mediation in Morocco.

III. Evaluation Scope and Methodology

The primary purpose of the evaluation is to improve the effectiveness of SFCG-M programming by providing learning tools of relevant findings and recommendations. Lama's methodology is based on a participatory approach that is designed to involve all stakeholders in a self-assessment process. This participatory approach aims to foster engagement in continuous improvement and learning, both within the organisation and across all partners. In order to maximise the learning potential of the evaluation, data collection has been mainly qualitative, although quantitative data has also been taken into consideration for accountability purposes.

The evaluation aims to assess the five criteria mentioned above, with a particular focus on *impact*, *sustainability* and *linkages*. The evaluation team has considered the original project logical framework as a starting point, seeking to identify the project's impact beyond that which is expected. Special attention is given to relationships that are usually hidden, as well as the underestimated results of a peacebuilding project.



Data Collection Tools: Lama's participatory tools are inspired by cutting-edge social research methodologies used by organisations such as the International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC) and the Management for Development Foundation (MDF). These tools allow us to measure qualitative evidence in a concise manner. The tools used for the evaluation comprise:

- **Team Self-Review (TSR):** Lama facilitated group analysis within the project team. The team assessed the efficiency, effectiveness, impact and relevance of implemented activities in relation to project goals.
- **Impact Grid (IG):** This is a method to enable beneficiary groups to identify the difference that intervention in the project has made to them. Beneficiaries are asked to think about what has changed in their life in relation to the project. Through a visual exercise they identify the major changes and establish what kind of impact the project had on their lives.
- **Focus Group Discussion (FGD):** FGD was the main tool to assess sustainability, using SWOT analysis and strategy role-play discussion.
- **Key Informant Interview (KII):** KII assessed the levels and quality of linkages created by the project; and was used for triangulation purposes that concern relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the intervention. The interview was conducted in a semi-structured way to encourage participants to think outside the box and achieve unexpected findings.
- **Document Analysis (DA):** The evaluation team conducted an in-depth document analysis with the involvement of the project team.

Quality-Check System: A pool of Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) experts have supervised the entire mission, ensuring data accuracy and guaranteeing the quality of the final report, which is approved by Lama's president.

The Evaluation Team: The evaluation team comprises team leader Stefano D'Errico, facilitator Kawtar Amraoui, and M&E expert Dario Marmo:

- Stefano D'Errico was in charge of leading the evaluation mission and writing the final report;
- Kawtar Amraoui facilitated focus group discussions, impact grid and team self-review sessions;



- Dario Marmo planned the evaluation mission together with the team, providing tutoring and coaching to implement the methodology in the field.
- Lama's president and M&E expert Marco Tognetti supported the mission during the planning phase and approved the final report. The copy-editing was performed by Lucy David.

Limitations: Constraints on time, logistics and resources prevented the evaluation team from broadening the scope of the evaluation. It should also be noted that the evaluation doesn't aim to demonstrate results by backing them up with statistical data; rather, the analysis reflects indications that emerged from qualitative and subjective data. The evaluation also has an accountability purpose, which is to assess whether all activities indicated in the project logical framework were implemented.

IV. Findings

A. Impact

- Indications that emerged from focus group discussions with the young mediators show that the programme has largely benefited the youth involved. The vast majority of young mediators feel that the programme has positively changed their life and that their self-esteem has grown remarkably as a result. The young mediators come from different backgrounds and some were already involved in social work before MediAction. These mediators have enhanced their role in the community by using mediation skills drawn from the MediAction training as well as through activities external to the project. Their involvement in MediAction has generally strengthened their leadership skills and enhanced their role in the community by providing them with a new social status and increasing their linkages with institutions and within the community. Mediators who didn't play a major role in their community before joining MediAction tended to benefit more from the project in terms of self-esteem. The training component allowed them to internalise new skills, thereby positively changing their attitudes.

1. Young Mediator from Meknes
"The programme has amazingly improved my social life. Before joining MediAction I used to stay alone playing on the personal computer. Now my life has changed and I like to meet new friends and organise new activities!"



