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FINAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION Promoting Active Citizen Engagement (PACE)

September 2014

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PROMOTING ACTIVE CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT (PACE): FINAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

September 29, 2014

COVER PHOTO

Thousands of civic activists march for peace in the northern city of Tripoli on April 21, 2013, including members of a PACE grantee, the Lebanese Center for Active Citizenship, which helped organize the rally opposing sectarian violence linked to the Syrian civil war.

DISCLAIMER

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ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directives System
ADA	Akkar Development Association
AND	Akkar Network for Development
AOR	Agreement Officer's Representative
BALADI	Building Alliance for Local Advancement, Development, and Investment
BRDI	Beyond Reform and Development/Irada
CAT	Capacity Assessment Tool
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CA	Cooperative Agreement
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CO	Contracting Officer
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CitiAct	Citizens Activism
CIPE	Center for International Private Enterprise
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
DG	Democracy and Governance
EYH	Expand Your Horizons
GCSS	Global Civil Society Strengthening
IndyACT	League of Independent Activists
IR	Intermediate Result
IREX	International Research and Exchange Board
IRI	International Republican Institute
KDC	Knowledge Development Company
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LCAC	Lebanese Center for Active Citizenship
LCCE	Lebanese Center for Civic Education
LCPS	Lebanese Center for Policy Studies
LCSI	Lebanon Civic Support Initiative
LEA	Lebanese Economic Association
LOST	Lebanese Organization for Studies and Training
LTA	Lebanese Transparency Association
LWA	Leader With Associates

MEPI	Middle East Partnership Initiative
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MP	Member of Parliament
MSI	Management System International
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OTI	Office of Transition Initiatives
PACE	Promoting Active Citizen Engagement
PLC	PACE Learning Center
PMPL	Performance Management Program for Lebanon
RF	Results Framework
SIDC	Soins Infirmiers et Développement Communautaire
SI	Social Impact
SOW	Scope of Work
TAG	Transparency and Accountability Grants
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
YEF	Youth Economic Forum
YNCA	Youth Network for Civic Activism

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EVALUATION PURPOSE AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The Promoting Active Citizen Engagement (PACE) final performance evaluation is meant to serve dual purposes:

1. To learn to what extent the project's objectives and goals—at all result levels—have been achieved; and
2. To synthesize information about lessons learned, best practices, challenges, and opportunities that will contribute to the design of a possible new civil society project.

This evaluation will assist the Mission in reaching decisions related to:

1. The effectiveness of the current technical approach to promote civic engagement and innovative media, as well as the effectiveness of these interventions (civic engagement and innovative media) in achieving the goal of PACE; and
2. The nature and scope of possible future interventions in the sector of civil society, based on lessons learned from the current project.

The evaluation questions are:

1. Did PACE strengthen civil society capacity to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy and participation that contributes to a cohesive national identity?
2. Did PACE opinion polling, technical assistance and training improve the ability of Lebanese civil society organizations to develop policy alternatives based on citizen concerns?
3. Have civil society organizations supported by PACE use media more effectively to publicize citizen concerns and policy alternatives?
4. Have civic actors been strengthened to address or advocate citizen concerns thanks to support from PACE?
5. What lessons can be learned from the experience of the project?
6. Taking into consideration the effectiveness of PACE, should USAID continue funding programs that aim to strengthen Lebanese civil society? Which type of programs would prove to be most beneficial?

PROJECT BACKGROUND

PACE is an \$8.3 million, three-year activity funded by USAID/Lebanon and implemented by Management Systems International (MSI) in collaboration with the International Research and Exchange Board (IREX), under the oversight of Counterpart International. PACE aims to “strengthen civil society’s ability to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy and participation that contributes to a cohesive national identity while preserving Lebanon’s social and political pluralism.” To that end, PACE focuses on three mutually reinforcing activities:

- Aggregate and analyze public opinion to develop policy alternatives that respond to citizen concerns at the local, regional, and national levels;
- Support media marketing, reporting, discussion, and analysis of policy alternatives based on citizen concerns; and
- Increase civic advocacy, activism, and participation through sub-grants that respond to citizen concerns.

DESIGN, METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

The Social Impact team's evaluation design incorporated a variety of targeted methods to address the evaluation questions, including review of key documents, meeting with USAID/Lebanon and MEPI staff, interviews with PACE headquarters and program staff, and semi-structured interviews with grantees. The evaluation was conducted in the United States and Lebanon from August 27 to September 19, 2014. Interviews with three grantees in Sidon were canceled due to security concerns.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Question 1: Did PACE strengthen civil society capacity to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy and participation that contributes to a cohesive national identity?

PACE did strengthen civil society capacity to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy and participation that contributes to a cohesive national identity, which was the overarching goal of the project. PACE increased the internal capacity of its grantees through its training and assessment tools, providing them with guidance on how to become stronger, more sustainable organizations. The program's initial work on policy alternatives provided civil society organizations with fact-based information on which to base their campaigns, and media training enabled organizations to publicize their causes to the broader populace. The contracting mechanism was inefficient, however, because it required the contractor to subcontract in-country implementation to two other organizations.

Insofar as the evaluation team could determine, the civil society partners of PACE are non-sectarian organizations, and their issues cut across confessional and partisan lines. Evaluators found examples of PACE grantees actively campaigning for national cohesion in the face of external pressures that threaten to exacerbate the fault lines of Lebanese society. Evaluators found examples of PACE partners advocating for change on non-sectarian issues or acting to promote social cohesion and a Lebanese national identity.

While PACE did not specifically set out to promote or strengthen the civic participation of women, the program did well along several gender indicators.

Question 2: Did PACE opinion polling and technical assistance improve the ability of Lebanese civil society organizations to develop policy alternatives based on citizen concerns?

PACE opinion polling helped PACE staff to identify the major concerns of Lebanese citizens, and PACE technical assistance improved the ability of a select few civil society organizations to develop policy alternatives based on those identified citizen concerns. This enabled focus on issues that mattered to a broad range of Lebanese society, rather than issues identified by civil society organizations themselves. The resultant policy briefs were used by other civil society organizations to buttress their advocacy campaigns, which also helped them to understand the importance of policy analysis in advocacy.

The initial opinion poll commissioned by PACE in 2012 enabled PACE staff to identify the main concerns of Lebanese citizens and directly led PACE to commission policy briefs on six issues. PACE commissioned two organizations to produce policy briefs and advocacy videos and to train recipient organizations on policy development and advocacy. The briefs effectively and succinctly identify the problems facing society, examine policy options, and provide actionable recommendations. PACE also

issued a grant to develop policy resources on the decentralization issue.

Several organizations used the policy briefs in their advocacy work. A Member of Parliament who spoke at a PACE event said policy expertise was the most valuable assistance that civil society could provide to effectively influence the policy-making process. One organization suggested PACE could have included labor unions in its advocacy campaigns.

Question 3: Have civil society organizations supported by PACE used media more effectively to publicize citizen concerns and policy alternatives?

CSOs supported by PACE have used media more effectively to publicize citizen concerns and policy alternatives. Many of the organizations that received PACE media training can point to specific instances where that training led directly to more effective media outreach and coverage. In addition, PACE support to new media organizations shows potential for using technology to create alternative news sources. In all, 39 of 42 grantees expanded their use of media platforms.

PACE media training was one of the most successful aspects of the program. All interviewed recipients said they used the training in their advocacy or social entrepreneurship work and provided specific examples of how the training helped them increase their ability to communicate their message through mainstream media, new media, or social media. Participants also credited PACE with helping them establish media contacts that enabled them to get their message out. PACE grantees across the board increased their social media usage.

PACE also issued grants to enable creation of alternative on-line news outlets and a pair of grants to television networks to create programs exposing corruption. The on-line news outlets began to gain some use from Lebanese citizens, while the television grants had a mixed impact. A PACE-funded media survey found that “Lebanon’s media scene has deteriorated consistently to a point where it is worse off than in 2005.”

Question 4: Have civic actors been strengthened to address or advocate citizen concerns thanks to support from PACE?

Civic actors have been strengthened to address or advocate citizen concerns thanks to support from PACE. PACE strengthened the overall capacity of civil society organizations through its training and technical assistance, particularly in improving the organizational structure of many organizations and their financial management. In this regard, PACE made a significant contribution to the organizational and financial sustainability of Lebanese CSOs, particularly newer organizations.

The key training initiative was the PACE Learning Center (PLC), which undertook a comprehensive approach to institutional development. Coaching, in which a trainer would go to a CSO’s offices and conduct training and consultations with that organization, was another successful aspect of the program. An assessment tool found 81 percent of CSOs reported improvement in their internal capacity after working with the center. More established grantees were more likely to say that they did not learn anything new from the PACE training, and several grantees who obtained similar training from other CSO support programs and could not identify what they learned from which program. These experiences reinforced the finding of previous USAID reports that there is “training fatigue” among Lebanese CSOs. Another shortcoming was that the PACE Learning Center came at the end of the project. Initially scheduled to last 16 months, the center ended up operating for only 11 months.

PACE sought to promote social entrepreneurship as a sub-objective. PACE did promote social

entrepreneurship, and several social enterprises assisted by PACE appear poised to become self-sustaining entities. However, the social enterprise segment of the PACE program was not connected to the other elements and did not promote advocacy of the issues identified by opinion surveys.

Question 5: What lessons can be learned from the experience of the project?

- *Keep your eyes on the prize:* In designing a civil society assistance program, it is important to ensure that the elements support one another and are targeted at the overarching goal.
- *You can't hurry change:* Three years was too short to effect policy changes.
- *Change requires allies:* Several issues will ultimately require parliamentary action. Civil society is most effective at working with parliament when it is viewed as an ally, rather than an adversary.
- *Train before, not after:* If a project does decide to provide training and technical assistance, it should do so at the outset of its support to its grantees.
- *Avoid duplication:* It is important to identify existing programs and to ensure that new programs do not duplicate what is already being done.
- *Find a niche:* It is important for a new program to find an underserved niche in order to be useful. PACE successfully did this in the policy development and media training areas
- *Give the people what they want:* The opinion poll that PACE commissioned at the outset provided an objective lens through which to view the key concerns of the Lebanese people.
- *Success isn't a number:* A future project might seek to engage fewer CSOs but to provide more in-depth, targeted support. The goal should be to build capacity to enable more effective policy analysis, recommendations, dissemination and advocacy that results in meaningful change.
- *Think local, act local:* While some issues must be addressed at the national level, others can be addressed more effectively at the local level. Future programs should continue to include partners outside Beirut.

Question 6: Taking into consideration the effectiveness of PACE, should USAID continue funding programs that aim to strengthen Lebanese civil society? What kind of programs would prove to be most beneficial?

USAID should continue funding programs that aim to strengthen Lebanese civil society. However, it is imperative that USAID rationalize and coordinate its projects. It is not clear that a stand-alone follow-on to the PACE project is indicated. A logical starting point would be to examine expansion of the BALADI CAP program and consider adding one or two option years to the cooperative agreement. Training could be provided through an existing USAID or MEPI CSO training initiative.

The mission should consider ways in which it can support policy research, analysis and development by Lebanese civil society and assist civil society organizations in effectively promoting policy alternatives through traditional media, new media platforms, and social media. On the advocacy side, future programming might seek to include labor unions. The mission should explore ways in which to improve cooperation between civil society and the national parliament and government and to improve the ability of civil society to lobby effectively. In this, the mission may want to examine USAID's ProRep program in Indonesia, which seeks to link independent policy analysis, CSO advocacy and legislation. The mission may want to consider the creation of a training center for legislative drafting, along the lines of that developed by a USAID project in Kyrgyzstan.

EVALUATION PURPOSE & EVALUATION QUESTIONS

EVALUATION PURPOSE

The PACE final performance evaluation is meant to serve dual purposes:

1. To learn to what extent the project’s objectives and goals—at all result levels—have been achieved; and
2. To synthesize information about lessons learned, best practices, challenges, and opportunities that will contribute to the design of a possible new civil society project.

This evaluation will assist the Mission in reaching decisions related to:

1. The effectiveness of the current technical approach to promote civic engagement and innovative media, as well as the effectiveness of these interventions (civic engagement and innovative media) in achieving the goal of PACE; and
2. The nature and scope of possible future interventions in the sector of civil society, based on lessons learned from the current project.

The Mission anticipates that the deliverable for this evaluation will focus analysis of PACE activities based on the core questions highlighted below. It is anticipated that the report will include lessons learned, best practices, challenges, opportunities, effective activities that deserve to be scaled up or repeated in any new interventions proposed to support civil society, as well as activities and approaches that should no longer be supported because of poor performance or impact. Any recommendations for future designs should include a sustainability analysis.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Following a critical review of the evaluation questions during the initial briefing and in subsequent interviews with USAID/Lebanon, the evaluation questions to be answered are:

<p>Final Evaluation Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Did PACE strengthen civil society capacity to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy and participation that contributes to a cohesive national identity?2. Did PACE opinion polling and technical assistance improve the ability of Lebanese civil society organizations to develop policy alternatives based on citizen concerns?3. Have civil society organizations supported by PACE used media more effectively to publicize citizen concerns and policy alternatives?4. Have civic actors been strengthened to address or advocate citizen concerns thanks to support from PACE?5. What lessons can be learned from the experience of the project?6. Taking into consideration the effectiveness of PACE, should USAID continue funding programs that aim to strengthen Lebanese civil society? Which type of programs would prove to be most beneficial? <p>Cross-cutting issues to address in all questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustainability• Gender

PROJECT BACKGROUND

PACE is an \$8.3 million, three-year activity funded by USAID/Lebanon and implemented by Management Systems International (MSI) in collaboration with the International Research and Exchange Board (IREX), under the oversight of Counterpart International. PACE is a Leader With Associates (LWA) award under the Global Civil Society Strengthening (GCSS) LWA held by Counterpart International. Counterpart is responsible for managing the two subcontractors, MSI and IREX, and for providing oversight in ensuring that all deliverables are submitted on time. Counterpart does not play a role in implementing the project. The award number is AID-268-LA-11-00001. The period of performance is from October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2014.

The LWA involves the issuance of an award that covers a specified worldwide activity. The Leader Award includes language that allows a mission or other office to award a separate grant to the Leader Award recipient without additional competition and which supports a distinct local or regional activity that fits within the terms and scope of the Leader Award. This is called an Associate Award. When a Leader Award recipient works with a consortium or sub-recipients, any Associate Awards under the Leader Award must be issued to the Leader Award recipient, not to any of the consortium or sub-recipient members.

PACE aimed to “strengthen civil society’s ability to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy and participation that contributes to a cohesive national identity while preserving Lebanon’s social and political pluralism.” To that end, PACE focused on three mutually reinforcing activities:

- Aggregate and analyze public opinion to develop policy alternatives that respond to citizen concerns at the local, regional, and national levels;
- Support media marketing, reporting, discussion, and analysis of policy alternatives based on citizen concerns; and
- Increase civic advocacy, activism, and participation through sub-grants that respond to citizen concerns.

PACE worked across Lebanon to reach broad constituencies, particularly youth, women, and vulnerable groups, through partnerships with civil society organizations (CSOs) committed to non-confessional and non-partisan approaches to civic engagement.

PACE built on prior USAID investments in the civil society sector, particularly the Transparency and Accountability Grants (TAG) and the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) Lebanon Civic Support Initiative. Drawing on successes and lessons learned from these projects, PACE sought to expand the breadth and depth of USAID partnerships with civil society organizations that have the potential to act as change agents in Lebanon’s complex and divided society.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

In the first and second years of implementation, PACE complemented, and operated concurrently with, OTI’s Lebanon Civic Support Initiative. As such, PACE collaborated with OTI to ensure synergy. The OTI program provided 43 grants over three years to civil society organizations. These grants were designed to build the capacity of civil society organizations to advocate on local, regional, and national issues. PACE worked with four partners who previously received OTI grants. In addition, during the PACE program, OTI subsequently provided funding to several PACE partners located in northern

Lebanon, where OTI currently focuses its efforts. The selection of civil society actors was critical to the success of PACE. Therefore, the program prioritized partnerships with non-confessional, non-partisan, and non-elite based organizations throughout Lebanon and individuals committed to challenging the confessional status quo.

