



Monitoring Report

Monitoring reference MR-146751.01
Report date 21/11/2013
Project title Democracy and Development in Action through Media and Empowerment (DAME)

I. Intervention data

Status	FINAL
Report final date	22/11/2013
Report finalised by user	ALVAREZ TIRAPU VALENTIN
Monitoring Report Type	Ongoing
Aid Modality	Project approach
Project	Single Country / National Project
Project Management	Project managed by the Delegation
Financed via a thematic budget line	No
CRIS Number	C-284404
Project Title according to Financing Agreement/Financing Decision	Democracy and Development in Action through Media and Empowerment (DAME)
Domain	European Development Fund
DAC - CRS Sector	15150 - Democratic participation and civil society
Additional DAC - CRS code	15150 - Democratic participation and civil society
Geographical zone	Timor Leste
Keyword (for innovative interventions)	
Date Financing Agreement/Financing Decision/Contract signed	22/08/2012
Person responsible at HQ	
Person responsible at Delegation	JORGE RUTH MARIA LORETA
Monitor	EBERLE Evan
Project Authority	Search for Common Ground
Type of implementing partner	International NGO/CSOs/Universities (at EU and international level)
Start date - planned	23/08/2012
End date - planned	22/08/2014
Start date - actual	23/08/2012
End date - likely	23/08/2014
Monitoring visit date	from 14/10/2013 to 25/10/2013

II. Financial data

Primary commitment (EC funding)	1,600,000
Budget allocated for TA	Not Available
Secondary commitment (funds contracted of EC contribution)	1,600,000
Other funding (government and/or other donors)	400,000
Total budget of operation	2,000,000
Total EC funds disbursed	605,537
Financial data on	21/10/2013

III. Grading

Relevance and quality of design	B
Efficiency of Implementation to date	B
Effectiveness to date	B
Impact prospects	B
Potential sustainability	B

IV. Summary of conclusions

Relevance and quality of design

Timor-Leste (TL) stands at a critical juncture in its development, with the security and political environment remaining exceptionally fragile. The DAME project fits right in as it seeks to strengthen the democratization process and further stabilize the country by improving channels of communication between citizens and decision-makers. Even though the project is well designed to address its overall objective, it faced several delays, some of which could have been avoided by including a proper inception phase in the design. There is a logframe, which is coherent, clear but a bit ambitious, given the short time-frame of 24 months. During the negotiations with all partners, roles and responsibilities had been clearly defined. SFCG is in contact with its partners on a daily basis, which allows for timely addressing of concerns. Capacity development of all partners involved is part of the project. Strengthened operational, technical and mechanical capabilities for national and local NSAs and NSA networks, as well as media and youth organizations involved is one of the expected results. Gender issues have been adequately mainstreamed in project design, unlike the environment and human rights, which are not specifically addressed within the project design. Governance plays a major part of the project as it projects increased capacity and mechanisms for NSA and local government to collaborate more effectively via improved dialogue, coordination and partnership.

Efficiency of Implementation to date

Substantial delays have taken place with this project. The contract was signed months later than projected. The Grantee could have negotiated an inception phase with the National Authorizing Officer (NAO) and the EU Delegation (EUD), which would have allowed the addressing of some of the issues which came up during the first couple of months. Mostly funds are spent in line with the implementation of activities. Some activities have initially been under budgeted, therefore SFCG did adjust the budget accordingly with approval of the NAO. Search for Common Ground (SFCG) faced delays in negotiating with its main partner BELUN, delays in the recruitment of key staff essential to kick off some activities, changes in leadership of 2 partners as well as the realization that the capacities of the partners and their member organizations aren't up to par. SFCG among others did a baseline survey for evaluation purposes and to provide a glimpse into the various ways in which youth and NGOs in Timor-Leste are organizing themselves in the peace-building and democratization process today; however, this did not include a proper assessment of the capacities of its 5 partners and their implementing agents. Most of the outputs are delivered as planned. Some were slightly altered due to higher demand as scheduled. IE civic leadership program, initially only 4 have been planned, however due to high interest, SFCG decided to add 2 more trainings in a cost efficient manner, which did save the project money. As to the District Youth Forums, originally planned for 25 participants per forum, due to the high interest, SFCG decided to increase numbers to 40, utilizing the funds from the leadership training. SFCG uses both the logframe and a workplan as management tools. In addition there are field reports, reports from implementing partners available. The Monitoring unit closed monitors the implementation based on the logframe.