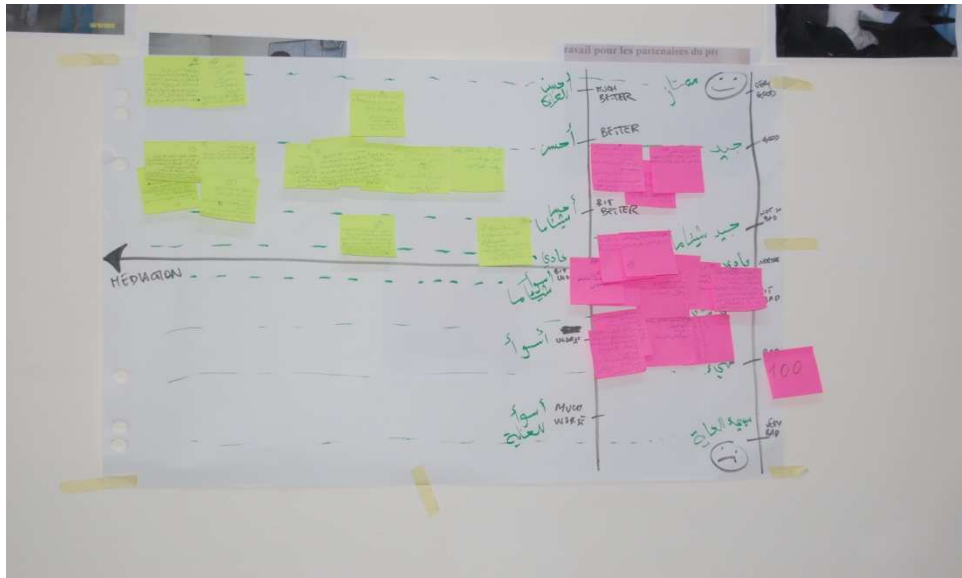


Figure 1: Impact grid in Fes. The impact grid is a visual exercise used to assess what has changed for young mediators after joining the program. The first vertical line on the right side reflects the level of young mediators' satisfaction: the top means they are very satisfied; the bottom means they are really unhappy. The second vertical line separates 'before' (on the right side with pink post-it notes) from 'after' (on the left side with yellow post-it notes). The horizontal line represents how they have changed in relation to MediAction. Those who put the yellow post-it note in the top left corner believe that their situation has improved markedly as a direct result of the project.

- Mediation cases reported during focus group discussion with young mediators and interviews with final beneficiaries show that youth have acquired mediation skills and valuable knowledge in conflict transformation. Notwithstanding, the mediators are not always ready to respond to the beneficiaries' needs. They often lack guidelines to choose which types of cases they can manage. Some mediators reported cases that would need social assistance or court intervention. A final beneficiary from Fez reported to have problems with her parents after a traumatic situation. Although young mediators' intervention helped her to solve some urgent issues, she would have needed the intervention of qualified personnel to deal with trauma. In these instances, young mediators could be exposed to coaching

2. Beneficiaries from Fez
"I prefer mediation to regular justice because it enabled me to talk with my husband."
"Mediation is faster and less expensive. Regular court takes long time and therefore I'd like to avoid [it]."



sessions with SFCG staff in order to be better oriented. A new training system containing more specific skills, together with a module on case management, would help them to manage people's cases and give them the required skills to decide when they should refer the case to entities better equipped to deal with special needs, such as the justice courts, social workers or specialised NGOs.

- The outreach campaign has reached a valuable number of people in all target areas. All stakeholders interviewed indicated that the outreach campaign was the most successful part of the project, and several cases of people using mediation to solve family or small local disputes were reported. The outreach campaign was organised differently from city to city but it has been generally successful in setting up mediation as an alternative method to solving disputes. Indications that arose from interviews and FGDs with project stakeholders were confirmed by interviews with the final beneficiaries. In Meknes, mediators organised a stand in front of the local court of appeal. In Fes, the partner association Chouala organised three outreach campaigns. Mediators chose specific locations to reach different possible beneficiaries, organising a stand in front of the court of justice; performing theatre in schools; and organising activities at the local female reformatory. In Rabat, mediators were invited to have a stand during the *Caravane du Citoyen*, which exposed them to the 15-20,000 people that visited the event. In Marrakech, mediators organised the outreach campaign at a site where people usually gather to pray.
- MediAction has great potential to foster inter-generational dialogue throughout its target communities. Young mediators have often helped their peers relate to their parents and with adults in general. Some cases reported during the focus group discussions show that they have successfully intervened in disputes involving different generations. However, adults do not always accept mediation performed by youth; only young mediators with excellent communication skills and reputations are able to intervene in adult disputes. Further programmes should address this issue and find creative solutions to bolster the reputation that hinders youth intervention. More

2. Beneficiary from Fez

"I prefer to refer my case to young mediators because they can better understand my concerns. They are youth like me. I would have never talked about it to anybody else."



advanced training in communication skills together with coaching sessions could also increase youth potential.

- The evaluation team believes young mediators often act as agents of change by helping people at risk or suffering from community stigma (such as those addicted to drugs or from troubled families) to reintegrate into their community. In this regard, the role of young mediators should be better defined. Sometimes they provide social assistance for people at risk without having either the required knowledge or skills. Mediators can listen to cases and make an analysis but then they should connect the beneficiary to other entities that have the right expertise to respond to the needs of the case. Unless young mediators have specialized skills, when they encounter special cases they should refer them to other agencies.
- Beneficiaries appreciated mediators for their listening capacity, stating that they prefer mediation because they have the opportunity to talk and solve their problems using a participative method.

B. Sustainability

- The project has proven to be sustainable through volunteerism, which is a feature of Moroccan culture. As pointed out in the majority of meetings and exercises, volunteerism is embedded in Morocco's society and it therefore makes the program sustainable even in the longer term.
- Volunteerism by itself is however not sufficient to ensure continuation after the end of the project; instead, the capacity of the partner must also be sufficiently strong. Using volunteers represents an opportunity or allows for the sustainability of the project only if the implementing partners have enough capacity to support them. A lack of such partner capacity could represent the major challenge to sustainability. In order to maintain momentum, incentives should be put in place that value the effort made by the youth, acknowledge their contribution and keep them motivated. In addition, visioning exercises could strengthen their commitment by clarifying their objective.