PROJECT INTENDED RESULTS

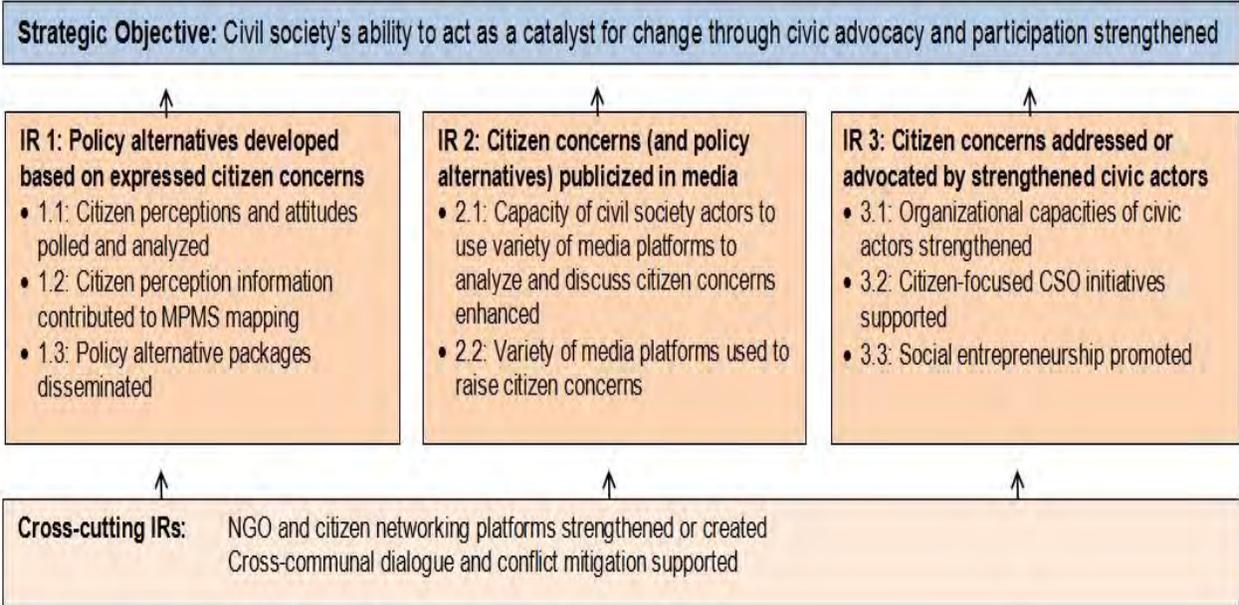
PACE contributed to the U.S. Foreign Assistance Framework objective of Governing Justly and Democratically. PACE aimed to strengthen civil society capacity to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy and participation that contributes to a cohesive national identity. To that end, PACE focused on three mutually reinforcing objectives:

1. Policy alternatives developed based on expressed citizen concerns;
2. Citizen concerns (and policy alternatives) publicized in media; and
3. Citizen concerns addressed or advocated by strengthened civic actors.

RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The following Results Framework (RF) draws causal links between PACE activities and its desired impact.

Project will contribute to a cohesive national identity while preserving Lebanon's social and political pluralism



DEVELOPMENT HYPOTHESIS

PACE's theory of change rests on the following hypothesis: By building the capacity of civic actors to aggregate, articulate, advocate and address citizen concerns across sectarian divides, PACE will empower civil society to effect positive change that contributes to forging a unified national identity.

CRITICAL ASSUMPTIONS

- Various Lebanese NGOs operate on a non-partisan, non-confessional basis and are committed to social change. With targeted support and resources, these actors can be mobilized to act as the voice of citizens, particularly youth, women, and vulnerable groups, who are left out of public discourse at the level of the political elites.
- Many of the priority concerns on the minds of Lebanese citizens cut across confessional lines; broadly publicizing those concerns will underscore the shared problems and “connector” issues affecting Lebanese of various backgrounds, effectively acting as a counterweight to the “divider” issues that perpetuate sectarian tensions.
- Demonstrating the tangible benefits of civic engagement in addressing shared concerns will promote the replication of participatory processes that engage broad constituencies based on a shared citizenship values rather than narrow sectarian interests.

PROJECT INFORMATION

USAID/Lebanon and PACE provided the evaluation team with the following information:

- Cooperative Agreement Scope of Work
- Approved Work Plans (Y1,Y2)
- Results Framework and M&E Plans
- Project Quarterly Reports
- Data Quality Assessments of selected indicators
- Project Site Visit Reports
- PACE Survey of Lebanese Citizen’s Priority Concerns and Attitudes towards Civic Engagement.

EVALUATION METHODS & LIMITATIONS

The Social Impact team's evaluation design incorporated a variety of targeted methods to address the evaluation questions by eliciting rich information and triangulating emerging trends and themes. Methods included:

1. Review of key documents. These are listed in Annex IV: Sources of Information
2. Meeting with USAID Lebanon Mission staff and MEPI staff.
3. Interviews with MSI headquarters and PACE program staff. Two evaluation team members collaborated in these interviews and compared notes. Interviews were conducted in English.
4. Semi-structured interviews with PACE grantees. At least two of Social Impact's evaluators collaborated in these interviews. Nearly all interviews were conducted in English, with a few grantees interviewed in a mix of English and Arabic, and one evaluator providing interpretation where necessary.

PACE awarded sub-grants to 42 organizations. Working in cooperation with PACE staff, evaluators requested meetings with representatives of all 42 organizations. Evaluators ultimately met with 37 representatives from 28 grantees (67 percent). Sixteen representatives were men and 21 women. One meeting with three CSOs was canceled due to security concerns, and one meeting with another grantee was canceled due to illness. Representatives of the other 10 grantees either declined or did not respond to the request to meet with evaluators. The breakdown by sub-award category is as follows:

- Media/civic engagement: 15 of 23
- Social entrepreneurs: 10 of 15
- Policy development/capacity building: 3 of 4 (one social enterprise grantee that provided capacity building for social entrepreneurs is counted in this category)

Where relevant, interview findings were compared with corresponding documents detailing PACE grants performance. An evaluation matrix is included as Annex VI.

The evaluation was carried out in the United States during the period August 27-31, 2014, and in Lebanon from September 2-19, 2014. The bulk of the interviews proceeded as planned. While security conditions impeded a few aspects of the planned work, the evaluation team concluded that the diversity and coverage of key informants was both sufficient and robust enough to allow for compiling findings and formulating recommendations.

Limitations were caused by security incidents on two days during the evaluation timeframe. Scheduled interviews with grantees in Akkar were relocated to Batroun, and interviews with three grantees in Sidon had to be canceled due to security concerns for both the evaluation team and the respondents.

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

FINDINGS

Question 1: Did PACE strengthen civil society capacity to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy and participation that contributes to a cohesive national identity?

PACE did strengthen civil society capacity to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy and participation that contributes to a cohesive national identity, which was the overarching goal of the project. The program's initial work on policy alternatives provided civil society organization's with fact-based information on which to base its campaigns, and media training enabled organizations to publicize their causes to the broader populace. This finding is based on a review of program data and reports, interviews with implementer staff, and interviews with two-thirds (28 of 42) of grantees.

The 2011 program description stated that the objective of PACE was "to strengthen civil society's ability to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy, activism, and participation." The term "catalyst for change" was not defined in that document. For purposes of this evaluation, the dictionary definition of "a thing that precipitates an event" was used. Evaluators found that a three-year timeframe was too short in many cases for change to be completed; therefore, evidence of civil society progress toward change was considered. PACE prioritized engagement with "organizations and individuals committed to challenging the confessional status quo"; in evaluating this question, the Social Impact team considered evidence that a PACE partner advocated or participated in events promoting social cohesion and national identity, finding this to be a change from the "confessional status quo."

PACE conducted 183 trainings and held 246 events in three years of operation. The project awarded 43 grants to 42 organizations totaling \$3.4 million. Most of these are legally registered as associations, though some training companies and social enterprises are registered as businesses. In addition, seven social enterprises had not registered as legal entities; PACE issued grants to individual entrepreneurs in these cases. (Lebanese law does not recognize social enterprises as a separate category.) It should be noted that these accomplishments occurred at a time that the Syrian civil war and the associated refugee crisis were putting tremendous stress on Lebanese national security and society, and a domestic political impasse left the country without a president or functioning parliament. Ultimately, PACE contributed toward the mission's CDCS results framework, by strengthening civil society's ability to contribute effectively to participatory and democratic governance and ensuring that citizens' concerns are increasingly addressed through CSO initiatives.

Program structure

PACE was implemented through a cooperative agreement with Counterpart International, which subcontracted with Management Systems International (MSI) to implement the bulk of the program in Lebanon, with a separate subcontract with IREX to implement the media elements. This arrangement enabled the mission to take advantage of an existing contracting mechanism with Counterpart while utilizing the in-country capability that MSI already had in place. While the arrangement was convenient for the mission, and Counterpart and MSI praised each other's performance (as well as IREX), both noted that it was suboptimal. Despite its experience in working with civil society, Counterpart had little engagement with the program other than reporting. For its part, MSI needed to go through an extra

layer of reporting bureaucracy at Counterpart. “It was inefficient and wasteful,” one MSI headquarters staffer stated. He stated that the need for two headquarters to coordinate communication with the mission resulted in MSI being less responsive to mission requests and concerns. An MSI colleague noted that it was unusual for an LWA subcontractor to serve as the lead implementer for a project, rather than in a subordinate implementation role to that of the prime contractor.

Social cohesion and national identity

Insofar as the evaluation team could determine, the civil society partners of PACE are non-sectarian organizations, and their issues cut across confessional and partisan lines. Evaluators found examples of PACE grantees actively campaigning for national cohesion in the face of external pressures that threaten to exacerbate the fault lines of Lebanese society, most notably in Tripoli and elsewhere in northern Lebanon, which have been flashpoints for sectarian violence during the Syrian crisis. PACE worked not only in Beirut, but also in regions to the north and south and in the Beqaa Valley, in areas that have seen increased insecurity and tensions. Numerous grantees cite “social cohesion” as a key element of their organizations’ activities.

Evaluators found examples of PACE partners advocating for change on non-sectarian issues or acting to promote social cohesion and a Lebanese national identity:

- The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies drafted a bill on decentralization at the request of then-President Michel Sleiman, who introduced it to parliament in April 2014. The bill is in committee; parliament is not conducting legislative business due to a political impasse over the presidential election. LCPS officials credited PACE with helping them develop and implement a social media strategy to promote the bill and for promoting contacts with CSOs that support decentralization in order to build an advocacy coalition.
- The Maharat Foundation has submitted a proposed revision of the media law; likewise, this proposal is currently in a parliamentary committee. In developing their advocacy on this issue, Maharat staff used information in a PACE policy brief on free expression and the media and was brought together by PACE with fellow grantees MARCH and the Lebanese Center for Civic Education, enabling Maharat and MARCH to combine their separate draft bills into a single text.
- Nahnoo has advocated for the reopening of Horsh Beirut, the city’s largest public park, which has been closed since 1992. According to Nahnoo, the city has reported that it is conducting a tender for a park operator and expects to have the park reopened by the end of 2014. Nahnoo has also succeeded in raising public awareness of restricted access to public beaches through a media campaign launched following PACE media training. Nahnoo staff credited PACE with enabling them to craft their message to garner media coverage and with helping them establish media contacts, as well as providing organizational support that led them to expand their activities to Tyre and Baalbek and secure other grants.
- Akkar Network for Development (AND) advocated successfully for the implementation of a 2003 law that established a governorate in Akkar, the northernmost part of Lebanon. AND utilized the PACE policy brief on public services in this effort, as well as the LCPS brief on decentralization.
- Akkarouna advocated for the opening of a motor vehicle registration station in Akkar, also using the public services policy brief as a basis for its advocacy.
- Lebanese Center for Active Citizenship (LCAC) in April 2013 joined a coalition of 60 CSOs in Tripoli to plan peacebuilding activities in the wake of inter-communal violence related to the Syrian civil war. LCAC and its partners organized a press conference, made television appearances, and held a candlelight vigil and a peace march that attracted 3,000 marchers, garnering national television and press coverage (see cover photograph). LCAC leadership

credited “very effective” PACE media training with helping improve its social media outreach and increasing its ability to gain exposure in the mainstream media.

- Citizen Activism (CitiAct), based in the southern suburbs of Beirut, organized a series of community initiatives to promote peace. CitiAct in April 2013 brought together 15 CSOs from across the country to form a human peace chain to commemorate the start of the Lebanese civil war and call for “a national coalition against civil strife,” an event that drew national and international television and press coverage. CitiAct received PACE media training and attracted media attention for numerous events against sectarianism.
- Youth Network for Civic Activism (YNCA) marked the 38th anniversary of the Lebanese civil war by bringing together youth from diverse confessional backgrounds and organizing “checkpoints” along a main highway in southern Lebanon at which they distributed national flags. Using a PACE grant, YNCA trained 85 youth activists and attracted television, radio and print coverage of its activities, which it coordinated with 10 other NGOs.
- PACE quarterly reports list additional instances where CSOs brought together youth in municipalities, particularly in northern Lebanon and the Beqaa Valley, to successfully advocate for improved municipal services in their communities. In particular, PACE partners in northern Lebanon credited the project and its policy briefs with bringing their organizations together to advocate on local needs. “PACE was the hub,” one participant said. “The nature of the issues pushed us toward cooperation,” another added.

A PACE staffer noted an initiative that brought together 20 Sunni and 20 Alawite youths from Tripoli, at a time when sectarian sympathies toward parties in the Syrian civil war had led to clashes between the two communities. “We brought together youth from the conflict areas to work together to advocate for common needs,” he said.

One PACE partner in a tense area of northern Lebanon told evaluators, “The issues we are working on are cross-confessional: livelihoods, jobs, economic impact. When you find a youth a job, it eases the pressure.” PACE partners held 134 public civic engagement activities, exceeding the goal of 65.

Gender indicators

While PACE did not specifically set out to promote or strengthen the civic participation of women, the program did well in several gender indicators. Of the 3,808 attendees at training, 2,042 (54 percent) were women. Numerous organizations assisted by PACE are dedicated to increasing women’s access to productive economic resources; for example, of the 15 social enterprises supported by PACE, eight are led by women, and 74 of the 102 people trained by the Nabad incubator were women (73 percent). Of the 42 PACE grantees, 18 were led by women (43 percent).

As part of its gender strategy, PACE in January 2014 produced a gender analysis paper (Annex IX). Evaluators found that PACE carried out key aspects of this strategy, including:

- Emphasis on an inclusive approach to program and grants implementation, including evaluation criteria stressing diversity and gender considerations in all solicitations.
- Partnerships with organizations that target women, youth, and vulnerable groups as beneficiaries, and that adopt a non-partisan, non-confessional approach to civic engagement.
- Priority themes based on a nationwide poll that had 50 percent representation of women, leading to allocation of program resources in specific thematic areas shaped by the viewpoints of both women and men.

- Emphasis on the importance of women’s participation in grantee activities, events, and training workshop. PACE reviewed sex-disaggregated data and initiates discussions with partners whenever these reviews reveal low levels of female participation in order to determine the possible reasons and identify remedial actions or solutions. For example, past remedial actions have included modifying the dates and venues of activities to facilitate female participation in light of space and time constraints facing women.
- When solicitations targeted sectors where women are at a strong disadvantage, applicants were encouraged to adopt specific measures to ensure program benefits extend to women. For example, a solicitation aimed at supporting the establishment of a Social Entrepreneurship Incubator required applicants to “identify ways to engage women-run social enterprises and/or to target social enterprises whose end-beneficiaries are women.” In the same vein, the evaluation criteria used for awarding social entrepreneurship start-up grants cited “diversity considerations, including a plan for ensuring benefits extend to both men and women and to vulnerable groups.”

Among the policy recommendations included in the briefs commissioned by PACE were several to advance the legal rights and status of women, including legalization of civil marriage, passage of a secular civil status law that permits independence from religious strictures, and electoral reform with a women’s quota in parliament.

PACE did not systematically collect evidence on whether the project made a difference in status and power relationships between men and women, but did provide evaluators with anecdotal evidence. For example, several social enterprises primarily benefitted disadvantaged women through creating job and income-generation opportunities for them. PACE staff reported that feedback from these beneficiaries indicated that this kind of support has empowered them to become more productive and financially independent, reducing their reliance on male kin.

Question 2: Did PACE opinion polling and technical assistance improve the ability of Lebanese civil society organizations to develop policy alternatives based on citizen concerns?

PACE opinion polling helped PACE staff to identify the major concerns of Lebanese citizens, and PACE technical assistance improved the ability of a select few civil society organizations to develop policy alternatives based on those identified citizen concerns. The resultant policy briefs were used by other civil society organizations to buttress their advocacy campaigns, which also helped them to understand the importance of policy analysis in advocacy.

Opinion polling

The initial opinion poll commissioned by PACE in 2012 was used to enable PACE staff to identify the main concerns of Lebanese citizens and directly led PACE to commission policy briefs on six issues:

1. Corruption in Public Institutions
2. Media in Lebanon
3. Quality of Public Services
4. The Sectarian Political System
5. Cost of Living
6. Youth Employment

It should be noted that these were not the top six priorities identified in the poll (though all were among the top identified, and a couple of these topics incorporated general economic concerns). After reviewing the poll results, PACE staff eliminated issues that they determined were beyond the capacity of civil society to address, such as the problems with electricity generation and distribution in the national grid, which was the top community concern. It is not clear that this issue was unsuitable for civil society; for example, it might have been possible to examine options such as having municipalities contract with private generator operators to provide electricity. Similarly, water was identified as a top-five concern at the community level, but was not chosen by PACE. At the national level, security was a top-five concern that was not addressed by PACE, which judged it outside of CSO competency. The poll found that the top concerns were the same across confessional and regional lines, though the intensity of concern about some given issues did vary by region and sect.

The decision not to address certain issues was arbitrary and made by senior PACE staff after discussion with CSOs regarding issues that those CSOs believed they had the capacity to influence. A reading of PACE's own lessons learned (Annex VII) finds that PACE managers discounted the value of polling data and argued for having CSOs identify their own priorities. PACE did not examine how civil society movements elsewhere addressed similar issues in these sectors nor seek ideas as to how these issues might be addressed in a Lebanese context.