Effectiveness to date

Despite the delay in several areas, SFCG manages the implementation of activities quite well. The sequence of activities as projected in the initial log frame, was changed in order to make up for lost time. This does not change the overall objective of the project, moreover it allowed for a swift adjustment to the new reality. Many activities are on track with high quality outputs. The level of capacity of individual NSAs went significantly up according to a parameter set by the project, youth participation and the confidence of youth to discuss issues in public discussions went up, local authorities engage with civil society for the first time constructively. There has been poor understanding though of dialogue process from FONGTIL District Coordinators (DCs) related to regional and national dialogues. SFCG recognises the need to more proactively communicate with them, sharing more details information and to further train the DLOs on the dialogues process so they are better able to identify the crucial issues to be covered in the exchanges. Still one third of

the activities are behind schedule, due to initial delays such as insufficient capacities of partner organizations. According to the monitoring tracker, only half of the activities planned are on schedule, the remaining are behind schedule or have not even started. For instance number of toolkits developed is 1 instead of 2, with the explanation that after missing the initial deadline of December 2012, the program should respect the new deadline of November 2013. Otherwise they will not have enough time remaining to train the partners. On the other hand SFCG managed to conduct more leadership trainings than planned without increasing the budget.

Impact prospects

The final direct beneficiaries are the constituencies of the 13 districts, representing hundreds of thousands of Timorese citizens. This action deliberately targets remote, isolated rural villages, which have been excluded from decision-making processes and cut off from mainstream services. The programme will also use radio as a tool since it is the most widely accessed source of information in Timor-Leste (more than 50% of households have radios). From a long-term point of view, the organisational development, conflict transformation, dialogue and media curricula are poised to replicate themselves and become self-sustaining. The key to this is associated intimately with the ¿buy-in¿ and proper training of Non State Actors (NSA) staff and engagement with local authorities (LA). With the support of community leaders, SFCG ultimately seeks for BELUN and project Associates to serve as the primary coordinators of present and future efforts. Both FONGTIL and BELUN were successful in completing Discussion-Oriented Organisational Self-Assessments (DOSAs) but are still developing training manuals for both local governments by regions and networks. Here, logistical challenges due complications with the schedules of local government heads can be encountered ¿ i.e. District Administrators and District Development Officers, particularly during decentralization consultation and pre-decentralization, are not always readily available. This Action invests heavily in nurturing and supporting local organisations as a matter of priority with the explicit assumption that SFCG will not be needed in Timor-Leste in perpetuity. The organisational development, conflict transformation, dialogue and media curricula methodology will be easily replicable with other NSA across Timor-Leste, with multiplier effects reaching ¿second waves¿ of NSA staff inspired and mobilised to make a positive contribution. Finally, the project utilises ¿multiplier youths¿ to reach out to and influence their peers, particularly around peaceful elections, making conflict transformation the norm rather than the exception. It remains to be seen whether the long-term projections and multiplier effects will take place accordingly.

Potential sustainability

The scale of the proposed Action will lead to change in the knowledge and perceptions that people, and in particular Timorese NSAs and LAs, have of the role of civic participation vis-à-vis policy development and growth. Emphasising the nexus between the people's voice and responsiveness of government officials is the paramount matter within this proposal. Policy briefs, civic education seminars, and dialogue activities all encourage and promote greater NSA-LA engagement at the national, regional and district levels, thereby impacting long-term policy at those levels. The Action will establish and strengthen networks of communication among NSA leaders and local and national government officials. The project thereby aims at having a lasting effect on the nation's overall political and social environment, which may help to open up space for NSAs, LAs, and other actors to take stronger and more constructive positions in voicing the importance of conflict sensitive development, dialogue, and civic participation. It will create space for communities to explore and discuss the meaning and direction of political processes and incorporation of NSA voices in the future peace of Timor-Leste.

Key observations and recommendations

The dearth and weak transfer of information regarding policies such as the role of NSA has caused great frustration at the local level, increasing misperceptions and creating feelings of exclusion within communities. While youth organisations played a major role in the struggle for independence, many of these groups have had difficulties forging a new peace-time identity and creating a clear vision. This action complements and builds upon SFCG's USAID-funded Youth Radio for Peacebuilding program in Timor-Leste, and draws upon the expertise of SFCG in working with youth, and using media for conflict transformation and development. More specifically, SFCG's Babadok Rebenta! (¿Drums of Peace¿) youth radio magazine and talk shows provide the ideal platform for engaging youth and their communities on elections and conflict sensitive development.

Recommendations

SFCG, NAO and EUD: 1. The project would have benefitted from an inception phase to avoid various stages of delay such as proper capacity assessment of partners and recruitment of key staff. 2. No cost extension/flexibility in adjusting budget lines. Given the delays from the very beginning and the rather short life cycle of the project, DAME will benefit from a no cost extension. 3. More training for volunteers,

specifically journalist at Community Radio level, proper skill development in exchange for volunteering. Students, who cannot afford to go to university, do volunteer work at radios, youth network among others. Those students should receive proper professional journalistic training. The radios would not be able to produce programming without the volunteers. 4. For NAO to take over some of the responsibilities of the EUD, ie monitoring the implementation of projects, the NAO office needs to be properly established, the deputy NAO needs to understand the role the Office needs to play both as project monitor as well as liaison with the government, and staff needs to be properly trained.