- The involvement of institutions has multiplied the linkages within the community, opening up several opportunities to integrate young mediators into the institutional framework. Interviews with INDH representatives revealed the commitment of the agency towards establishing social mediation as a useful practice for Moroccan society. However, the concept of ‘social mediation’ is not clearly defined and it seems to be different from mediation intended as a means of solving disputes. Most of the officials interviewed thought of mediation as part of—or even a synonym for—social assistance. Institutions such as the INDH and *Entraide Nationale* look mainly at professional figures to help them create institutional proximity with people at risk in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Although young mediators could play this role, they should be equipped with specific skills to provide social assistance. Either way they could have a role in connecting social mediators with possible beneficiaries.
- All young mediators expressed concern about their social and legal status. Current Moroccan law doesn’t clearly define the mediator as a professional figure. They also suffer from a lack of social status. Mediation is part of Moroccan and Islamic culture but it is traditionally performed by elders. This situation hampers youth intervention and creates several difficulties and risks in the field.
- Approximately 36 mediators left the programme after the training phase. Youth mediators still involved in the project cited a lack of job opportunities and social pressure as the main reasons pushing their peers to leave. Some youth appear to have participated in the training hoping to enhance their professional skills and aiming to get a job after the project. They left the project as soon as they realised it wouldn’t have opened job opportunities. Other youth left the project because of lack of time due to family or work duties. SFCG-M could explore job opportunities within the institutional framework, NGOs and the private sector to increase the program’s appeal among youth. The INDH and *Entraide Nationale* said that they would be keen to hire youth if they demonstrated specific skills to deal with social issues. The *Entraide Nationale* in particular has already created listening centres in schools and in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. NGOs such as OMEJ would be willing to hire mediators if the community perceived it as a useful service. Finally,



many stakeholders believe possibilities exist within the private sector, but that mediators should have knowledge specifically tailored for business.

C. Linkages

- A national network of young mediators has not yet been created. Although such a network would be important for advocating the establishment of a social and legal status for mediators, a formal network doesn't seem to be a fundamental precondition for the success of the project. All stakeholders involved indicated the urgency of creating spaces for sharing experiences and discussion, such as websites or blogs on the internet, mediation events, or a mediation newsletter. These indications suggest that the creation of an informal network using new media and events is more urgent than a formal one. Young mediators are well connected locally and, although they are not yet connected nationally, in one case they have created relationships abroad.
- MediAction has great potential to create linkages between institutions and citizens in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. All beneficiaries interviewed stated that they prefer mediation to regular justice methods because it is more cost-effective. MediAction could fill the gap created by the length and costs of regular justice by linking beneficiaries with the necessary institutions.
- The evaluation team observed that the success of the project depends largely on the implementing partners' capacities. In both in Fes and Meknes (the two most successful cases), the implementing partners are investing their own resources, providing equipment and renting rooms for the mediation centres. Consequently, the project appears more solid and established in cases where MediAction was implemented with strong and reliable partners already familiar with providing social services to the community. In Fes and Meknes, where the project looks very substantial, the two implementing partners appear to have been active and established in the community.
- SFCG-M has created several local networks linking organisations and institutions willing to promote mediation throughout Moroccan society. The project has generally created solid relationships with



institutional and implementing partners, both at the national and local level, with some exceptions due to local dynamics and procedural shortcomings. The evaluation team noticed a widespread lack of communication with the local sections of INDH. Although a verbal agreement was in place with officials from INDH's national headquarters, its local representatives were not always involved in the process from the project's inception. In Meknes, for example, although SFCG-M had been requesting a meeting with the Wali (local authority) for several months without success, a decision was made that it was better to move forward with activities, in order to make project implementation possible within the agreed timetable. The Wali was therefore informed only after the activities started, creating friction between SFCG-M and the INDH local representatives. In both in Sale and Meknes start-up seminars have never taken place. Such cases should be assessed to ascertain whether it is more convenient to wait for the institutional consensus instead of starting without it. Moreover, none of INDH's local representatives were informed about the activities' advancement and lament that they have yet to receive a narrative report.

Below is a brief explanation of the quality of these relationships in each of the five cities:

Sale: Relationships between SFCG-M, the implementing partners and the young mediators were solid. However, the evaluation team didn't have the opportunity to talk with local representative of the INDH due to lack of time.

Rabat: Relationships with the implementing partners are problematic in Rabat, as young mediators claimed that the partner has not given them all their resources. The mediation centre is also located in a building containing other services, such as a beauty salon. This situation hinders confidentiality. However, young mediators also stated that their relationship with ADA improved after the election of the new ADA president, and relationships between SFCG and the INDH look well established.

Meknes: OMEJ, the implementing partner, looks very well established in the community. OMEJ has previously worked with *Entraide Nationale* on a youth-focused programme. An OMEJ representative stated that they want to incorporate mediation as an objective as well as a



programme of the organisation. They have elaborated a very effective outreach strategy informing beneficiaries about mediation in front of the local court of appeal. They also expressed that they want to finance mediation even in the case where they don't have any additional funds from the project. The partnership with the INDH has been compromised by the lack of communication described above. Notwithstanding, the partnership with the *Entraide Nationale* looks solid and well established.

Fes: The relationship with implementing partner Chouala looks strong, despite the fact it wasn't involved in the selection process of training participants. Some problems have arisen with the INDH regarding the equipment for the mediation centre. The project's budget was approved by INDH's committee but the equipment has not yet been provided. The *Entraide Nationale* provided the equipment and two rooms in a citizen house in the target neighbourhood. INDH played a very active role, participating in the training, and demonstrating interest in and institutional support for the project.

Marrakech: There is a bad relationship with the INDH local representative. Lack of communications has meant that the INDH never received reports about the activities' advancement and was unaware that the program would end in March. This situation has compromised trust and the approach of the INDH is very adversarial. The evaluation team interviewed the director of the *Association d' Initiative pour le Développement Humain*. This association did not appear to be very well established in the community. Notwithstanding, the director of the association stated that they have created stronger relationships with institutions, and new partnerships with SFCG and the British Embassy thanks to the project. INDH has already paid the first tranche for equipment.