The poll also surveyed Lebanese citizens on their news sources and found that television was by far the most popular news source in the country. This led PACE to focus media outreach on television outlets.

PACE commissioned follow-up polls in 2013 and 2014 to track citizen views toward civil society and civic involvement. The final survey found a decrease in the number of Lebanese who feel that CSOs represent their interests, from 35 percent in 2012 to 29 percent in 2013 to 27 percent in 2014, and in Lebanese who feel they can make a difference in their community, from 47 percent of the general population in 2012 to 39 percent in 2013 to 43 percent in the 2014 survey. The survey asked the same questions of 190 beneficiaries of PACE, including some who had been trained by PACE grantees.

The final two polls did not survey attitudes on the main concerns of Lebanese citizens or on their views toward the issues identified in the 2012 survey. Such questions could have enabled PACE to track whether their main concerns changed over time or were being addressed.

Policy briefs

After determining the issues to address, PACE commissioned Beyond Reform and Development (BRD) to produce briefs on the first four issues and the Youth Economic Forum (YEF) to write the final two briefs. YEF also produced advocacy videos based on all six briefs. In addition to producing the briefs, BRD and YEF trained recipient organizations on policy development and advocacy.

The evaluation team, including a long-time committee professional staff member in the U.S. House of Representatives, found the briefs to be well-researched, well-written, and well-presented. They are concise and accessible to civil society organizations and policymakers who may lack a detailed knowledge of a given issue. They effectively and succinctly identify the problems facing society, examine policy options, and provide actionable recommendations, both short-term actions where civil society might realistically achieve success and longer-term goals that will require greater political engagement and tenacity.

PACE provided a grant to enable the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (LCPS), an established think-tank, to develop policy resources on the decentralization issue, including a draft bill, focus group discussions with key stakeholders, and media outreach. PACE also provided social media training to LCPS and facilitated contacts between LCPS and advocacy organizations.

An official from one organization that worked on the briefs noted that they facilitated a transfer of knowledge on key issues from the research organizations to the advocacy organizations. She added that they promoted cooperation between CSOs by creating “an umbrella under which different organizations could work together” on an issue of common concern and provided “tools to link CSO programs to reality.”

PACE reported that 41 CSOs in Lebanon have used the briefs in their activities and campaigns, exceeding PACE’s target of 40. Of the 19 organizations that received PACE civic engagement grants, evaluators met with 15. Of these, seven organizations noted receiving the briefs, six found them useful, and five used them in advocacy efforts. Overall, 24 PACE partners used the policy briefs by adopting their recommendations or disseminating the briefs; seven additional CSOs used the briefs to shape PACE grant applications; and 10 other CSOs trained by BRD and KDC reported using the briefs in their work.

PACE reported that in general, the CSOs used the briefs to help them frame an advocacy issue, define key messages, and conduct stakeholder analysis. Some also used the briefs as a model for conducting their own, project-specific policy development work. Others used the briefs to apply for follow-on funding, using research and statistics contained in briefs.

Of the six briefs produced, each was used by the following number of CSOs, with some CSOs reporting use of more than one brief:

- Quality of public services, 22
- Freedom of expression, 8
- Corruption, 4
- Youth employment, 4

- Confessionalism, 3
- Cost of living, 2

For example, the Akkar Network for Development (AND) used the decentralization and public services briefs to advocate successfully for the implementation of a 2003 law that established a governorate in Akkar, the northernmost part of Lebanon. Likewise, the Akkarouna organization in northern Lebanon used policy briefs on decentralization, public services, and youth employment to advocate for the opening of a motor vehicle registration station in Akkar. The organization noted that this was not only an issue of providing a public service in the governorate, but also would help increase youth employment. Akkarouna was assisted in this task by PACE technical assistance, which helped the organization focus its efforts on youth and women empowerment.

A Member of Parliament who spoke at the PACE close-out event told an evaluator that policy expertise was the most valuable assistance that civil society could provide to parliament. He advised that donor money spent on developing expertise on issues of concern would be the most helpful contribution to enable civil society to effectively influence the policy-making process. The MP noted that Lebanese MPs are accessible and that both parties and MPs are open to persuasion on many issues. He suggested that production of handbooks on the legislative process in Lebanon and on how to lobby parliament could increase the effectiveness of civil society in its interactions with parliament.

One PACE partner that was active on the policy-development side noted that advocacy can be more effective when associations representing large numbers of people make known their support. In this regard, he suggested that future programming might seek to engage Lebanese labor unions, which represent hundreds of thousands of workers from across all regions and confessions. “We need to create pressure,” he said. “Labor unions scare the political elites. They transcend sects, while the elites try to build walls between sects.” PACE staff noted that it was difficult to find advocacy organizations with expertise on economic issues, particularly youth employment. Unions may be in a position to cooperate with youth-centered advocacy organizations to urge action on economic issues addressed in the issue briefs, such as youth employment.

Question 3: Have civil society organizations supported by PACE used media more effectively to publicize citizen concerns and policy alternatives?

CSOs supported by PACE have used media more effectively to publicize citizen concerns and policy alternatives. Many of the organizations that received PACE media training can point to specific instances where that training led directly to more effective media outreach and coverage. In addition, PACE support to new media organizations shows potential for using technology to create alternative news sources. In all, 39 of 42 grantees (93 percent) expanded their use of media platforms, exceeding the target of 80 percent.

Grantees expanded their use of media platforms in several ways:

- Eighteen grantees created new Facebook pages or reactivated dormant pages, while 15 other grantees increased the number of “likes” on Facebook, in some cases several hundredfold;
- Thirteen grantees garnered coverage of their activities in mainstream news media;
- Eight grantees produced periodical newsletters or magazines;
- Five grantees produced videos or television programs that aired on national television stations.

Media training

PACE media training was one of the most successful aspects of the program. Evaluators met with 20 organizations that had undergone media training or received specific technical assistance or support. All 20 of these organizations found the training useful, all 20 said they used the training in their advocacy or social entrepreneurship work, and all 20 provided specific examples of how the training helped them increase their ability to communicate their message through mainstream media, new media, or social media. Participants also credited PACE with helping them establish media contacts that enabled them to get their message out. “We are becoming the reference for media on public space issues,” a Nahnoo staffer said. “They call us for an interview because they know us from previous campaigns.”

Particularly useful for grantees was training on how to make their issue attractive to the media, how to speak and comport themselves on camera, and how to frame their issue. Grantees who garnered increased coverage of their issues were more likely to note that they used these aspects of training. One trainer was a well-known evening talk-show host who invited numerous PACE grantees to appear on her program. One criticism of PACE media training was that organizations would sometimes send someone other than their media staffer to an activity, said an official of one training organization. Only three grantees failed to report increased use of media platforms; two were social enterprises that ended their participation in PACE early, the third was an 8-year-old social enterprise that reported little benefit from PACE training across-the-board.

PACE grantees across the board increased their social media usage. For example, the long-established LCPS began live tweeting from its events for the first time. Some organizations have set targets for the frequency of their Facebook postings. An organization in the Beqaa Valley said that social media use has made people in villages aware of his group’s work; however, activists in northern Lebanon note that SMS text messages remain the most effective form of outreach. One activist stated that social media usage is contributing to social cohesion, as youth across Lebanon realize that they have similar goals, challenges, and Facebook friends. A CSO increased its Facebook followers from 17 to 4,000 by implementing PACE social media training; another created a Facebook page and developed a mobile application that allows users to report problems in municipal services directly to the local government.

A media representative noted that the mainstream media are now following civil society activities more closely because they have started following social media. “Civil society is much more heard than before because the media search social media for new stories,” she said. A counterpart added, “A media trend is greater concern about social problems.”

Media grants

PACE provided grants to help establish a news website for an existing print outlet and a freestanding news site. Maharat reported 40,000 total users of its new platform in its first six months of operation. (For comparison, IREX reports that “media watchers” in Lebanon estimate the daily circulation of the largest national newspaper is “no higher than 10,000.”) Nahar Ashabab reports 500,000 hits on its website each month; the site was launched in December 2012. (For comparison, the Washington Post reports 18.8 million visitors to its website each month; the U.S. population is roughly 70 times that of Lebanon, based on World Bank estimates.) PACE also funded the League of Independent Activists (IndyACT), which developed a civil society news application for mobile devices, which enables CSOs to upload news of their activities. The app has been downloaded by 450 users since October 2013, and the IndyACT website, which features news from the app, has attracted 3,500 visitors. In all, PACE assisted 11 institutions that serve to strengthening independent media or journalists, one short of its target of 12.

PACE also partnered with two established media organizations – MTV and Al Jadeed TV – in an effort to raise awareness of issues. The PACE grant to Al Jadeed funded 18 episodes of a program dedicated to exposing various instances of corruption through investigative reporting, while the grant to MTV (not related to the American music television network) funded live television debates and was to form local advocacy teams to follow up on issues. The Al Jadeed project did achieve sustainability, as the network commissioned additional episodes at its own expense and ultimately renewed the show for a second season. The MTV grant, however, did not live up to expectations. The program had difficulty finding a timeslot on the network’s primetime schedule and drew low ratings, leading to its cancellation. The follow-up teams were not formed. PACE itself found that relationships with media organizations should be limited to programming and advocacy work funded through CSOs.

As part of its PACE subcontract with Counterpart International, IREX conducted an update of its Media Sustainability Index for Lebanon. The survey found that “Lebanon’s media scene has deteriorated consistently to a point where it is worse off than in 2005,” a trend attributable to a lack of access to information, political control of media outlets and security threats to journalists. The survey’s panel of experts found that “media in Lebanon cannot be considered entirely trustworthy” and often inflame sectarian tensions, so citizens must consult multiple outlets in order to get all sides of a story. The IREX findings indicate a need for an access to information law, as advocated by the Lebanese Transparency Association; media law reform, as advocated by the Lebanese Center for Civic Education; and establishment of independent media outlets, like the Maharat News portal.

Question 4: Have civic actors been strengthened to address or advocate citizen concerns thanks to support from PACE?

Civic actors have been strengthened to address or advocate citizen concerns thanks to support from PACE. Nineteen PACE partners engaged in advocacy interventions; most of the 15 interviewed by the evaluation team could point to specific areas in which PACE assistance strengthened their organization.

PACE selected its advocacy grantees by first developing an inventory of more than 250 advocacy and service delivery CSOs, with a focus on non-partisan, non-confessional organizations around the country. The project then categorized the CSOs based on the final selection of priority themes, along with their geographic areas of operation to facilitate planning, networking, and outreach. The aim was to support grant activities within certain geographic clusters, ensuring cross-confessional reach across governorates.

Technical assistance

PACE strengthened the overall capacity of civil society organizations through its training and technical assistance, particularly in improving the organizational structure of many organizations and their financial management. In this regard, PACE made a significant contribution to the organizational and financial sustainability of the 19 Lebanese CSOs that received civic engagement grants, particularly newer organizations that had not previously developed administrative policies and practices. Of the 15 advocacy organizations interviewed, 11 said they received training or technical assistance on improving their organization. All 11 found that training useful, and nine of those said they had implemented management or financial practices recommended by PACE. The other two were more established organizations that planned to make recommendations to their boards to implement improvements suggested by PACE.

For example, one grantee noted that PACE suggested changes in his CSO’s accounting and human resources systems that have enabled the organization to attract increased funding from international

donors and to hire more qualified staff more quickly while shortening its training cycle for advocates. Other organizations echoed that they were better able to obtain other grants because of improved financial accountability. Another noted that PACE helped her organization expand beyond Beirut. “We had a strong basis in advocacy. PACE helped us become more national and push for media exposure,” she said. Others cited training in strategic planning as particularly useful.

PACE Learning Center

The key training initiative was the PACE Learning Center (PLC), operated by two Lebanese organizations, Knowledge Development Corp. (KDC) and Soins Infirmiers et Développement Commaunitaire (SIDC). The managing director of KDC, a for-profit capacity development company, called PACE a “pioneering project” for its comprehensive approach to institutional development. He noted that PACE contributed to the sustainability of capacity building in Lebanon by enabling KDC to develop this approach, including relationships with trainers and coaches. A PACE official noted that many CSOs criticize the “cookie-cutter” approach of training seminars offered by other projects, so PACE tried to customize training for each organization with individual coaching and on-site support.

A 2011 Lebanon Democracy and Governance Assessment, commissioned by the mission and conducted by MSI, called for “tailored, participatory capacity-building approaches, including mentoring and coaching,” which the report called a “help desk” approach. Consequently, PACE sought “to fill gaps and address weaknesses in existing training programs targeting CSOs.” The PACE Learning Center targeted organizations that had common needs.

The program began with a self-assessment of the organization’s current state through the Capacity Assessment Tool (CAT), which led to an institutional improvement plan by which the organization could set its priorities and request training and coaching to address those shortcomings. In addition to generic training, the PLC created demand-driven training to respond to grantee requests (such as fundraising or monitoring and evaluation) and a training-of-trainers program to ensure sustainability of the knowledge imparted to an organization. Topics of the nine generic training workshops included advocacy, CSO internal governance, strategic planning, action planning, financial management, and networking/coalition building. Topics for the five demand-driven training events included human resources management, fundraising, monitoring and evaluation, and cost management and pricing. PLC also produced three manuals on fundraising, legal requirement, and administration so that knowledge could be sustained in the organizations and organized two knowledge-sharing workshops attended by 14 CSOs.

Numerous grantees told evaluators that CAT was one of the most useful aspects of their work with PACE. The initial CAT assessment induced the staff of each CSO to examine its own internal strengths and weaknesses and to consider aspects of its structure that may not have been previously explored. The CAT assessment provided a baseline from which technical assistance could be tailored for each organization and from which improvement could be measured. A second administration of the CAT found 81 percent of organizations reported improvement in their internal capacity, exceeding the target of 75 percent. PACE staff and PLC implementers found that coaching, in which a trainer would go to a CSO’s offices and conduct training and consultations with that organization, was the most successful aspect of the program. Interviews with grantees confirmed this finding.

However, evaluators found several examples of grantees who did not benefit from the PACE learning center. First, more established grantees were more likely to say that they did not learn anything new from the PACE training. Similarly, several grantees obtained similar training from other CSO support programs and could not identify what they learned from which program; among those other, similar training programs were the CSOs Institutional Strengthening Program, funded by MEPI and implemented

by Catholic Relief Services and Université Saint-Joseph, and Expand Your Horizons, funded by USAID and implemented by World Learning and KDC. (See Annex VIII.)

These experiences reinforced the finding of the 2011 MSI assessment and a subsequent PACE assessment that there is “training fatigue” among Lebanese CSOs. International assistance to Lebanese CSOs has been longstanding, and many organizations and individuals have already received training through other programs. A KDC official noted that this was particularly true in Tripoli, and most of the organizations interviewed in the north of the country reported they chose not to participate in PLC activities, even those held in Tripoli before the security situation deteriorated and made further training infeasible.

Another shortcoming of the PACE Learning Center was the timing of the initiative, which came at the end of the project. Initially scheduled to last 16 months, the center ended up operating for only 11 months. KDC and SIDC officials, as well as many of the organizations that received training, noted that the late inauguration and the short duration of the center resulted in its falling short of its potential. “You can’t bunch training,” a KDC official said. “People can’t commit that much time.” He noted that PLC failed to reach its target for training exercises because it ran out of time and elected to add coaching sessions rather than hold additional seminars. Twice, KDC held three consecutive two-day trainings in a six-day period. According to a PLC report, “Several CSOs completed their projects prior to PLC, so the capacity development was perceived as a burden and not as a support.”

The training-of-trainers program also fell short of its potential as a sustainability initiative, with only four participants completing the program of 18 who enrolled. KDC attributed this to the tight program timeframe, which resulted in the final session taking place in July, during vacation season.

A senior PACE official stated that the overall mission of PACE was too broad. “I think our mandate was too much,” she said. “We did capacity building, media, social entrepreneurship. I think the design was not well-integrated. I’d focus exclusively on coaching. Someone should map out all of the training available.”

Social entrepreneurship

The PACE results framework sought to promote social entrepreneurship as a sub-objective under IR3. Evaluators found that PACE did promote social entrepreneurship through its sub-grant program, training, and the Nabad incubator, implemented by local grantees BRD and Arcenciel. The incubator provided training that most social entrepreneurs found useful, PACE media training helped social enterprises gain media exposure, and several social enterprises assisted by PACE appear poised to become self-sustaining entities.

However, evaluators found that the social enterprise segment of the PACE program was not connected to the other elements and did not promote advocacy of the issues identified by opinion surveys. In initial conversations with USAID, evaluators were told that social entrepreneurship was envisioned as a way for CSOs to become financially self-sustaining by engaging in revenue-generating activities; however, the organizations that received social entrepreneurship grants and training were not the same organizations that received support in their advocacy efforts. Some partner organizations directly addressed the issues on which PACE worked, albeit on a very modest scale; for example, several organizations directly employed a handful of women or youth. Some other social enterprises were structured as businesses to complement existing NGOs.

PACE reached its target by making grants to 15 social enterprises, of which 13 are still in operation. One grant was terminated for false reporting, another faded away when the entrepreneur left for a family emergency abroad. The social enterprises were selected in a nationwide competition that received 117 applications, of which 60 were selected to attend a three-day workshop. Of those finalists, 38 submitted applications for the 15 grants, each of which was between \$11,000 and \$15,000.

Evaluators met with representatives of 10 organizations, in most cases with a founder. All 10 social entrepreneurs found PACE training useful, implemented it into their organizations, and provided specific examples, usually pertaining to financial management, business plans, and social media usage.

The Nabad incubator, a training facility implemented by BRD and Arcenciel, received mixed reviews. Most social entrepreneurs found the training useful, though a few were critical of some aspects. A significant problem resulted from the relationship between Arcenciel and its subgrantee, BRD, which was strained. Officials of both organizations attributed this to a poor delineation of responsibilities, which sometime left both unclear on their roles. PACE officials also noted that experienced Arcenciel staff departed just prior to the incubator opening, resulting in inexperienced staff taking over. Most participants said this did not affect the training, though several said that training seemed disconnected due to a lack of cohesion in Nabad operations.

A mentorship program under Nabad received generally positive views, though a couple of grantees found their mentors to be uninterested in working with them. Some credited their mentors with providing know-how and savvy without which their organization could not have overcome daunting startup challenges. Evaluators could find no common factors linking which mentors were more engaged versus less engaged.

The social enterprises supported by PACE were an eclectic mix of service providers and startup businesses. At least three organizations train women to be cooks for catering operations, three recycle refuse items into consumer products, and a couple seek to match job-seeking youths with jobs or mentors. Lebanese law has no provision for social enterprises, so some of the entities have registered as businesses and others are registered NGOs.

Several entities are indistinguishable from small businesses that might be assisted through micro-enterprise or other economic development programs. Two enterprises – Gueco, which makes designer bags from discarded rubber inner tubes, and Chreek, which makes home furnishings from waste products – have been given free retail space in a prime downtown shopping area to sell their products. Similarly, Triple E, which designs and manufactures small wastewater treatment facilities for apartment complexes and villages, has begun to sell its products to private buyers. These organizations benefitted from being linked to business mentors by PACE and receiving media training and exposure that enabled them to promote their products. While these small businesses appear on their way to profitability, it is not clear that a civil society project was the right vehicle to support these entities.

Several other enterprises undertook the task of training unemployed women, many of whom may not be able to work outside their homes for cultural reasons, in commercial cooking or sewing techniques, for employment with the organization or with outside employers. Some seek to establish a commercial component that can finance further training for additional women. While this model shows potential for sustainability of these training programs, it is disconnected from the advocacy objective of PACE.

USAID/Lebanon also funds a social enterprise training program at Hagazian University in Lebanon, which could prove a more suitable avenue for such support should the mission deem it worthwhile.

One organization that could aid the sustainability of other civil society organizations is Help for Leb, which is developing a crowd-funding website that will enable donors to contribute to various organizations of their choosing. A key element of sustainability for CSOs is securing indigenous sources of funding, rather than continuing dependence on foreign donors. The Help for Leb website could provide a platform for CSOs to draw on the Lebanese people and the Lebanese diaspora to fund initiatives that can garner broad public support.

CONCLUSIONS

What made PACE stand out from other USG projects over the past dozen years were its support of policy analysis and alternatives and its media training. These are the two areas that hold the greatest promise for future programming and that fill a gap that is not addressed elsewhere in civil society programs. PACE technical assistance and coaching did provide needed support to certain CSOs, but such assistance, while valuable, is widely found among other USG and international donor projects.

The decision to have PACE address issues identified through a national poll was correct. While any poll is a snapshot in time of citizen attitudes, a national poll does provide a view across society. An alternative might have been to poll civil society organizations about what they viewed as the top concerns of society, but this would have run the risk of merely reinforcing the views already held by those organizations and simply sending cash to support the work already being undertaken on those issues. A national poll enabled the identification of new issues that may not have been addressed previously by civil society and indicated possible areas in which civil society could develop new expertise in order to advocate effectively on issues that citizens identified as their top concerns. Future civil society programming might aim to develop expertise on issues such as electricity, water and security that were not addressed by PACE and to produce policy analysis and alternatives that might be actionable at the national or local level.

Based on the performance of earlier USAID legislative strengthening programs in Lebanon, the mission decided not to provide support to the Lebanese National Assembly. This was a correct decision, given that the challenges confronting parliament are more political than capacity driven. However, the experience of PACE showed that changes in national legislation ultimately must go through parliament. Providing direct support to parliament is not indicated, but it is important for civil society to engage MPs and parliament committees. Policy expertise, analysis and development could be an important contribution of civil society to enable the Lebanese policy-making process to become more objective and fact-driven. Furthermore, Lebanese CSOs should learn how best to lobby the parliament, ministries and political parties to develop allies and ultimately effect change. In this regard, developing a capacity to draft bills that are technically and legally effective could help CSOs become a partner in the legislative process and to be perceived as allies rather than adversaries by MPs and government officials. LCPS officials noted that their organization has become a partner of the Ministry of Oil and Gas and the Ministry of Industry by working with them on common initiatives. “We are able to do that because we are first and foremost a research center, and we have research,” the director said.

PACE media training helped raise public awareness of the issues being advocated. Evaluators found numerous examples of PACE partners garnering media attention on their issues and making their voices heard. PACE social media training helped organizations use these outlets to directly reach users who are interested in their issues and advocacy. The development of the Maharat news portal was an innovative way to tap the potential of online news to bypass the traditional television outlets, which have high licensing and economic barriers to entry, and provide articles and videos directly to interested users. Finally, PACE partners’ advocacy for a new media law, against censorship, and for access to public information successfully merged all three pillars of PACE assistance.

There is a surplus of CSO training in Lebanon, with three other USG projects currently providing such training, as well as periodic training from other international donors. (See Annex VIII.) While numerous beneficiaries spoke of training fatigue and confessed they could not distinguish PACE training from others, it became apparent that small, focused assistance was more useful than big training seminars. The most effective PACE technical assistance was targeted based on the needs and requests of its partners, particularly its coaching programs that placed a trainer on site at a CSO. Coaching is

expensive, and providing coaching to a large number of organizations may be cost-prohibitive. It may be more effective to work with a smaller number of CSOs, providing them with tailored assistance, rather than to organize large seminars for a large number of CSOs. While it may look impressive for an implementer to report a large number of activities and a large number of participants, technical assistance should be driven by identified needs and effectiveness, rather than generating PMP data points on a quarterly M&E report.

Question 5: What lessons can be learned from the experience of the project?

PACE staff did an excellent job of compiling lessons learned from the project in five documents, one addressing each area of the program. Those papers relied on views from both the PACE program team and its partners. The PACE lessons learned papers are incorporated in this report as Annex VII. This section of the report will expand and amplify the most important PACE lessons learned, list additional lessons identified by evaluators, and provide a different viewpoint on some of PACE's lessons learned.

Keep your eyes on the prize

In designing a civil society assistance program, it is important to ensure that the elements support one another and are targeted at the overarching goal. In this regard, the social entrepreneurship segment of PACE was disconnected from the other elements of the program. Many of the social entrepreneur grantees, while promising and innovative, should have been assisted through a micro-enterprise project. The idea of improving financial sustainability of advocacy organizations is sound, but an effort to promote social entrepreneurship as a means of facilitating self-funding should have focused on the advocacy organizations engaged in other elements of PACE.

You can't hurry change

Three years was too short for a program like PACE to effect policy changes in a country like Lebanon, where the pace of change is slow and external shocks like the Syrian refugee crisis and security threat from the Islamic State can combine with a dysfunctional parliament to distract attention from the issues being advocated and delay action on them

Change requires allies

In light of the dysfunction of the Lebanese parliament and government, it is understandable that the mission would seek to catalyze change through civil society, and progress on some issues validated this approach. However, several issues like the media law, decentralization law, and access to information law will ultimately require parliamentary action. Civil society is most effective at working with parliament when it is viewed as an ally, rather than an adversary. Likewise, building networks of likeminded CSOs enables them to maximize their impact and effectiveness.

Train before, not after

If a project does decide to provide training and technical assistance, it should do so at the outset of its support to its grantees, so that they can use the training to advocate more effectively during the life of the grant. The delays in establishing the PACE learning center resulted in an 11-month training program that extended beyond the grant period in many cases, reducing the efficacy of the training as well as the incentive for grantees to participate.

Avoid duplication The record of international donor assistance programs to Lebanese civil society is long, both in their operational history and the number of different programs currently in operation. Given limited funding for new initiatives, it is important to identify existing programs, particularly those funded by the U.S. government, and to ensure that new programs do not duplicate what is already being done. Ideally, assistance to a sector should be unified; at a minimum, a new project should be able to take advantage of capacity already developed in existing projects.

Find a niche

With a multiplicity of CSO programs, it is important for a new program to find an underserved niche in order to be useful. PACE successfully did this in the policy development and media training areas.

Give the people what they want

The opinion poll that PACE commissioned at the outset provided an objective lens through which to view the key concerns of the Lebanese people. (In this regard, evaluators disagree with PACE's own lesson learned on this subject.) Selecting issues based solely on what CSOs thought important simply would have sent USAID money to organizations to do what they already planned to do. Likewise, if civil society capacity is lacking to analyze and advocate on a major societal concern, it is a strong indication of where capacity needs to be developed.

Success isn't a number

Evaluators found that the most useful technical assistance provided by PACE was one-on-one coaching sessions for individual CSOs. Coaching is expensive and reaches fewer people and organizations than seminars, but more effective. A future project might seek to engage fewer CSOs but to provide more in-depth, targeted support. The goal should be to build capacity needed to enable more effective policy analysis, recommendations, dissemination and advocacy that results in meaningful change, particularly on issues of broad public concern where civil society may lack expertise. It may be more effective to concentrate assistance on a few CSOs, rather than supporting a large number of organizations with varying capacity levels.

Think local, act local

Many successes of PACE came at the local level, particularly municipality and governorate. While some issues must be addressed at the national level, others can be addressed more effectively at the local level. Future programs should continue to include partners outside Beirut.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Question 6: Taking into consideration the effectiveness of PACE, should USAID continue funding programs that aim to strengthen Lebanese civil society? What kind of programs would prove to be most beneficial?

In light of the effectiveness of PACE and the needs of Lebanese civil society, USAID should continue funding programs that aim to strengthen Lebanese civil society. However, it is imperative that USAID rationalize and coordinate its projects so as to reduce duplication and overlap, maximize synergies and cooperation, and reduce overhead and bureaucracy. It is not clear that a stand-alone follow-on to the PACE project is indicated. In order to design the most effective programs, USAID should conduct an internal survey of its existing democracy, human rights and governance programs in Lebanon, as well as those of other USG and international donors.

A logical starting point would be to examine expansion of the BALADI CAP program, which operates through fiscal year 2017 and aims to support 50 civil society organizations. BALADI CAP is a complement to the BALADI and BALADI PLUS programs, which provide grants and technical assistance to municipalities, and it currently focuses on Lebanese CSOs that work with BALADI-assisted municipalities. By channeling civil society assistance through BALADI CAP, rather than a new program, USAID could take advantage of the connections already being made between civil society and local government as a starting point for a broader democracy and governance program. In addition to expanding the scope of BALADI CAP, the mission might also consider adding one or two option years to the cooperative agreement, which would allow programming over a longer timeframe while retaining the mission's prerogative to end the program in September 2017 if the situation warrants. While BALADI CAP uses the same LWA contracting mechanism as PACE, which resulted in inefficiencies noted in the findings, combining all civil society support into a single project could result in less bureaucracy than creation of a new, stand-alone civil society project, while maximizing synergy and coherence in the mission's democracy and governance programming.

USAID's Expand Your Horizons project might be considered as a vehicle for further training CSOs assisted by PACE, but the former project is set to end in September 2015, resulting in too short of a time horizon for effective training. The mission may want to explore the possibility of directing PACE grantees to the CSOs Institutional Strengthening Program, launched in 2013 and funded by MEPI, which targets training to CSOs less than three years old. Several PACE grantees have also received assistance from the CSOs Institutional Strengthening Program. The difficulty of interagency coordination may preclude such cooperation, but the mission should explore ways in which future civil society training can leverage USG projects already underway.

While training and technical assistance to Lebanese CSOs are widespread and longstanding, PACE successfully added two key ingredients to the mix: policy development and media training. The mission should consider ways in which it can support policy research, analysis and development by Lebanese civil society and assist civil society organizations in effectively promoting policy alternatives through traditional media, new media platforms, and social media. On the advocacy side, future programming might seek to include labor unions, which represent hundreds of thousands of Lebanese workers in all regions and across all confessions. PACE staff noted that it was difficult to find advocacy organizations with expertise on economic issues, particularly youth employment. Unions may be in a position to cooperate with youth-centered advocacy organizations to urge action on the economic issues addressed in the issue briefs. The Solidarity Center, a NED core grantee affiliated with the AFL-CIO, may have useful expertise to contribute in this area.

Both PACE and BALADI CAP have aimed to strengthen CSO capacity to engage the Government of Lebanon at the level of municipalities and unions of municipalities. This is a logical point of entry given the dysfunction of the national parliament and government and should continue in future work. However, some of the issues identified by PACE, such as decentralization, access to information, and a proposed media law, require engagement at the national level. The mission should explore ways in which to improve cooperation between civil society and the national parliament and government and to improve the ability of civil society to lobby effectively. The mission may want to try to take advantage of any lingering connections from past parliamentary strengthening programs, such as the Parliamentary Resource Center developed from 2010-2012 by the Center for International Development of the State University of New York. Such engagement should include MPs, parliamentary staff, ministry officials and political party officials.

In designing future civil society programs, the mission may want to consider the example of USAID's *Program Representasi (ProRep)* in Indonesia. ProRep rests on three pillars: 1. Building the capacity of universities and think tanks to conduct and disseminate policy-relevant research and analysis; 2. Building CSO capacity for advocacy on key issues; 3. Encouraging evidence-based legislative and policy processes. Similarly, the mission should consider ways in which future programs could link policy analysis and advocacy from universities, think tanks and CSOs with those local and national officials and entities whose action is required to change the policy in question. Such an approach should facilitate the formation of alliances between civil society and parliament or ministries to enable them to work together to effect change. It should not include formal assistance to parliament, which has been provided in previous programs and which is currently precluded by mission policy.

As part of a broader democracy and governance program, the mission may want to consider the creation of a training center for legislative drafting. Such a center could be located in a law school in Beirut and provide training in legislative drafting to individuals from civil society, parliament, and the government. The mission should examine the example of the USAID-funded Kyrgyzstan Parliamentary Strengthening Project, which opened such a center at the Kyrgyz State Law Academy in May 2014.

In short, the structure of future civil society programming should be:

- Civil society programming included in a broader democracy and governance program, possibly by expansion of the current BALADI CAP structure extended by one or two option years
- Technical assistance coordinated with other ongoing USG civil society training initiatives
- Engagement with universities, think tanks, CSOs, labor unions, MPs, parliamentary staff, ministry officials, and political parties

Program elements should include:

- Policy research, analysis and development
- Media outreach and social media training
- Coordination between CSOs, parliament and government at the local and national level
- Possible creation of a training center for legislative drafting

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: EVALUATION STATEMENT OF WORK

PROMOTING ACTIVE CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT (PACE): Final Performance Evaluation Scope of Work

I. INTRODUCTION

In July 2014, the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) and the USAID/Lebanon Program Office requested that a final performance evaluation be undertaken for the Promoting Active Citizen Engagement (PACE) activity. The objective of the evaluation is to learn to what extent the activity's objectives and goals have been achieved; and to synthesize information about lessons learned, best practices, challenges, and opportunities that will contribute to the design of a possible new civil society project. As described in the USAID Evaluation Policy and ADS 203, a **performance evaluation** focuses on descriptive and normative questions such as: what a particular project or program has achieved at the conclusion of an implementation period; how it is being implemented; how it is perceived and valued; whether expected results are occurring; and other questions that are pertinent to future program design, management and operational decision making.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

PACE is an \$8.3 million, three-year activity funded by USAID/Lebanon and implemented by Management Systems International (MSI) in collaboration with the International Research and Exchange Board (IREX), under the oversight of Counterpart International. PACE is a Leader With Associates (LWA) award under the Global Civil Society Strengthening (GCSS) LWA held by Counterpart International. The award number is AID-268-LA-11-00001. The period of performance is from October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2014.

PACE aims to “strengthen civil society’s ability to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy and participation that contributes to a cohesive national identity while preserving Lebanon’s social and political pluralism.” To that end, PACE focuses on three mutually reinforcing activities:

- Aggregate and analyze public opinion to develop policy alternatives that respond to citizen concerns at the local, regional, and national levels;
- Support media marketing, reporting, discussion, and analysis of policy alternatives based on citizen concerns; and
- Increase civic advocacy, activism, and participation through sub-grants that respond to citizen concerns.

PACE works across Lebanon to reach broad constituencies, particularly youth, women, and vulnerable groups, through partnerships with civil society organizations (CSOs) committed to non-confessional and non-partisan approaches to civic engagement.