D. Relevance

- The programme addresses issues of concern in Moroccan society, such as the inaccessibility of regular justice. The cost and length of justice often hinders the ability of citizens to solve their disputes. Beneficiaries appreciated mediation as an alternative means for solving disputes in a faster and less expensive way. Moreover, when comparing this approach to the court, parties in conflict see that mediation gives them the opportunity to express themselves freely in a safe and confidential space, unlike the court system. They also said that mediation gives them the opportunity to preserve their relationship with the other party in conflict.
- The project has brought an innovative approach to mediation. Almost all partners see MediAction as innovative and needed for their community.
- All institutional stakeholders interviewed expressed great interest in mediation and social mediation. They identify mediation as a useful service and express their will to sustain the initiative even further.
- MediAction was found to be extremely relevant for the youth involved. As stated earlier, it has had a profound effect on their personalities, creating leaders, helping marginalised youth and fostering self-development. Young mediators feel they have a role in their society, and are committed to changing their community in a positive way.

3. Personal Story of a Young Mediator from Sale

“Before joining the training I was a very hesitant person with low self-confidence. I was very shy and unable to communicate with others, including classmates and teachers. After the training I became much more confident. I learnt how to facilitate dialogue, how to manage my emotions and respect other views different from mine. One day a conflict occurred in my classroom between one of my classmates and the teacher. That day I decided to intervene between the two parties to solve their conflict. I would have never done this before joining MediAction. From that day [the classmate’s] relationships with her peers and teachers have improved a lot and I feel I can communicate with anybody”.



- All stakeholders have pointed out the importance of working with youth. All local representatives of both the INDH and *Entraide Nationale* stated that working with youth is a priority for Moroccan society. On one hand youth can easily be manipulated by extremists; on the other hand they represent the future. Involving them in such activities improves their potential to become agents of change and increase social stability.

E. Efficiency/Effectiveness

- Remarkably, SFCG collected baseline data in all project locations before commencing the programme. SFCG also developed indicators and collected information that can be compared to the present report.
- SFCG provided training on mediation and conflict management to 133 youth comprising all five project locations: 24 in Sale, 28 in Rabat, 25 in Marrakech, 30 in Fez, and 26 in Meknes. A total of 97 young mediators are still involved in the project, volunteering as mediators: 24 in Sale, 14 in Rabat, 15 in Marrakech, 21 in Fez, and 23 in Meknes.
- The project has created a broad network of relationships with local institutions, authorities and organisations. SFCG is supporting the creation and establishment of local mediators' associations in Fez, Meknes and Rabat. The creation of a national network of mediators should be finalised at the end of March.
- Outreach campaigns were organised in all locations except Sale, where events will be implemented in March. The number of people impacted by the outreach campaign is not measurable. However, indications drawn from FGDs and interviews show that the outreach campaign reached a vast sector of the target communities.
- Mediation centres were created in all locations except Sale, where it is in the process of being established. In addition, implementing partners in Fes, Meknes and Rabat have created mediation cells to broaden the scope of mediation in more disadvantaged neighbourhoods and guarantee proximity to citizens. Fes is the most interesting case: Chouala signed conventions with five



organisations to institutionalise mediation cells in different areas. Mediation cells were established in primary and secondary schools, in the local female reformatory and in other local NGOs.

- A video documentary on mediation has not yet been created. SFCG has already signed a contract with the production studio, which has been gathering video material.
- SFCG has organised one Training of Trainers workshop, with 29 participants. In March another Training of Trainers workshop will be organised in Meknes with 28 participants.
- Start-up seminars with all stakeholders have taken place in three out of five cities. Those in Sale and Meknes have not taken place.
- In all five locations the process has been delayed by the heavy administrative procedures of the INDH. The project started with a six-month delay in Meknes due to local political dynamics.

V. Reflecting on Findings

This chapter is intended to measure the evaluation findings against questions that underpin some of the quantitative indicators developed in the baseline. Listed below are the five main questions addressed by the baseline:

- *Do community members (men, women, leaders and youth) feel that the youth community mediation centres are reinforcing social cohesiveness?*

Indicators that emerged from interviews during the field visit show that mediation centres have great potential to reinforce social cohesiveness. Interviews with beneficiaries and cases reported by young mediators show that:

- Citizens visit and solicit the services of the mediation centre to solve disputes and receive social assistance; and



- Citizens of disadvantaged neighbourhoods come to discuss their problems in order to address their anger and frustrations in a constructive manner.

➤ *Are trained youth reporting a change in their self-esteem, leadership skills and their perception of their role in the community?*

Yes. All young mediators interviewed reported that they were positively changed by the training. They all feel more self-confident, and stated that they have acquired new knowledge and skills; that their relationships in the community have grown in terms of quality and quantity; and that they are playing a role to positively change their society.

➤ *Are community members and state officials demonstrating support for the creation and the development of youth mediation centres?*

Community members and state officials interviewed generally expressed their will to support the development of youth mediation centres:

- Institution officials from INDH, *Entraide Nationale* and the National Delegation for Education considered mediation a useful service for Moroccan society. They expressed the will to sustain mediation centres and include young mediators in the institutional framework. However, in order to do this, mediators should receive more specific training to broaden their knowledge in other social assistance areas. Likewise, some administrative and logistic constraints that occurred in the field have diminished the support given by the INDH.
- Organisations and associations involved in the programme are enthusiastic about MediAction and would like to continue the mediation service even after the programme has finished. In Fes and Meknes the implementing partners currently pay the rent and some of the mediation centre expenses themselves.