PACE builds on prior USAID investments in the civil society sector, particularly the “Transparency and Accountability Grants (TAG)” and the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) Lebanon Civic Support Initiative. Drawing on successes and lessons learned from these projects, PACE seeks to expand the breadth and depth of USAID partnerships with civil society organizations that have the potential to act as change agents in Lebanon’s complex and divided society.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

In the first and second years of implementation, PACE complemented, and operated concurrently with, the OTI's Lebanon Civic Support Initiative. As such, PACE collaborated with OTI to ensure synergy. The OTI program provided 43 grants over three years to civil society organizations. These grants were designed to build the capacity of civil society organizations to advocate on local, regional, and national issues. The selection of civil society actors was critical to the success of PACE. Therefore, the program prioritized partnerships with non-confessional, non-partisan, and non-elite based organizations throughout Lebanon and individuals committed to challenging the confessional status quo.

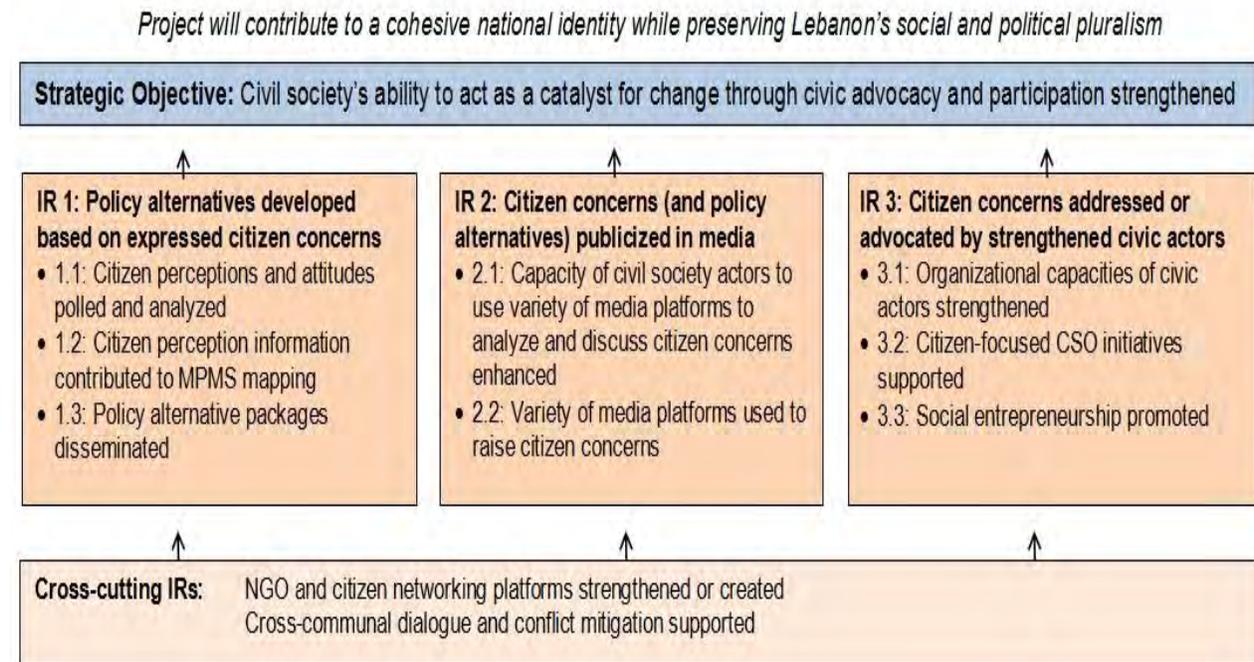
PROJECT INTENDED RESULTS

PACE contributes to U.S. Foreign Assistance Framework objective of Governing Justly and Democratically. PACE aims to strengthen civil society capacity to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy and participation that contributes to a cohesive national identity. To that end, PACE focuses on three mutually reinforcing objectives:

4. Policy alternatives developed based on expressed citizen concerns;
5. Citizen concerns (and policy alternatives) publicized in media; and
6. Citizen concerns addressed or advocated by strengthened civic actors.

RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The following Results Framework (RF) draws causal links between PACE activities and its desired impact.



PACE's theory of change rests on the following hypothesis: By building the capacity of civic actors to aggregate, articulate, advocate and address citizen concerns across sectarian divides, PACE will empower civil society to effect positive change that contributes to forging a unified national identity.

EXISTING PROJECT INFORMATION

USAID/Lebanon has the following information that it will provide to the evaluation team:

- Cooperative Agreement Scope of Work
- Approved Work Plans (Y1,Y2)
- Results Framework and M&E Plans
- Project Quarterly Reports
- Data Quality Assessments of selected indicators
- Project Site Visit Reports
- PACE Survey of Lebanese Citizen's Priority Concerns and Attitudes Towards Civic Engagement.

II. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The PACE final performance evaluation is meant to serve dual purposes:

3. To learn to what extent the project's objectives and goals—at all result levels—have been achieved; and
4. To synthesize information about lessons learned, best practices, challenges, and opportunities that will contribute to the design of a possible new civil society project.

This evaluation will assist the Mission in reaching decisions related to:

3. The effectiveness of the current technical approach to promote civic engagement and innovative media, as well as the effectiveness of these interventions (civic engagement and innovative media) in achieving the goal of PACE; and
4. The nature and scope of possible future interventions in the sector of civil society, based on lessons learned from the current project.

The Mission anticipates that the deliverable for this evaluation will focus an evaluation of PACE activities based on the core questions highlighted below and any additional questions that the evaluation team may propose, pending final USAID approval. It is anticipated that the report will include lessons learned, best practices, challenges, opportunities, effective activities that deserve to be scaled up or repeated in any new interventions proposed to support civil society, as well as activities and approaches that should no longer be supported because of poor performance or impact. Any recommendations for future designs should include a sustainability analysis.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Per the USAID *Evaluation Policy* and ADS 203, it is expected that each evaluation question will be answered with the highest quality and most credible evidence possible, given time and budget constraints. The questions below are the result of brainstorming sessions among USAID and other stakeholders that generated a broad range of potential evaluation questions. The final evaluation questions are the result of a consultative meeting with USAID/Lebanon held on Sept., 3, 2014. The proposed evaluation questions to be answered are:

Final Evaluation Questions

1. Did PACE strengthen civil society capacity to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy and participation that contributes to a cohesive national identity?
2. Did PACE opinion polling and technical assistance improve the ability of Lebanese civil society organizations to develop policy alternatives based on citizen concerns?

3. Have civil society organizations supported by PACE used media more effectively to publicize citizen concerns and policy alternatives?
4. Have civic actors been strengthened to address or advocate citizen concerns thanks to support from PACE?
5. What lessons can be learned from the experience of the project?
6. Taking into consideration the effectiveness of PACE, should USAID continue funding programs that aim to strengthen Lebanese civil society? Which type of programs would prove to be most beneficial?

Cross-cutting issues to address in all questions:

- Sustainability
- Gender

AUDIENCE AND INTENDED USES

This evaluation is intended to be used by USAID/Lebanon and others at the discretion of the Mission. The evaluation should provide USAID/Lebanon with concise recommendations based on evidence that will improve future programming in this sector. The resulting evaluation may be used by USAID/Lebanon during its annual Portfolio Review. It is intended that this evaluation will become publicly available on the DEC.

III. EVALUATION DESIGN AND METHOD

This will be a performance evaluation. This evaluation will gauge the performance of PACE based on work plans, the activity M&E Plan and indicator reporting, project site visit reports and progress reports. The evaluation will rely on primary and secondary data from desk reviews (e.g. RFA, CA, Work Plans, Quarterly reports, Annual report, Assessment studies, etc.); monitoring and evaluation data; and key informant interviews (KII) and Focus Groups discussions with PACE COPs and staff and stakeholders and beneficiaries such as CSOs and citizens.

Illustrative Data Collection Methods and Tools

. The evaluation methodology shall include a desk review of the activity documents, other activity reports for similar activities, KIIs and Focus Group Discussions, case studies of success stories, comparing evaluations done for similar USAID projects. The evaluator should propose additional or revised methods if he/she believes they are better suited to answer the evaluation questions.

The consultants should follow the following methodology:

- Meet with USAID/Lebanon to refine evaluation questions and agree to definitions for sustainability, cost-efficiency and cost effectiveness in the context of PACE.
- Meet with the project staff and key informant meetings to obtain more detailed, in-depth understanding about specific issues.
- Review of general project information available in the existing project documents, country strategy document, previous evaluation reports if applicable, quarterly reports and indicators, etc;
- Interview key stakeholders, using a structured questionnaire as a guide during interviews.

- Prepare first draft of the evaluation report including a review of the project's activities achievements, success stories, challenges and results.
- Provide recommendations in terms of the nature and scope of possible future interventions in the sector of civil society, based on lessons learned from the current project.

Data Analysis Methods

The evaluation team will prepare a data source matrix (sometimes called an evaluation matrix) that will include the evaluation questions, and the evaluation tool(s), data source(s) and analysis plan for each question. See Table One for an illustrative evaluation matrix. The matrix will be included as Annex VI of the report.

Table 1. Evaluation Matrix (illustrative template)

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions related to the criteria	Data sources	Data collection methods, sample and tools	Data analysis plan	Comments?
Effectiveness	Following the objectives of the Cooperative Agreement, to what extent was PACE able to build the capacity of the civil society organizations mainly through its learning center (PACE Learning Center)?	-Key stakeholders at CSOs; -Key stakeholders at USAID; and - Key stakeholders at IPs	KIIs, FGDs with with CSO representatives	Qualitative data analysis of KIIs through coding	e.g. Do we have relevant baseline data? What sample size of CSOs is needed?
	To what extent did the surveys (opinion poll) methodology assist PACE (management?) in achieving the objectives of PACE?				
	Were civil society organizations satisfied with the technical assistance and training provided under the program? If so what do the CSOs identify as the most effective and least effective technical assistance and training activities?				
Sustainability	What are the prospects for the sustainability of the end results produced by this project?				
Program management	What were some of the key lessons learned and best practices that emerged during the program implementation? Should they be incorporated in a new civil society program?				
	Was the sub grant program well-structured and managed?				
Impact	What were the results, impact, success and most importantly the cost effectiveness of the PACE sub-grants?				
	What impact have project activities had (or not had) on immediate stakeholders and beneficiaries?				
Efficiency	Were the sub-grants implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives? OR Were activities under the sub-grants cost efficient?				

This matrix will ensure that a range of appropriate data sources are considered and that the team will be able to triangulate data, where possible, to answer each question with more validity. All of the data collected from different sources will be reviewed in the manner of a data quality assessment, while findings are to be triangulated.

IV. EVALUATION DELIVERABLES

- **Scope of Work with Outline of the Work Plan:** The PMPL Team will prepare an outline of the work plan that will include the methodologies to be used in the evaluation. The work plan outline will be submitted to the COR at USAID/Lebanon for approval with the SOW by August 18.
- Kick-off briefing with USAID to reeving evaluation questions (Sept 2)
- **Mid-point briefing to USAID:** Statement of progress, preliminary findings, problems encountered and resolutions (Sept 15).
- **Outbrief with USAID and final presentation:** Major findings of the evaluation will be presented to USAID/Lebanon using a PowerPoint presentation. The debriefing will include a discussion of achievements and issues as well as any recommendations the PMPL Team has for future interventions. (Sept 22)
- **Draft report:** A draft report of the findings and recommendations is to be submitted through the USAID COR, clearly describing findings, conclusions, and recommendations by September 22, 2014.
- **USAID will provide comments** on the draft report within one week of submission. The PMPL Team will consider USAID comments and revise the draft report accordingly, as appropriate. (Sept 25)
- **Final Report:** The PMPL Team will submit a final report of not more than 25 pages, excluding annexes that incorporate the responses to Mission comments and suggestions. The format will include an executive summary, table of contents, methodology, findings related to the evaluation questions and specific areas of interest (above), and recommendations. The report will be submitted in English, electronically in MS Word format and compliant with USAID Graphic Standards. (Sept 29)

V. REPORTING GUIDELINES

USAID's *Evaluation Policy* requires that all evaluation SOWs include USAID's Criteria to Ensure the Quality of the Evaluation Report. The PACE evaluation team is advised to incorporate these guidelines in their report where relevant and applicable to the evaluated cooperative agreement.

Structure of the Evaluation Report

The findings from the evaluation will be presented in a draft report at a full briefing with USAID/Lebanon and possibly at a follow-up meeting with key stakeholders. The format for the evaluation report is as follows:

1. **Executive Summary:** concisely states the most salient findings and recommendations with respect to the evaluation questions (2 pp.);
2. **Table of Contents** (1 pp.);
3. **Introduction:** purpose, audience, and synopsis of task (1 pp.);
4. **Background:** brief overview of PACE project context, USAID/Lebanon program strategy and activities implemented in response to the development problem, a brief description of PACE, and purpose of the evaluation (3 pp.);

5. Methodology: describes evaluation methods, including limitations, constraints and gaps (1 pp.);
6. Findings/Conclusions for each evaluation question; including a reference to the data quality of the evidence provided; (10 pp.);
7. Issues: provide a list of key technical and/or administrative, if any (1 pp.);
8. Recommendations (1 pp.);
9. The final version of the evaluation report will be submitted to USAID/Lebanon in hard copy as well as electronically in MS Word format. The report should not exceed 25 pages, excluding references and annexes.

VI. TEAM COMPOSITION

USAID's ADS requires that at least one member of every evaluation team be an evaluation specialist. An evaluation specialist is a person with significant experience designing evaluations and a strong understanding of data collection and analysis methodologies.

It is expected that the evaluation team will consist of an evaluation expert and a technical expert. The ideal technical expert's qualifications would combine expertise in Democracy and Governance (DG) programs, including decentralization, advocacy, access to justice, network and coalition building, capacity building of civil society organizations and/or media. PMPL proposes to recruit an expert in international relations, government, development studies, law, or other relevant international development field. The expert should possess advanced studies (a Master's degree or preferably a PhD) in the above mentioned fields and have at least 10 years professional experience in Democracy and Governance programs. The technical expert is to be recruited through Social Impact .

The evaluation expertise will be provided by the PMPL resident staff.

VII. EVALUATION MANAGEMENT

1. Pre-Field Work (August 18-27): Identify and recruit a Democracy and Governance Expert and a team leader. Obtain key documents, make key contacts and plan for interviews and discussions with PACE stakeholders, liaise with PACE field staff to set up necessary interviews with project staff and other USAID project representatives as needed. The pre-field work should be accomplished one week prior to the evaluation starting date. The DG expert arrives in country on Sept 1, 2014.
2. Evaluation kick-off and Field Work - Week one (Sept 2 -3): The evaluation team meets with the PMPL COP to assign roles and responsibilities, the outline of the evaluation report is prepared, the team meets with USAID for an in-country briefing during which the evaluation methodology is confirmed and the evaluation questions are made clear and confirmed. Additional documentation may be requested at this time. Logistics for the field visits are made final. Interviews with key staff begin.
3. Field Work – Week two (Sept 4-15): The focus will be on interviewing USAID key staff who are responsible for PACE, the staff of PACE itself and members of the 43 grant recipient CSOs others who work with or have been impacted by the activities under evaluation. Interviews with prominent supporters of PACE will be included such as LCPS, media and politicians. Other donors supporting Democracy and Governance Programs (i.e. UNDP, EU...) in Lebanon and CSO staff will be also interviewed.

4. Post-Field Work – Week three (Sept 16-20): The team begins preparing the first few sections of the draft report on the background, setting and institutional context related to the project. An outbrief is to be conducted at USAID and to be followed with the completion of the data analysis and of the evaluation draft report. Submission and presentation of the completed draft final report by September 22, 2014. The technical expert travels from Lebanon on September 23, 2014.
5. Post-Field Work – Week four (Sept 23-27): The mission reviews the report and submits comments to PMPL by 27 Sept. The final report will be submitted by 29 Sept that includes responses to final comments from USAID/Lebanon.

Table Two illustrates the PACE evaluation work plan, while Table Three shows estimated LOE for this evaluation.

Table 2. PACE Evaluation Work Plan

		August 18-27	Aug 27- Sept 1	Sept 2-3	Sept 4-15	Sept 16- 22	Sept 23- 27	Sept 28- 29
Pre- fieldwork & logistics	Prepare the logistics of the assessment							
Desk Review	Desk review and develop work plan (Aug 18 - 30)							
Fieldwork	Travel to Lebanon (Aug 31-Sept 1)							
	Team Planning Meeting and In-brief with USAID (Sept 2-3)							
	Interviews in capital and the field (Sept 4 – Sept 15) Mid-point brief to Mission (Sept 15)							
Reporting	Initiate the data analysis and drafting of report (Sept 16 - 20)							
	Finalize draft report writing/Final report outline Outbrief and submit draft report (by Sept 22)					X		
	Depart Lebanon (Sept 23)							
	USAID Reviews draft report and submits comments (Sept 23-27)							
	Team revises report							
	Final Report submitted by Sept 29							X

Notes:

X	Denotes Deliverable due
	Work

Table 3. Illustrative Evaluation LOE/STTA

Proposed Staff	Labor Category	Logistics (Aug 18 – 26)	Desk Review, Work plan (Aug 27-30)	Travel to Lebanon (Aug 31-Sept 1)	Fieldwork and Data Collection		Data Analysis, Reporting and Dissemination				Total
					In-Brief and more planning (Sept 2)	Intensive field work (Sept 2-Sept 15)	Initial Analysis and report drafting (Sept 16-20)	Finalize Draft Report Writing, outbrief (Sept 22)	Travel from Lebanon (Sept 23)	Respond to USAID comments (By Sept 29)	
Team Leader	Consultant	0	3	2	1	12	5	1	1	2	27
PMPL Support	Selected staff	5	0	0	1	12	0	0	0	0	18
TOTAL LOE		5	3	2	2	24	5	1	1	2	45

ANNEX II: EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

The Social Impact team's evaluation design incorporated a variety of targeted methods to address the evaluation questions by eliciting rich information and triangulating emerging trends and themes. Methods included:

1. Review of key documents. These are listed in Annex IV: Sources of Information
2. Meeting with USAID Lebanon Mission staff and MEPI staff.
3. Interviews with MSI headquarters and PACE program staff. Two evaluation team members collaborated in these interviews and compared notes. Interviews were conducted in English.
4. Semi-structured interviews with PACE grantees. At least two of Social Impact's evaluators collaborated in these interviews. Nearly all interviews were conducted in English, with few grantees interviewed in a mix of English and Arabic, with one evaluator providing interpretation where necessary.

Where relevant, interview findings were compared with corresponding documents detailing PACE grants performance.

The evaluation was carried out in the United States during the period August 27-31, 2014, and in Lebanon from September 2-19, 2014. The bulk of the interviews proceeded as planned. While security conditions impeded a few aspects of the planned work, the evaluation team concluded that the diversity and coverage of key informants was both sufficient and robust enough to allow for compiling findings and formulating recommendations.

Limitations were caused by security incidents on two days during the evaluation timeframe. Scheduled interviews with grantees in Akkar were relocated to Batroun, and interviews with three grantees in Sidon had to be canceled due to security concerns for both the evaluation team and the respondents.

ANNEX III: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Interview Questions- PACE, MSI and Counterpart staff

- What was the greatest success of the project?
- How did the PACE Learning Center build capacity?
- Can you provide a specific example of where advanced training enabled a beneficiary to effect change?
- How did the opinion polls assist you in reaching your objectives?
- How did PACE staff select the issue areas based on the poll?
- What were the lessons learned of the project?
- What was the impact of the subgrants?
- Did you cooperate with other donors?
- What needs of Lebanese civil society should be addressed in potential future programming?
- What is the relationship between PACE and the various BALADI projects?
- Was the social entrepreneurship component connected to the other components of PACE?

Interview Questions- training organization staff

- Describe your organization and your relationship with your partner organization.
- What assistance did PACE provide to your organization?
- How did PACE improve your organization?
- Describe the training that you provided to PACE grantees.
- How did you ensure the training was relevant and avoid training fatigue?
- How did you ensure the sustainability of training?
- Can the organizations that you trained advocate more effectively thank to the training?
- What training is still needed by Lebanese CSOs?
- How are social enterprises different from micro-enterprises and other small businesses?

Interview Questions- policy brief developers

- How did PACE assist your organization? What were the results?
- What is the status of the legislation that was supported by your policy brief?
- Did PACE opinion polling and technical assistance improve the ability of your organization to develop policy alternatives based on citizen concerns?
- What can CSOs accomplish given a dysfunctional parliament?
- How do issues like decentralization help build a national identity?
- How can CSOs build support from the Lebanese people?
- If USAID funds future civil society programs in Lebanon, what should they address?

Interview Questions- civic engagement and media grantees

- Describe your organization's structure and goals.
- What specific assistance did your organization receive through PACE?
- Describe the work you undertook with the PACE grant.
- Did you use the policy briefs, and did they contribute to your advocacy efforts?
- What is the status of legislation that you advocated?
- What was the outcome of your advocacy campaign?

- How did your organization's work contribute to social cohesion?
- Has your organization used media more effectively to publicize citizen concerns and policy alternatives? Can you provide an example?
- Has your organization been strengthened to address or advocate citizen concerns thanks to support from PACE?
- Did your organization reform its internal organizational or financial structure based on what you learned from the PACE program?
- With PACE coming to an end, how is your organization funded? Has your organization secured additional funding sources thanks to reforms made due to the PACE program?
- Describe the training provided and the people trained by your organizations supported by the PACE grant?
- If USAID funds future civil society programs in Lebanon, what should they address?

Interview Questions- social entrepreneur grantees

- Describe your organization's structure and goals.
- What specific assistance did your organization receive through PACE?
- Describe the work you undertook with the PACE grant.
- Describe your experience with the Nabad incubator?
- Was the training useful and relevant?
- How did you use the training? Can you provide an example?
- How did PACE improve your organization?
- Does your organization engage in advocacy?
- How are social enterprises different from micro-enterprises and other small businesses?
- If USAID funds future social entrepreneurship programs in Lebanon, what should they address?

ANNEX IV: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The Social Impact team's evaluation design incorporated a variety of targeted methods to address the evaluation questions by eliciting rich information and triangulating emerging trends and themes. Methods included 1) document review; 2) interviews with MSI headquarter staff and PACE program staff 3) semi-structured interviews with grantees and CSOs directors and other staff; 4) meetings with USAID staff; 5) interview with MP Ghassan Moukhaiber.

The sources of information are listed below:

I- Key Documents Reviewed:

- ADS Chapter 205 Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment
- PACE Award Agreement
- PACE Contract Modification
- PACE M&E Plan
- PACE Work Plans
- PACE Quarterly Reports
- PACE PLC Final Technical Performance report
- PACE Technical Assistance for Grantees
- PACE Data Base for persons trained
- PACE reports for the National surveys
- PACE lessons learned report
- PACE list and contacts of engaged CSOs
- PACE Success stories
- PACE Policy briefs
- PACE MSI CAT tool
- TAG program final evaluation report
- USAID Lebanon democracy and governance assessment report
- USAID Lebanon civil society assessment update
- USAID R 10 Preparing evaluation reports
- USAID pnaz042 Project Design Sustainability Analysis Tool
- USAID Evaluation Policy
- USAID C-20 Summary Checklist for Assessing USAID Evaluation Reports
- USAID C-13 Common Tools and Methods Used in Performance Evaluations
- USAID C-19 Checklist for Assessing USAID Evaluation Reports

2- Key Informant Interviews:

People Met	Institutions Visited
USAID Lebanon	
Mr. Bret Saalwaechter , Director Governance and Democracy	USAID Lebanon
Ms. Gail Spence, Program Office Director	USAID Lebanon
MS. Lenna Jammal, Deputy Program Office Director	USAID Lebanon
Mr. George Boulos, Development Program Officer	USAID Lebanon
Ms. Ahmad El Amine, Project Management Specialist/ PACE AOR	USAID Lebanon
Mr. Erik Ryan, MEPI Coordinator	USAID Lebanon
Ms. Arabella Barbir Bohsali, Grants Program Manager	USAID Lebanon
Member of Parliament	
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Ms. Katherine Sheppard, Program Officer	Counterpart International, Washington
Mr. Matthew Witting, Senior Project Manager	MSI , Arlington
Mr. Hervé de Baillenx, former chief of party	MSI, PACE Program
Ms. Ghada Khouri, Chief of Party	MSI, PACE Program
Ms. Racha Nasreddine, Senior Civil Society Specialist	MSI, PACE Program
Ms. Lea Traboulsi, Civil Society Specialist	MSI, PACE Program
Ms. Rania Temrawi, Grants and Procurement Manager	MSI, PACE Program
Ms. Nada Hamzeh, Senior Media Specialist	MSI, PACE Program
Ms.Collette Azzi, monitoring and evaluation specialist	MSI, PACE Program
Mr. Chadi Nachabe, Senior Civil Society Specialist	MSI, PACE Program
Ms. Rana el Sayed, Former Grants and Civil Society Specialist	MSI, PACE Program
PACE Grantees	
Mr. Jean Dib Hajj, Managing Director	Knowledge Development Corp
Ms. Natalia Menhall, Partner	Beyond Reform and Development (BRD)
Mr. Nabil Hassan, Partner	Beyond Reform and Development (BRD)
Mr. Ayad Wakim, Project Coordinator	Nahar Ashabab
Ms. Farah Saati, Account Manager	Think Media Labs
Ms. Layal Banham, Program Officer	Maharat and Lebanese Center for Civic Education (LCCE)
Ms. Stephanie Kiridjian	MARCH

Mr. Sami Atallah, Executive Director	Lebanese Center for Policy Studies
Ms. Rania Abi-Habib, Development and Communication Officer	Lebanese Center for Policy Studies
Ms. Michèle Boujikian, Researcher	Lebanese Center for Policy Studies
Mr. Jules Hatem, Managing Partner	Triple E
Ms. Karine Nassar, Director	Soins Infirmiers et Développement Communautaire (SIDC)
Ms. Nina Richa, Administrative and Finance Officer	Soins Infirmiers et Développement Communautaire
Ms. Andrea Geara, former PACE Administrative and Help Desk Officer	Soins Infirmiers et Développement Communautaire
Mr. Samir Sfeir, former Nabad Incubator Project Coordinator	Arcenciel
Ms. Kim Issa, Marketing and Coaching Manager	Arcenciel
Mr. Rami Lakkis, President	Lebanese Organization for Studies and Training LOST
Mr. Salah Zaayter, Human Resources Manager	Lebanese Organization for Studies and Training LOST
Ms. Joanna Hammour, Project Developer	Nahnoo
Mr. Ahmad Karout, President	Kazamedia/ITvism
Mr. Ali Ghoul	Kazamedia/ITvism
Ms. Nadine Saba, Program Director	AND
Ms. Azza Adra, General Director	Akkarouna
Mr. Ahmad Halawani Aza	Akkarouna
Mr. Zaher Obeid	Hadatha
Ms. Maya Ali	ADA
Mr. Haitham Khalaf, Project Director	Lebanese Center for Active Citizenship
Mr. George Ghafary, Founder	Chreek
Ms. Katia Boueri, Operations Manager	2b design
Ms. Rita Khawand	SOILS
Ms. Mabelle Chedid	Food Heritage Foundation (FHF)
Mr. Raja Bou Hadier	Mommy Made
Ms. Asma Mostafa, Project Manager	Women's Union Association of the Workers in the North (WWAN, Akkar)
Ms. Zeina Saab, Founder and Executive Director	Nawaya
Ms. Nadine Farah, Founder	Help for Leb
Mr. Patrick Zoghby, Founder	Gueco
Ms. Nadine Merhi, Program Manager	Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA)

ANNEX V: DISCLOSURE OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Name	John Lis
Title	Technical Expert
Organization	Social Impact
Evaluation Position?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Team member
Evaluation Award Number <i>(contract or other instrument)</i>	RAN-I-00-09-00019, Task Order 07
USAID Project(s) Evaluated <i>(Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)</i>	Promoting Active Citizen Engagement, Counterpart International, AID-268-LA-11-00001
I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:</p> <p><i>Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</i> <i>2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.</i> <i>3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project.</i> <i>4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</i> <i>5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.</i> <i>6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.</i> 	I worked as a short-term consultant for MSI (a subcontractor for the implementer) from September 2013-May 2014 to perform an evaluation of State Department democracy and governance programs in Iraq.

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature	 _____ Signature
Date	September 19, 2014

ANNEX VI: EVALUATION QUESTIONS MAPPED TO FINDINGS AND METHODS MATRIX

Evaluation Questions	Q1. Did PACE strengthen civil society capacity to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy and participation that contributes to a cohesive national identity?	Q2. Did PACE opinion polling and technical assistance improve the ability of Lebanese civil society organizations to develop policy alternatives based on citizen concerns?	Q3. Have civil society organizations supported by PACE used media more effectively to publicize citizen concerns and policy alternatives?	Q4. Have civic actors been strengthened to address or advocate citizen concerns thanks to support from PACE?	Q5. What lessons can be learned from the experience of the project?	Q6. Taking into consideration the effectiveness of PACE, should USAID continue funding programs that aim to strengthen Lebanese civil society? What kind of programs would prove to be most beneficial?
Findings						
Finding 1: PACE did strengthen civil society capacity to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy and participation that contributes to a cohesive national identity.	√					√
Finding 2: PACE opinion polling helped PACE staff to identify the major concerns of Lebanese citizens, and PACE technical assistance improved the ability of a select few civil society organizations to develop policy alternatives based on those identified citizen concerns.		√				√
Finding 3: CSOs supported by PACE have used media more effectively to publicize citizen concerns and policy alternatives.			√			√
Finding 4: Civic actors have been strengthened to address or advocate citizen concerns thanks to support from PACE.				√		√
Conclusions: Lessons learned					√	√
Recommendation: USAID should continue funding programs that aim to strengthen Lebanese civil society.						√

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions related to the criteria	Data sources	Data collection methods, sample and tools	Data analysis plan	Comments?
Impact	Did PACE strengthen civil society capacity to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy and participation that contributes to a cohesive national identity?	-Key stakeholders at CSOs; -Key stakeholders at USAID; and - Key stakeholders at IPs	KIIs, project reports	Qualitative data analysis of KIIs	
Effectiveness	Did PACE opinion polling and technical assistance improve the ability of Lebanese civil society organizations to develop policy alternatives based on citizen concerns?	-Key stakeholders at CSOs; -Key stakeholders at USAID; and - Key stakeholders at IPs	KIIs, project reports, opinion polls, policy briefs	Qualitative data analysis of KIIs	
	Have civil society organizations supported by PACE used media more effectively to publicize citizen concerns and policy alternatives?	-Key stakeholders at CSOs; -Key stakeholders at USAID; and - Key stakeholders at IPs	KIIs, project reports	Qualitative data analysis of KIIs, quantitative analysis of project PMP data	
	Have civic actors been strengthened to address or advocate citizen concerns thanks to support from PACE?	-Key stakeholders at CSOs; -Key stakeholders at USAID; and - Key stakeholders at IPs	KIIs, project reports	Qualitative data analysis of KIIs, quantitative analysis of project PMP data	
Program management	What lessons can be learned from the experience of the project?	-Key stakeholders at CSOs; -Key stakeholders at USAID; and - Key stakeholders at IPs	KIIs, project reports, project lessons learned papers	Qualitative data analysis of KIIs, qualitative analysis of project lessons learned	
	Taking into consideration the effectiveness of PACE, should USAID continue funding programs that aim to strengthen Lebanese civil society? Which type of programs would prove to be most beneficial?	-Key stakeholders at CSOs; -Key stakeholders at USAID; and - Key stakeholders at IPs	KIIs, project reports, project lessons learned papers	Qualitative data analysis of KIIs	

ANNEX VII: PACE LESSONS LEARNED SUMMARIES

Promoting Active Citizen Engagement (PACE) Lessons Learned – Capacity Building

This document is part of a series of Lessons Learned Summaries developed by PACE in the final months of implementation. Each summary examines a key program component (policy development, media, civic engagement, social entrepreneurship, and capacity building).

Background

Over a three-year period, PACE sought to strengthen civil society capacity to act as a catalyst for change through technical assistance and grants to local CSOs to support civic engagement, media, social entrepreneurship, and capacity-building activities. PACE delivered capacity-building assistance in multiple ways: (a) through capacity assessments, training, technical assistance, and coaching from PACE team members, (b) by hiring expert trainers as part of grant activities based on specific CSO needs, (c) by supporting five grants with CSO capacity-building components in policy development, advocacy, and media/social media campaigning, and (d) by working with a training service provider in Year 3 to institute the “PACE Learning Center.”

The PACE Learning Center provided a menu of capacity-building services, including institutional capacity assessments based on MSI’s Capacity Assessment Tool (CAT), training workshops for groups of CSOs with common needs, knowledge-sharing tools and workshops, and coaches to deliver on-site technical assistance to individual CSOs.

Objective

- Analyze lessons learned from PACE’s approach to capacity building.
- Gain insights into program methodologies, results, and impact to inform follow-on projects.
- Document lessons learned for incorporation into the final program report.

Methodology

The following methodologies were used to identify lessons learned:

- An internal workshop involving the entire program team.
- Consultations with capacity-building partners, particularly implementers of the PACE Learning Center.
- Review and evaluation of capacity-building grants and activities.

The analysis focused on examining the following issues:

- Advantages and disadvantages of issuing stand-alone capacity-building grants versus embedding capacity-building elements within existing grants
- Advantages and disadvantages of using self-diagnosis of CSO institutional development priorities as the basis for capacity-building support
- Challenges to ensuring institutionalization of new knowledge and skills within CSOs

Summary of Lessons Learned

Capacity building is a process, not a one-off training activity. Overwhelmingly, PACE partners welcomed the program’s integrated approach to capacity building. This involved a holistic process starting with a pre-award assessment, on to facilitation of a self-diagnosis of strengths and weaknesses

using the CAT, based on which partners develop an institutional improvement plan and receive tailored technical assistance, training, and coaching services. A follow-on CAT then measured progress in institutional development, and sets new priorities for additional improvements. This model was described as “pioneering” by PACE’s main capacity-building partner, and CAT results showed that most partners achieved improvements in institutional capacities.