➤ *Do community members feel that youth NGOs are playing a central and important role in the community?*



All stakeholders interviewed pointed out the importance of working with youth to improve their role in the community. They all agree that youth represent a key sector for the future of Moroccan society.

➤ *Are youth involved in conflict-prevention activities on the ground?*

Young mediators expressed their will to be more involved in conflict prevention activities on the ground. Although they generally express this attitude positively, they occasionally feel they can't be an agent of change for two main reasons:

- They don't possess a social or legal status to protect them and therefore they often incur risk or are hampered during their interventions in the field; and
- They feel they would need closer supervision by adults or SFCG-M in order to be able to better evaluate when they can intervene and how they should manage difficult cases.

VI. Challenges

Logistics:

- Mediation centres are often hosted in places that are considered inadequate by young mediators for different reasons. In Rabat the centre is hosted in a citizen house where other activities also take place. This situation hinders confidentiality and discourages the attendance of final beneficiaries. In Fes the mediation centre is hosted in a local citizen house in a very disadvantaged neighbourhood. The young mediators evaluated the location positively because of its strategic position. Notwithstanding, the listening room is located close to a noisy tailor's school, thereby compromising listening activities. In Meknes local sites provided by the INDH were evaluated as inadequate by SFCG-M due to lack of equipment and their far-away location. As a consequence, OMEJ has rented two rooms in a more suitable place at its own expenses. This lack of adequate infrastructure could affect two fundamental mediation criteria: proximity and confidentiality.



Relationships among partners:

- The heavy administrative procedures of INDH funds have delayed the projects in all five locations. The role of young mediators is not clearly defined by law. This situation hampers mediators' interventions in the field, as they are not always recognised as legitimate by the final beneficiaries and could incur problems with the law or be exposed to risky situations.
- A general lack of communication with local institutional partners has often delayed the project, creating misunderstandings and false expectations of the programme. INDH local representatives are usually not informed about a project's achievements or an activity's advancement.

Mediators' status and role:

- Young mediators need more supervision to effectively intervene in disputes. Mediation centres aren't supervised by professionals specialised in mediation, nor are they guided by supervisors during the implementation of mediation activities, which take place without any support or advice about case management.
- The role of young mediators is not clearly defined by law. This situation hampers mediators' interventions in the field. They are not always recognised as legitimate by the final beneficiaries and could incur in problems with law or being exposed to risky situations.

Project planning:

- In terms of project planning, although MediAction has a logical framework, this doesn't clearly state the expected results. The absence of a results-oriented approach creates conceptual misunderstandings and lack of conceptual clarity. It also hinders the possibility of measuring and comparing the project's achievements against its expected results, thereby affecting monitoring and evaluation activities.



VII. Recommendations

Based on the findings and analysis presented in the previous sections, the evaluators would like to make the following general recommendations:

- It is important for SFCG-M and its partners to give continuity to the project. It would be a mistake to end the project and leave the youth in a limbo at the beginning of their proactive role as agents of change in their communities.
- The evaluation team recommends creating an informal national network of mediators. The network shouldn't be formalised. SFCG-M could facilitate the process, using new media such as the internet and organising large-scale events about mediation. The objective should be gathering and sharing experience from the MediAction and Youth and Community Mediation Centres² project locations.
- The evaluation team recommends enhancing project ownership for the implementing partners. SFCG-M should provide specific training in conflict transformation and mediation to the implementing partners' personnel. In MediAction the local associations had mainly a logistical role. Providing such training sessions would increase their ownership of the project. If the implementing partner had more ownership, sustainability and quality of the performance would dramatically increase. The evaluation team also strongly recommends including SFCG's coaching sessions in further programming.
- The evaluation team recommends involving all partners during the planning phase with start-up seminars and planning meetings. These moments should be used to reflect, analyse, brainstorm, address concerns, raise suggestions and create a shared vision. Ownership is the fundamental precondition to facilitate and smooth the implementation phase.

² Youth and Community Mediation Centers (YCMC) is a 22-month project funded by USAID and implemented by Search for Common Ground in Casablanca and Tetouan. The project ended in July 2009 and was designed to mitigate conflict by engaging youth constructively in Morocco's democratic and economic development.



- The evaluation team suggests discussing an exit strategy with partners at the beginning of the project, in order to create ownership and sustainability from the outset. SFCG-M should make each partner feel responsible for the project's sustainability and brainstorm around their role regarding the exit strategy.
- The evaluation team recommends ensuring that all partners are informed about the activities' advancement, sharing the quarterly narrative report and monitoring findings with all partners as a practice.
- SFCG-M should find creative solutions to better define mediators' social status. The evaluation team suggests creating an 'umbrella' of organisations that recognise mediation as a practice for solving disputes. Mediators could also devise a symbol or wear t-shirts that make them recognisable in the community.
- The evaluation team recommends creating a good mix of mediators in terms of age groups, with special attention given to youth already involved in social work with other organisations. The evaluation team recommends using this selection criteria:
 - i. A group aged between 20 and 35 years old. The group should be evenly composed of three main age brackets: youth aged between 20 to 25; 25 to 30; and 30 to 35;
 - ii. Youth should have a minimum of a Bachelor-degree education;
 - iii. Most of the youth should already be involved in social work with other organisations;
 - iv. The youth should express a commitment to volunteer work and social assistance.
- The evaluation team recommends only choosing partners that are socially well established in further programming. Such partners should provide other social services considered useful by the community, and have a good reputation with local authorities and institutions. They should have already participated in other programmes with youth and be committed to including mediation in their objectives. Finally, they should have enough capacity and resources to sustain mediation after the end of the project.