Capacity building should begin from day one and requires dedicated resources. An innovative aspect of PACE’s programmatic approach is that capacity building aimed to achieve two goals simultaneously: (a) to improve partners’ performance on their grant-funded activities and (b) to strengthen partners’ internal systems and sustainability. In the first two years, the PACE team handled most capacity-building tasks, facilitating CAT assessments and delivering technical assistance and coaching to partners. When specialized expertise was needed, expert trainers were hired as part of grants. As the number of partners increased, PACE issued a stand-alone capacity-building grant to SIDC/KDC to launch the PACE Learning Center, which took over most assessment, training, technical assistance, and coaching activities. Initiating the PACE Learning Center earlier—ideally in the initial months of the program—would have yielded better results, providing dedicated resources and more time for design and delivery of demand-driven training activities and coaching services.

Assessment of CSO capacity building needs should be owned and driven by CSOs themselves. CSOs are more likely to embrace capacity-building efforts when they drive the process of diagnosing their strengths and weaknesses. MSI’s CAT tool proved instrumental in this regard since it puts the CSO in the driver’s seat. Administration of the tool is facilitated by program staff or external consultants, but it does not use the top-down approach often called for by traditional assessment methodologies. As a result, participating CSOs embrace CAT findings and some have even expressed readiness to use the CAT on their own after the program ends.

Capacity building efforts provide an opportunity to strengthen local training service providers. Engaging local trainers and training service providers to deliver CSO capacity building support helps to strengthen local expertise, transfer new methodologies, and ensure new skills continue to be available to local CSOs beyond the life of a program. This was one of the marked advantages of partnering with SIDC/KDC, whose team was trained in use of the CAT methodology and has since adopted it as its own.

Some CSOs need incentives to participate in capacity building interventions. PACE adopted a demand-driven approach to capacity building and did not make participation in the PACE Learning Center mandatory for its partners. However, some CSOs need incentives to participate due to training fatigue and the multiple, sometimes duplicative, training workshops available to CSOs from various INGO and donor programs. These workshops vary greatly in terms of quality of trainers, training curriculum, and learning objectives. Consequently, CSOs do not know before actually attending a workshop whether they will benefit from it. Putting in place a high-quality program with seasoned trainers and adaptability to the capacity levels and specific needs of partners, and then requiring grantees to participate (e.g., by tying their participation to grant payments), can help ensure maximum benefits to partners.

Training workshops and knowledge-sharing events provide an opportunity for CSO networking. Given the degree of fragmentation in Lebanese civil society, every opportunity should be seized to provide avenues for CSO collaboration. Training workshops and regular knowledge-sharing events should be designed to maximize CSO participation, interactions, and networking. In addition, providing informal, online platforms for continued engagement by participating CSOs can facilitate ongoing

contacts after a learning activity has taken place. This could be done through an email listserv, a Facebook group, or a Whatsapp group.

A standards-based approach to CSO capacity building should be encouraged. There is a multitude of trainers available in the Lebanese marketplace. Their qualifications and approaches differ widely. For example, various trainers develop workshops on advocacy techniques, using different methodologies and tools. There is an opportunity to build a cadre of strong trainers who together could develop and consistently apply agreed-upon training standards and methodologies that draw on best practices and evaluation of learning outcomes. PACE lacked the time and resources to invest in such an endeavor, but it should be considered by follow-on projects for improved quality of capacity-building efforts.

Capacity building should include self-learning tools. Training workshops, technical assistance, and coaching are not the only ways to promote learning. Tools that promote continual self-learning are also an important aspect of capacity building, such as manuals, handouts, links to relevant online resources and potential sources of additional support. Such materials should be made available in Arabic so they can benefit a wide audience.

CSOs need to diversify their funding sources to build financial sustainability. Given the high level of donor dependency among CSOs, introducing them to a diverse menu of possibilities to build financial autonomy is also critical, such as crowdfunding, fundraising activities, seeking private sector sponsorships, tapping into corporate social responsibility programs, and incorporating income-generation or social entrepreneurship components into their core programs.

Impact on CSO internal management is as important as impact on the policy environment. Opinion polls commissioned by PACE and other relevant literature about the civil society sector in Lebanon points to a crisis of leadership and trust. Indeed, it appears that public perceptions of CSOs, while generally more positive than perceptions of government institutions at all levels, also signal a worrying lack of trust in the sector. CSOs must work on enhancing their public image. Part of this requires improving their internal systems so that they can model the transparency, good governance, and accountability they advocate for. The success and impact of a civil society project should take into account its impact on CSOs themselves, not only on the external or policy environment. Over the long run, more robust, well-functioning CSOs are more likely to galvanize support and influence public policies.

Select Quotes from PACE Partners

“PACE was instrumental in promoting and pioneering a comprehensive CSO capacity development approach that included capacity assessment, priority setting, training, onsite and online coaching, and knowledge sharing. PACE contributed in creating a learning culture within CSOs. Furthermore, PACE contributed to the building of local capacity development professionals that are willing and ready to provide services to the Lebanese CSOs... More time and effort should have been invested in the mobilization of the PACE Learning Center, as well as for the capacity development activities.”—*Jean Dib-Hajj, director, Knowledge Development Corporation (KDC)*

“The main success is that PACE program provided CSOs with two kinds of support: Support related to the implementation of the activities and the support provided for the sustainability of the organization at many levels (financial management, advocacy...) At some points, the timeline was a bit restrictive especially that more time was needed for the implementation to fulfill the objectives.”—*Layal Bahnam-Tannouri, project manager, Maharat Foundation*

“The technical assistance provided by PACE was unprecedented, whether through capacity-building sessions given by the members of the PACE team; the workshops provided by the PACE Learning Center; and the increased exposure of the grantees before both traditional media and social media.”—*Haytham Khalaf, director, Lebanese Center for Active Citizenship*

“The culture of knowledge sharing and transfer of lessons learned fostered by PACE was very enriching... Long-term planning, not only on a project basis, helped us a lot in our sustainability plans as an NGO beyond the PACE project.”—*Georgina Manok, project manager, Lebanese Economic Association*

“The [pre-award] assessment done by PACE... helped us put our focus on the NGO structure. It was a capacity building issue of great importance. The PACE Learning Center was a tool which helped us identify our weaknesses and try to work on them.”—*Ayad Wakim, project coordinator, Nahar Ashabab*

“PACE program played a very important role in enhancing the capacity of our organization, be it at the administrative level such as financial controls and related issues, or be it at the technical level, including media support, networking opportunities, and overall technical advice, feedback, and ideas.”—*Ahmad Karout, president, Kazamedia*

“In our baseline CAT assessment, we found out our weaknesses in HR, finance, and M&E because the projects we were handling were small and grew in size and number rapidly. The CAT helped us identify the gaps present within our organization. The second CAT showed a remarkable improvement and we are now able to use the CAT tool on our own, position our organization, and assess our performance... We had a very close collaboration with our coach... who added a lot of value to our organization. This close follow-up was very important in helping us better implement and better assess our improvement... The trainings were a very good opportunity for networking with other NGOs... and helped us prepare and better deliver trainings to other NGOs in Akkar.”—*Joyce Abdallah, finance officer, AND*

Promoting Active Citizen Engagement (PACE)

Lessons Learned – Civic Engagement

This document is part of a series of Lessons Learned Summaries developed by PACE in the final months of implementation. Each summary examines a key program component (policy development, media, civic engagement, social entrepreneurship, and capacity building).

Background

In Year 2 of PACE, the program issued a solicitation for civic engagement grants based on policy development work and themes derived from a national opinion poll. This led to the award of 11 civic engagement grants to support advocacy campaigns in several regions of the country. In addition, 10 media grants also incorporated civic engagement activities, bringing the total number of relevant grants under this component to 21.

Civic engagement partners have ranged from youth-led organizations with limited capabilities, to well-established national-level CSOs. Their campaigns have been held at the local, regional, and national levels. Most have focused on promoting improved quality of public services, fostering civic participation in public decision-making, and preserving the space for democratic dialogue. PACE sought to scale up local initiatives to the regional level, scale out national initiatives to the regional level, and help community-level partners expand their base of operations to new geographic areas and beneficiary groups.

Objective

- Analyze lessons learned from PACE's approach to civic engagement activities.
- Gain insights into program methodologies, results, and impact to inform follow-on projects.
- Document lessons learned for incorporation into the final program report.

Methodology

The following methodologies were used to identify lessons learned:

- Two internal workshops involving the entire program team.
- Consultations and brief questionnaire sent to civic engagement partners.
- Review and evaluation of relevant grants related to the civic engagement component.
- Findings from field visits tied to survey research.

The analysis focused on examining the following issues:

- Advantages and disadvantages of preselecting policy themes for civic engagement activities
- Advantages and disadvantages of supporting civic engagement activities at the local versus the national level
- Examination of program impact on grantee organizations versus impact at the policy level

Summary of Lessons Learned

Advocacy requires a long-term view to produce results. Advocacy is a long-term, non-linear process that typically runs the cycle from policy analysis, awareness-raising, media outreach, community mobilization, and lobbying of decision-makers, with continuous monitoring, evaluation, and readjustment. Given the pace of change in Lebanon, where government is highly resistant to reform and political crises

and deadlock are frequent, the three-year timeframe of the PACE program was a major constraining factor. When factoring in the start-up and close-out phases, polling and policy development work, the time needed for competing and evaluating solicitations, and then for obtaining the necessary grant approvals, PACE was left with less than two years to support CSOs working on advocacy, media, and social entrepreneurship initiatives, while also building their capacities in the process. Civil society strengthening programs should have a longer timeframe of at least five years in order to adequately build CSO capacities and momentum for change.

Support for long-standing civil society issues is critical in parallel with tackling new realities created by the Syrian refugee crisis. At a time of intense focus on assistance to Syrian refugees, PACE filled an important gap through its support for the longer-term objectives of CSOs in Lebanon. While the refugee situation created new conditions on the ground, the long-standing issues that have been on the civil society agenda well before the crisis erupted—and will likely continue to be once it dissipates—reflect the concerns and priorities of Lebanese citizens over a long-term horizon. Several PACE partners that are also working on refugee assistance shared the concern that the influx of donor funding in this area, if not properly managed and balanced with other core activities, could pose a potential threat to their long-term sustainability should it induce major deviations from their missions and strategic plans. Civil society support should strategically invest in civic engagement initiatives that look beyond the immediate, short-term needs created by the refugee crisis.

Non-partisan, non-confessional CSOs hold the most promise as potential change agents, but also need to coalesce around common issues for greater impact. In the polarized Lebanese context, and given pervasive clientelistic networks, CSOs that are non-partisan and non-confessional in their approach to advocacy are the most likely to galvanize public support across confessional lines and the least likely to fall prey to political manipulation. CSOs that do not benefit from political funding are also the ones that are most in need of support so they can maintain neutrality vis-à-vis political parties. This empowers them to select the issues on which to advocate since they are not affected by self-censorship or pressures from political funders. At the same time, being independent of the political elites can also constrain CSOs' ability to reach and influence decision-makers, which underscores the need to develop their community mobilization and outreach capabilities, as well as their ability to forge alliances with reform-minded groups and individuals within and outside the public sector.

Coalition-building, while critical for successful advocacy, is challenging in the Lebanese context. Fragmentation in Lebanese society and politics also affects the civil society sector, where a spirit of unhealthy competition dominates, making it difficult to build alliances around common causes. A longer-term civil society program could make a difference in this regard. In the short three years of its existence, PACE lacked sufficient time, resources, and opportunities to support CSO coalition-building, focusing on encouraging small, organic networks among its partners. By the end of the program, several opportunities for real coalition-building began to emerge, particularly around issues related to decentralization and media law reform. These could not be properly exploited, however, as the program entered the close-out phase. A longer timeframe for civil society programming is essential to build traction for issues-based advocacy and coalition-building.

There is an opportunity to adopt a more strategic approach to CSO alliance-building from day one. Given the critical importance of building alliances around advocacy issues to amplify impact, a strategic approach should be pursued from day one, using various means, including frequent CSO networking events, regular publications and updates shared with partners, incentives for partners to work together, connecting local initiatives to national ones and vice versa, and forging linkages with influencers and opinion shapers. While PACE worked on all of these fronts to one degree or another,

dedicated staff and resources for concerted efforts in this area would yield better results, provided there is a sufficient timeframe for such efforts to bear fruit.

CSOs are at different stages of development and capacity levels, which requires a flexible approach to partnerships and capacity building. Potential change makers in the Lebanese context range widely in terms of their capacities and sophistication in navigating a challenging political environment. The “usual suspects”—i.e., large, well-established, and typically Beirut-based CSOs—are undoubtedly important players. However, smaller organizations working at a local or regional level, and youth-led organizations, must also be empowered to play a role in civic engagement and advocacy. These types of organizations, while presenting a higher degree of risk from a donor perspective, often hold great promise as they bring fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and the drive and motivation necessary to incite change. They also help to foster local creativity and to challenge the traditional methodologies of larger, sometimes “jaded” organizations that may have become too rigid to contemplate new ways of advancing their causes. PACE carefully considered these nuances and different capacity levels, assuming a calculated risk in engaging nascent, youth-led organizations in the program along with well-established national CSOs. This helped widen the pool of USAID partners with the potential to champion social causes. Such investments should be continued by working across the civil society spectrum, at both the national and local levels, and with CSOs at different stages of organizational development.

Sometimes, the process is as important as the outcomes. The CSOs that are most capable of embarking on issues-based advocacy are typically well-established, elite organizations based in Beirut. For a program to engage CSOs outside the capital, where advocacy is sometimes an unfamiliar concept, it is important to support initiatives aimed at fostering citizen participation in the democratic process. There, the advocacy issues should evolve from this process rather than be imposed by the program (i.e., grassroots-led rather than top-down).

The accumulation of CSO experience should be supported to build momentum and boost capabilities over time. Effective advocacy requires the accumulation of experience, results, and steps towards a larger outcome. With this in mind, successful organizations and campaigns require support over an extended period in order to continually enhance and learn from experience, adapt their approaches to new conditions, and widen their circle of supporters. This will at times justify and in fact necessitate repeat funding to the same organizations to amplify impact or position partners as more effective change agents. USAID and implementing partners should not lose opportunities to capitalize on prior achievements and consolidate gains through repeat funding.

Measuring the success and impact of civil society projects must be realistic and context-specific. A challenge facing any civil society program is how to measure success, while striking a balance between breadth and depth of impact. This requires careful development of a Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) that is realistic and ground-truthed. To make this possible, it is highly recommended that PMPs be reviewed and reassessed yearly so they can be adjusted based on implementation experience and local conditions. In addition, expectations should be tempered by the realm of what is achievable within programmatic constraints and country context. Success is not only measured by the number of laws passed. It can also be measured by an organization’s increased ability to influence the policy-making process, to push for the implementation of existing laws, to advocate *against* detrimental laws and not only *for* new ones, to grow its and understanding of the advocacy process, to generate support from opinion shapers, to enhance its public and media visibility, and so on. Appropriate measures of success should be based on the capacity level of a given partner, the country context, and the multi-pronged advocacy cycle.

Flexibility with branding is critical in the Lebanese context. The PACE branding and marking plan allowed for a degree of flexibility based on exceptions provided by USAID rules. This was essential for the success of the program and its ability to establish local partnerships. Many advocacy CSOs are reluctant to brand their activities as funded by USAID for fear of alienating potential supporters, generating negative press, or fueling suspicions that their work is driven by a foreign agenda. It is important to recognize that this perception does not affect all donor agencies in the same way. Some CSOs are open to branding donor-funded activities tied to UN agencies, for example, but reluctant to brand USAID-sponsored activities because the USG is not viewed as a neutral party in Lebanon. Others are reluctant to brand for security reasons, particularly in areas where anti-U.S. sentiment runs high. Moreover, branding of advocacy and media initiatives compromises the independence of such efforts when neutrality is a critical element of their success. Ultimately, a trade-off must be made between seeking USAID visibility at any cost versus achieving results that advance USAID strategic objectives in Lebanon.