- INDH funding procedures resulted very heavy and time-consuming. The evaluation team suggests that activities shouldn't depend on INDH funds for further projects. Either way, a solution to accelerate funding procedures could be to request a single grant for the whole project instead of submitting grant requests locally.
- Although SFCG had a Memorandum of Understanding with various partners, it didn't sign MoUs with all INDH representatives. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) should be signed with all institutional and civil society partners.
- The project is much more solid when it is managed by a field co-ordinator. Fes and Meknes are by far the most successful examples. As a result, the evaluation team recommends hiring three field co-ordinators as follows:
 - i. One field co-ordinator responsible for Rabat and Sale;
 - ii. One field co-ordinator responsible for Fes and Meknes;
 - iii. One field co-ordinator responsible for Marrakech; and
 - iv. The project manager should supervise the work of the three field co-ordinators, providing strategic advice and organisational support.
- The evaluation team recommends including expected results in the logical framework of further programmes.



Annexes

1. Evaluation Terms of Reference

Search for Common Ground in Morocco is seeking proposals from a qualified evaluator (or team of evaluators) with expertise in evaluating development programs/projects in Morocco to conduct a final evaluation of a community mediation project whose aim is to reduce local tensions and conflicts through the establishment of Community Mediation Centres in five cities across the country (Fes, Marrakech, Meknes, Rabat and Sale).

The deadline for submitting applications is **JANUARY 18, 2010**.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 *Search for Common Ground*

Since 1982, Search for Common Ground (SFCG), an international non-governmental organization, has been working to transform the way the world deals with conflict: away from adversarial confrontation, toward cooperative solutions. Our *philosophy* is to “understand the differences,” but “act on the commonalities.” SFCG is engaged in a long-term process of incremental transformation, so we make long-term commitments. We seek cross-cultural integration of indigenous and international concepts of conflict prevention. We work with partners on the ground to strengthen local capacity to deal with conflict. SFCG currently works in or with nineteen countries around the world.

1.2 *SFCG in Morocco*

Since 2001, Search for Common Ground in Morocco (SFCG-M) has worked with Moroccan society to transform the manner in which people and institutions resolve conflicts and to develop a culture of mediation in Morocco. In order to reduce the risks and costs of disputes, SFCG-M enhances the capacity of



individuals and institutions to resolve conflicts cooperatively and develops a culture of dialogue by bringing together key actors, including civil society, government, and media.

1.3 Project summary:

The overall goal of the MediAction project is to build the capacity of youth for the promotion of a culture of mediation, dialogue and peace in marginalized neighbourhoods, and to reinforce social cohesion. The project targets 5 cities across the Kingdom (Rabat, Marrakech, Salé, Fès, and Meknès); it has been implemented in partnership with the *Initiative Nationale du Développement Humain* (INDH) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) through the British Embassy in Rabat. The project's main activities are: 1) the training of young mediators in each of the five cities, 2) the creation of 5 mediation centres in partnership with the INDH and local associations, and 3) awareness-raising campaigns on mediation at the local level.

2. REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

2.1 Organizational Goal

SFCG, as an organization, has committed to conducting programmatic evaluations in order to maximize the effectiveness of our programming and engage in continuous improvement and learning within programs and across the organization.

2.2 Evaluation Objectives

The evaluation is intended principally for learning purposes, although accountability should not be ignored. It is expected to generate relevant findings, lessons, and recommendations which will be shared with key stakeholders of the project and used to inform future programming with respect to social and community mediation.

The evaluation should address the overarching goal and objectives of the project while assessing the relevance and effectiveness of implemented activities with respect to the set goals. A successful application



will take into account the original project logical framework, including its indicators, but also seek to capture outcomes beyond those expected in an attempt to assess actual and potential impact.

Two main objectives have been identified for the evaluation:

- C. To assess the performance of the project along the following dimensions: Impact, Sustainability, Linkages (primary), Relevance, Effectiveness, and Efficiency (secondary).**

- D. To identify the strengths and weaknesses of the project and come up with findings, lessons and recommendations to guide and inform future programme work with special focus on Community Mediation in Morocco.**

2.3 Audience

The primary audience of this evaluation is SFCG staff and SFCG's donors. A secondary audience comprises partners in the broader conflict resolution/peacebuilding field who might benefit from the findings identified by the present evaluation. Search for Common Ground is in fact committed to publishing project and program evaluations on its website (www.sfcg.org), either in summary form or their entirety, for any stakeholder interested in learning about our work and the sectors we work in.

2.4 Evaluation Principles

While the specific evaluation methodology shall be defined by the applicant, SFCG expects that all proposals take into account and integrate the organization's approach to evaluation, which is grounded in the guiding principles of our work in general. The evaluation methodology must therefore be:

- Participatory
- Culturally sensitive
- Committed to building capacity
- Affirming and positive while honest and productively critical, and
- Valuing knowledge and approaches from within the context.

3. SCOPE OF WORK



The evaluation will cover the accomplishment of all the expected results as outlined in the project contract and project action plans. All the different project components and activities stated in the original logical framework will be assessed.

3.1. Evaluation criteria and questions:

The evaluation will concentrate on the six evaluation criteria mentioned above, with priority given to measuring the project's impact, sustainability and the linkages it created among target groups and stakeholders. For each criterium, the evaluation should seek to focus on the identified questions:

Impact (PRIORITY): The main focus will be on actual and imminent changes brought about among—and if appropriate beyond—the target groups (youth, community members, schools etc) as a direct consequence of participation into the project. Specific focus questions include:

- To what extent has the project led to knowledge, attitude and behaviour changes among—and if appropriate beyond— the target groups?
- To what extent has ownership been engendered among project target groups, key stakeholders and final beneficiaries?
- To what extent have SFCG and partners been able to establish mediation as an option to resolve conflicts or disputes locally?

Sustainability (PRIORITY): The main focus will be on whether the outcomes and changes brought about by the project are likely to continue after the end of the project, and how. Specific focus questions include:

- To what extent and how are the trained young mediators and local partners committed to pursuing community mediation activities after the end of the project?
- How are mediation centres contributing to raising awareness of mediation at the community/local level?
- To what extent has the capacity of the community mediation centres (including local partners) and the mediators themselves been built to continue offering community mediation services?



Linkages (PRIORITY): The main focus will be on assessing the links and level of coordination/cooperation that the project produced among the target group as well as key stakeholders. Specific focus questions include:

- To what extent and how are the mediators interacting among themselves and with members of the community (inside and outside the centres)?
- To what extent and how are the institutional partners (local associations, INDH and, where appropriate, other agencies such as the Entraide Nationale) cooperating to promote mediation and social cohesion?

Relevance: The main focus will be on the appropriateness of the project's concept and design to the overall situation of the targeted communities. Specific focus questions include:

- To what extent do the stated objectives correctly address the problems and real needs of the target groups in terms of empowerment and capacity building?
- How relevant is the project design and implementation to larger efforts (both local and national) aimed at decreasing vulnerability and social disadvantage?

Efficiency: The main focus will be on how well the project activities used resources to achieve the intended results. Specific focus questions include:

- What has the general implementation and management of the project been in terms of quantity, quality, and timeliness of inputs and activities, adherence to work-plans, action-plans, logical framework, and budgets?
- How well has the project management responded to changes and challenges in the environment in which it was implemented?

Effectiveness: The main focus will be on extent to which the project achieved its stated results and purpose in a sustainable way. Specific focus questions include:

- To what extent have expected outcomes been achieved within the project's timeframe? How well have benchmarks been met?



- How have project assumptions and risks been identified and managed during implementation?

3.2. Location

In principle, the evaluation will cover all five project locations (Fes, Marrakech, Meknes, Rabat and Sale).

3.3. Deliverables

The following outputs are expected from the evaluator or evaluation team:

1. **A Final Evaluation Report** – This should not exceed 25 pages, be in English and include:
 - Executive summary (possibly also in FRE)
 - Table of contents
 - Evaluation Methodology and Scope
 - Key Project Findings and Recommendations for Future Activities
 - Annexes, including collected data, detailed description of the methodology with research instruments, list of interviewees, bibliography, and evaluator(s) brief biography
2. **An Evaluation Utilization Plan** – this should not exceed 2 pages (to be included as annex to the evaluation report), in English, and highlight how the evaluation’s findings and recommendations will be discussed and disseminated within SFCG as well as partners and key stakeholders.
3. **Evaluation forms and data collected** – All information collected and generated by the evaluator should be handed to SFCG’s DME Specialist.

SFCG will exercise no editorial control over the final evaluation report; it will however retain the right to suggest edits and changes based on the organization’s commitment to the quality of the final product. Both the final and the summary report will be credited to the consultancy team and potentially placed in the public domain at the decision of SFCG.

All the deliverables must be submitted before the set deadline to SFCG’s DME Specialist and Morocco Country Director.



3.4. Duration & Deadlines

The expected length of assignment is not to exceed 28 days.

The indicative start date for the evaluation is February 8, 2010.

The proposed timeline for the evaluation contract is:

Task	Indicative Date
Start of contract	8 February 2010
Preparation/Document Review	8 – 12 February 2010
Data Collection and Field Trips	15 February – 5 March 2010
Report Finalization	9 – 12 March 2010
Submission of Final Report to SFCG (including all deliverables)	15 March 2010
Follow-up activities (as to the utilization plan)	22 – 26 March 2010 (as appropriate)

3.5. Logistical Support

SFCG will provide preparatory materials to the evaluation team, including relevant background materials and a briefing from SFCG staff.

4. THE EVALUATION TEAM

4.1 Evaluators' Responsibilities

The evaluator will be expected to provide a description of all staff (primary as well as administrative) working on the evaluation. He/she will be responsible for developing the methodology and a final work plan after the signing of the contract. The evaluator will be expected to travel to the various locations cited above. The final writing of the deliverables does not have to take place in the location where the evaluation has been conducted. The evaluator/team is expected to be responsible for the following:





DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION &

- Form/Manage an evaluation team (if appropriate)
- Draft an evaluation plan, including methodology and data sources
- Collect data and Review project information
- Engage stakeholders in the evaluation process
- Data analysis and report writing
- Finalize and submit evaluation deliverables

4.2 Required Qualifications (for evaluation team as a whole)

SFCG is looking for an evaluator/team with relevant experience, both thematic and geographic. At a minimum, the following requirements should be met:

- Previous experience in the evaluation of development programs and/or projects;
- Previous experience in the evaluation of projects in Morocco;
- Knowledge of evaluation methods and data collection skills;
- Knowledge of participatory processes;
- Proficiency in Moroccan Arabic, French and English;
- Excellent communication skills (written and oral);
- Knowledge of IT applications;
- A proven commitment to quality of outputs/deliverables.

The following elements would be seen as advantageous:

- Previous experience in the evaluation of social change programs and/or projects;
- Knowledge of mediation.

5. APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Applicants must submit the following materials to **Bernardo Monzani**, DME Specialist, by email at bmonzani@sfcg.org:

Via Brunetto Latini 73
50133 Firenze
T/F +39055576962
P.I. 05694560482
info@ldca.eu
www.ldca.eu



1. A cover letter with contact information that summarizes qualifications for all key individuals proposed for the evaluation (max 2 pages):
2. An indicative evaluation plan, including at a minimum (max 5 pages):
 - a. Methodology and tools for data collection
 - b. Research questions
 - c. Indicative work plan (proposed sample groups and timeline for data collection and analysis)
3. Description of past evaluation experiences including at least 2 references
4. Evaluators' CV
5. Indicative budget, including evaluator's (or team's) per day rate.

2. Evaluation Framework

Impact		
Target Groups	Key Questions	Tools
a. Project Team b. Young Mediators c. Final Beneficiaries	To what extent has the project led to knowledge, attitude and behaviour changes among- and if appropriate beyond- the target groups?	a. Team Self Review; Focus Group; Key Informant Interview b. Team Self Review; Key Informant Interview c. Impact Grid; Key Informant Interview; Direct Observation
a. Project team b. Young Mediators c. Partners d. Final Beneficiaries	To what extent has ownership been engendered among project target groups, key stakeholders and final beneficiaries?	a. Team Self Review; Focus Group; Key Informant Interview b. Team Self – Review; Key Informant Interview c. Key Informant Interview d. Impact Grid; Key Informant Interview; Direct Observation
a. Project Team b. Young Mediators c. Final Beneficiaries	To what extent have SFCG and partners been able to establish mediation as an option to resolve conflicts or disputes locally?	a. Team Self Review; Focus Group; Key Informant Interview b. Team Self Review; Key Informant Interview c. Impact Grid; Key Informant Interview; Direct Observation



Sustainability		
Target Group	Key Questions	Tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Young Mediators b. Local Partners 	To what extent and how are the trained young mediators and local partners committed to pursuing community mediation activities after the end of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Team Self Review; Key informant Interview b. Key informant Interview
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Young Mediators b. Final beneficiaries 	How are mediation centres contributing to raising awareness of mediation at the local community level?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Key Informant Interviews b. Direct Observation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Young Mediators b. Project Team c. Local Partners 	To what extent has the capacity of the community mediation centres (including local partners) and the mediators themselves been built to continue offering community mediation services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Team Self Review; Focus Group Discussion b. Team Self Review; Focus Group Discussion c. Key Informant Interview
Linkages		
Target Groups	Key Questions	Tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Young Mediators b. Final Beneficiaries 	To what extent and how are the mediators interacting among themselves and with members of the community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Focus Group Discussion; Direct Observation b. Direct Observation; Key Informant Interview
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Institutional Partners b. Local Partners 	To what extent and how are the institutional partners co-operating to promote mediation and social cohesion?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Key Informant Interview; Document Analysis b. Key Informant Interview; Document Analysis
Relevance		
Target Groups	Key Questions	Tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Project team b. Young Mediators c. Final Beneficiaries 	To what extent do the stated objectives correctly address the problems and real needs of the target groups in terms of empowerment and capacity building?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Team Self Review; Focus Group; Key Informant Interview b. Team Self Review; Key Informant Interview c. Impact Grid; Key Informant Interview; Direct Observation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Local and 	How relevant is the project designed and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Key Informant Interviews



International Partners b. Relevant Person in the Community	implementation to larger efforts (both local and national) aimed at decreasing vulnerability and social disadvantage?	b. Key Informant Interviews
Efficiency		
Target Groups	Key Questions	Tools
Project Team	What has the general implementation and management of the project been in terms of quantity, quality, and timeliness of inputs and activities, adherence to work-plans, action-plans, logical framework, and budgets?	Project Documents Review; Team Self Review
Project Team	How well has the project management responded to changes and challenges in the environment in which it was implemented?	Key Informant Interviews
Effectiveness		
Target Groups	Key Questions	Tools
Project Team	To what extent have expected outcomes been achieved within the project's time frame? How well have benchmarks been met?	DM&E Documents Analysis; Key Informant Interviews
Project Team	How have project assumptions and risks been identified and managed?	Team Self Review; Documents analysis

3. Interviews, Focus Groups and Impact Grid Participants

Focus group and Impact Grid Participants:

Project Location	Male	Female	Total
Fez	9	6	15
Meknes	7	6	13
Rabat	3	2	5
Sale	10	7	17
Marrakech	1	3	4
Total			54



Semi Structured Interviews with Final Beneficiaries:

Project Location	Males	Females	Total
Fez	1	2	3
Marrakech	0	1	1
Total			4

Semi Structured Interviews with Project's Stakeholders:

Organization	Project Location	N° of Persons
INDH	Marrakech	2
Association Initiative de Developpement Humain	Marrakech	1
Delegation of the National Ministry of Education	Marrakech	2
OMEJ	Meknes	2
INDH	Meknes	3
Entraide Nationale	Meknes	3
AMEJ	Sale	5
Chouala Association	Fez	2
INDH	Fez	2
Entraide Nationale	Fez	1
Association Biladi	Fez	1
ADA	Rabat	1
INDH	Rabat	2
	Total	27

Team Self Review

Name	Role
Bernardo Monzani	DM&E Specialist
Suzanne Muskin	Country Director
Kamal Hachoumy	Programme Manager
Nabila Alaoui (separate interview)	Field Coordinator