Select Quotes from PACE Partners

“[What PACE did well is support] cross-confessional regional projects on micro and macro issues; institutional development and sustained follow-up; media support; creative initiatives to boost engagement; empowering youth and new NGOs to take initiatives covering areas across Lebanon, whether in Beirut, South, North, Bekaa; diversified grantees; creating a community of like-minded CSOs... [What could have been done better is] more collaboration between grantees; more coordination in event planning (common calendar for all grantees).”—*Georgina Manok, project manager, Lebanese Economic Association (LEA)*

“The critical factors that made it [PACE] successful, in our opinion, are: The quality of staff: PACE team is genuinely driven, very supportive to partners and willing to adapt to new ideas to make impact; Responsiveness to local realities: PACE program design and implementation process was based on local studies and needs and was flexible enough to deal with real issues.”—*Gilbert Doumit, Partner, Beyond Reform and Development (BRD)*

“In our opinion, the PACE program was successful in many ways: PACE followed-up on every step of implementing the programs, which definitely increased the impact of the projects; PACE dealt with the grantees as partners, and not merely as grantees, which enabled us as grantees to get every kind of assistance that we needed throughout the lifetimes of the projects; PACE focused on supporting innovative programs, which previously were not financed by donor agencies ... Personally, I think that PACE was one of the most original programs for NGOs in Lebanon.”—*Haytham Khalaf, director, Lebanese Center for Active Citizenship (LCAC)*

“As an organization, we are struggling not to divert our work and objectives due to the increased donor funding for Syrian refugee assistance. PACE helped us keep the focus on our mission by supporting our civic engagement activities.”—*Maya El Ali, project manager, Association for Development in Akkar*

“Another important success, in our eyes, is the fact that organizations projects were supported regardless of the ‘donors’ trend’ and in fact the PACE program was filling a very important gap by supporting ideas that are not necessarily related to the Syrian refugees crisis in Lebanon, which helped NGOs to highlight and work on ideas that are often forgotten... There are only a few donors investing in civil society organizations that are targeting non-political citizen’s priorities, and none is as close as PACE program is to these organizations.”—*Ahmad Karout, president, Kazamedia*

“PACE future programs should focus on CSO internal governance, financial management and influencing public policies (not only advocating & lobbying for change, but also for CSOs to become effective national and regional stakeholders in public policy evaluation and formulation)... Anticipated programs should call for the establishment and grouping of the various and similar small and fragmented NGOs into more focused, organized, and effective networks and coalitions.”—*Jean Dib-Hajj, director, Knowledge Development Corporation*

Promoting Active Citizen Engagement (PACE)

Lessons Learned – Media Activities

This document is part of a series of Lessons Learned Summaries developed by PACE in the final months of implementation. Each summary examines a key program component (policy development, media, civic engagement, social entrepreneurship, and capacity building).

Background

In Year I of PACE, the program issued a solicitation for media grants, which led to the award of 14 grants to support media-related activities and innovations. As part of the program's integrated approach, 10 media grants incorporated civic engagement activities, and all 11 civic engagement grants incorporated media activities.

Media partners have included CSOs, two television stations, and a digital marketing firm. PACE support helped promote media reform and freedom of expression; introduce new citizen-driven television programming; build the social media presence, media relation skills, and media exposure of partners; and create new media platforms, including an alternative news portal, mobile apps for citizen reporting and civil society news, and community-level print and digital publications. Over 90 percent of PACE grantees expanded their use of media platforms during their partnership with the program.

Objective

- Analyze lessons learned from PACE's approach to media activities.
- Gain insights into program methodologies, results, and impact to inform follow-on projects.
- Document lessons learned for incorporation into the final program report.

Methodology

The following methodologies were used to identify lessons learned:

- Internal workshop involving the entire program team
- Consultations with partners that implemented media activities
- Brief questionnaire sent to partners
- Review and evaluation of grants related to the media component

The analysis focused on examining the following issues:

- Advantages and disadvantages of working across multiple media platforms
- Advantages and disadvantages of partnering with private sector media institutions
- Impact of expanded use of social media networks by program partners

Summary of Lessons Learned

Integrating media work is essential to amplify the reach and impact of CSOs. Any project that seeks to empower CSOs to act as catalysts for change cannot ignore the power of the media in influencing public opinion. The media component of the PACE program was a critical element of success. Overwhelmingly, PACE partners reported positive outcomes from program support in enhancing their media outreach capabilities. Technical assistance, training, and networking with media professionals helped partners increase their reach, exposure, credibility, and ability to influence the public discourse. Future civil society projects should continue to incorporate media activities as a cross-

cutting program component to amplify results and impact. Having dedicated resources with a solid understanding and network of contacts with the media is important for this endeavor.

The complexity of the Lebanese media landscape requires a multifaceted approach to media activities. Lebanon has a plurality of media outlets that offer various viewpoints. At the same time, the majority of mainstream outlets are politically affiliated, providing little room for coverage of citizen concerns in a non-partisan manner. Television remains the primary source of news and information for the Lebanese based on opinion poll data gathered by PACE, followed by the internet, and there is a dearth of community-level media. In this context, working on multiple fronts is necessary: (a) with mainstream media, especially TV, to introduce new programming that gives voice to citizen concerns, (b) fostering the creation of alternative media such as non-partisan news portals, blogs, and print/digital publications, (c) empowering CSOs to leverage the power of social media and digital tools to make their voices heard, (d) supporting grassroots communications, including those that use the arts to disseminate messages, and finally (e) supporting CSO efforts to reform existing media laws to create a more enabling environment for the growth of independent media. These efforts, all of which were pursued by PACE, can be leveraged by future and ongoing USAID projects.

There is no ‘cookie-cutter’ approach to media activities, but being strategic is critical. Every CSO needs to craft its own context-specific media strategy. Simple, standard tools can be used to guide CSOs through this process, but the strategy itself will differ from one organization to another. Too often, CSOs focus on communication outputs, such as producing newsletters and brochures, without analyzing whether the output will achieve desired outcomes. Teaching CSOs to adopt strategic communication methodologies helps them make more effective use of various media platforms. To that end, CSOs must learn to formulate communication objectives, define target audiences, and develop effective messages—all of which are prerequisites to producing communication outputs that achieve results.

Building CSO social media presence has become a necessity and is also useful for M&E purposes. Establishing a social media presence is no longer an option for CSOs given the popularity of social media networks in Lebanon, particularly among youth, and growing media convergence, whereby mainstream outlets are increasingly influenced by what happens in social media. The efforts PACE partners have made in growing their social media presence largely paid off in terms of increased visibility as well as audience engagement and participation in offline activities. In addition, an unexpected benefit of encouraging CSOs to build a social media presence is that it provided the PACE team with rapid, often real-time access to information about CSO activities as well as immediate and candid feedback from beneficiaries. This helped enhance program reporting and M&E.

Digital technologies are promising tools for citizen reporting and engagement, but must be accompanied by extensive marketing online and offline. PACE piloted the use of digital technologies such as mobile applications and crowdsourcing platforms to support awareness-raising and advocacy campaigns. Measuring the impact of these efforts has been challenging, and citizen usage of mobile apps created by CSOs has not met result targets thus far. What is clear is that intensive marketing is required to promote broad usage of such tools. This is not to say that such efforts should be abandoned, but rather that they should be reassessed before further investments are made, especially given the possibility of delayed impact after closing of the PACE program. Moreover, CSOs should be challenged to carefully assess the need to create new platforms versus using existing ones in new ways.

Linking CSOs to private sector marketing professionals helps to strengthen their campaigns. PACE has encouraged its partners to engage marketing professionals to help them craft effective advocacy campaigns and materials, and some have been able to leverage significant private sector resources from prominent marketing firms. This is a sound approach as CSOs need the assistance of

creative professionals to project their messages in ways that resonate with target audiences. There is an opportunity to further leverage contributions from marketing firms and professionals, such as by negotiating group rates for multiple CSOs and encouraging corporate social responsibility investments in CSO campaigns.

Media studies tend to duplicate existing efforts by local and international organizations. The media studies produced with PACE support provided informed analysis of the state of the Lebanese media and a useful methodology for assessing change over time. However, there are several local and international organizations that produce similar studies, which made it difficult to add value to existing efforts. The investments made in the media studies would have yielded more meaningful results had they been targeted to enhancing CSOs' media relations skills—an area in which PACE made modest investments that generated significant media exposure and public visibility for the program and its partners.

There is an opportunity to support media monitoring, but this requires a long-term investment. Lebanese organizations that purport to be “media watchdogs” conduct media monitoring on a very limited basis. Given the state of the Lebanese media, there is a need for a solid media watchdog that carries out daily monitoring, produces regular critiques, and holds the media accountable to the public. However, such an effort requires a long-term investment as media monitoring is a labor-intensive process requiring the use of a sophisticated standards-based approach to media critiquing. Prior donor-funded efforts in this regard have been short-lived and unsustainable, focusing primarily on media monitoring during election cycles, when sectarian incitement in the media is typically at its highest. In the absence of long-term funding commitments, advocacy CSOs should receive assistance and training in media monitoring on the public policy issues they seek to influence so that they can in turn influence media coverage of those issues. PACE piloted this on a small scale, but more should be done in this area.

Partnerships with television are challenging, but can yield impact if properly exploited. From an administrative perspective, managing relationships with television is difficult because TV professionals are not accustomed to donor and reporting requirements. Another challenge is that all TV stations are driven by the bottomline and seek programs that generate high viewership ratings and advertising revenues. Nevertheless, such partnerships can be exploited for the benefit of civil society provided sufficient leverage can be made on TV executives to secure primetime and ensure proper coordination with CSOs. These conditions must be negotiated at the highest levels prior to award in order to obtain binding commitments. In addition, there are opportunities to explore “edutainment” programming to disseminate advocacy and awareness-raising messages and to capitalize on the interest of prominent TV personalities in lending their name and visibility to support a cause.

Communication products can be used to foster CSO networking and information sharing. In addition to offline activities, meetings, workshops, and extensive monitoring, PACE frequently used social media and e-mail to communicate with its partners. As we began to assess lessons learned, a common message from partners is that they would have welcomed more regular and formal communications, such as a PACE newsletter, a shared calendar of all grantee activities, and frequent networking events. All of these recommendations are valid and would have further contributed to encouraging networking among partners. Future projects should use all of the means at their disposal, including but not limited to social media, to encourage CSO networking and information sharing.

Careful messaging and flexibility with branding and marking helps project a positive image of USAID support. PACE invested a great deal of time and effort from the onset to carefully crafting the image of the program and relaying appropriate messages to partners and other audiences. Strategic

communications about PACE, and judicious use of USAID branding and marking, proved critical in cultivating a positive image of the program among civil society and in the media. Given that some anti-U.S. media outlets seize any opportunity to generate negative press about USAID or USG efforts in Lebanon, this careful approach helped to protect the public image of the PACE program.

There is an opportunity to formalize networks with influencers and opinion shapers. Cultivating relationships with influencers and opinion shapers, including current and former reform-minded government officials, legislators, academics, and public figures, was valuable in raising the visibility and amplifying the impact of CSO activities and campaigns. Follow-on projects could further capitalize on this by formalizing such a network to advise on programmatic strategies and facilitate access to key decision-makers when needed.

Select Quotes from PACE Partners

“During our partnership with PACE, we realized the importance of using multiple platforms to get our messages across. We went through internal restructuring to integrate digital technologies in all of our work. We developed a social media strategy, expanded our partnerships with universities, and broadened our circle of stakeholders to reach deeper at the grassroots level and in different parts of the country. It was a major turning point for our organization.”—*Roula Mikhael, director, Maharat Foundation*

“Social media is a game changer that has influenced the way we work. We used to produce technical reports with excellent research and viable solutions to our country’s problems, but few people read them... We still produce well-researched studies, but we’re also reaching beyond economic experts to the average citizen through our blog, Facebook, and videos.”—*Georgina Manok, project manager, Lebanese Economic Association*

“If you’re not on social media nowadays, it’s like you don’t exist... We document all our work on our website, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. By doing this, we are modeling the transparency we want to see in public decision-making. This helps us gain the trust of our online followers. That’s why when we call for action, they answer the call.”—*Mohamad Ayoub, executive director, Nahnoo*

“Ultimately, social media is just a tool... Inciting people to act is the most important but also most difficult stage of online engagement... We’re not just talking online, we’re acting offline too. As a result, decision-makers consider us in their decisions. They take us seriously.”—*Lea Baroudi, president, MARCH*

Promoting Active Citizen Engagement (PACE)

Lessons Learned – Policy Development

This document is part of a series of Lessons Learned summary sheets developed by the PACE program team in the final six months of implementation of the three-year program. Each summary sheet examines a major program component and captures findings based on internal discussions, grant evaluations, and partner consultations.

Background

In its first year of implementation, PACE commissioned a national opinion poll to identify citizen concerns and develop policy recommendations on priority concerns. Based on survey findings, six themes were selected for the development of policy briefs, which were then used to issue calls for proposals: (1) cost of living, (2) youth unemployment, (3) confessionalism/ sectarian tensions, (4) corruption, (5) quality of public services, and (6) freedom of expression/independent media. Two PACE partners—Beyond Reform and Development (BRD) and the Youth Economic Forum (YEF)—developed the policy briefs based on broad consultations with relevant stakeholders around the country, and then provided limited training and coaching on policy development to select civil society organizations (CSOs).

A second opinion poll was commissioned in Year 2 to gauge citizen perceptions and attitudes towards the priority themes in target geographic areas where the program works. A third poll in Year 3 (under way) aims to measure changes in perceptions and attitudes as compared to the baseline established in Year 2.

Objective

- Analyze lessons learned from PACE's approach to policy development and the use of polling/surveys to inform programmatic priorities.
- Gain insights into program methodologies, results, and impact to inform follow-on projects.
- Document lessons learned for incorporation into the final program report.

Methodology

The following methodologies were used to identify lessons learned:

- Internal workshop involving the program's technical team (civil society specialists, media specialist, M&E specialist, and chief of party)
- Consultations with policy development partners, namely BRD and YEF
- Review and evaluation of relevant grants related to the policy development component
- Brief questionnaire sent to partners that implemented advocacy interventions

The analysis focused on examining the following issues:

- Advantages and disadvantages of conducting national opinion polls versus using rapid assessment techniques to identify citizen concerns, select priority themes, and develop policy recommendations
- Advantages and disadvantages of developing policy briefs and encouraging CSOs to adopt them versus supporting individual CSOs in crafting their own policy recommendations

Summary of Lessons Learned

Opinion polls are not useful tools for M&E purposes. Although they are part of the program's Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP), the opinion polls commissioned by PACE were not useful for M&E purposes. For a program with a modest budget and three-year duration, the expectation of achieving national-level impact on the general public's perceptions and attitudes was unrealistic. Moreover, the results of opinion polls cannot be directly attributed to PACE since they are also influenced by many factors external to the program, such as the political situation and security conditions, among others. Alternatively, rapid assessment methodologies are more appropriate M&E tools for a program like PACE, including targeted questionnaires and focus group discussions with program participants and beneficiaries. Combined with other qualitative methods, such as grant evaluations and success stories, these tools help to tell the full story of the program.

Opinion polls can be useful tools for project design. At the same time, opinion polls can be useful tools for project design and Mission-wide strategy development. Conducting opinion polls at regular intervals and sharing the results and analysis with implementing partners could contribute to developing complementary strategies and messages across USAID-funded projects in various sectors.

Opinion poll results are time-bound and can be misleading. Media coverage of specific matters when an opinion poll is conducted can skew the results towards an issue that is in the limelight at one point in time but may subside after the poll, or may not represent a long-term civil society priority. Rather than using opinion polls to determine grant-making themes, a civil society strengthening project like PACE could have invested the resources devoted to polling in aggregating CSO opinions, needs, and priorities. In fact, some issues that did not emerge as priorities in the national opinion poll, such as women's rights, have been a long-time focus of CSOs and are key to promoting democratic change. The initial opinion poll showed that the majority of the Lebanese do not see women's rights as a priority and this theme was therefore not selected. Yet the fact that the issue did not rise to the surface through a poll should not preclude assistance to CSOs that are working to turn it into a national priority, if this furthers USAID strategic objectives in Lebanon. In conclusion, the time and resources invested in the initial opinion poll would have been better spent on building relationships with CSOs and civic actors. Civil society knows the issues of concern to Lebanese citizens and has a long history of working on these priorities. During program start-up, taking stock of where CSOs have been, where they are today, and where they are heading would have been more useful from a programmatic perspective than gathering polling data.

Basing policy development on opinion poll data is not effective. For the reasons cited above, basing the development of policy briefs on opinion poll data is not effective because some of the issues cited as priorities by the general public cannot be influenced by CSOs, such as security conditions and the general economic situation, for example. Here too, listening to CSOs by identifying priorities that they have the potential to influence would have better served the PACE program. The initial months of PACE could have been devoted to consultations with civic actors to gather this information while at the same time initiating the relationship and trust-building process with civic actors.

Moreover, given that the baseline opinion poll could only be conducted in Year 2—after priority themes were selected based on the Year 1 poll—the timeframe between the baseline and final poll was much too short to yield meaningful results. PACE compensated for these flaws through the use of focus group discussions, questionnaires targeting program beneficiaries, and other rapid assessment methods. Nevertheless, the resources devoted to polling work would have been better invested in core program activities.

CSOs are not active or capable of advocating on cost-of-living and youth unemployment issues. While the national opinion poll revealed that cost of living and youth unemployment are high priorities

for Lebanese citizens, civil society lacks the capacity to effectively advocate for changes in policies or practices related to these macroeconomic issues. Reflecting this, PACE received only a handful of applications related to these themes in response to widely advertised grant solicitations. Making a significant impact on these fronts requires multi-year funding of economic growth programs that engage national public institutions with the capability and political will for change. There are very few CSOs involved in economic policy-making, such as YEF and the Lebanese Economic Association (LEA), but which have limited resources, capabilities, and access to decision-makers.

There is an opportunity to enhance CSO capabilities in economic policy-making. Based on the above constraints and challenges, there is an opportunity for future programs to build the capability of CSOs in economic policy making. Economic issues are often perceived as too complex and daunting for CSOs. However, organizations like YEF, LEA, and the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (LCPS) have the expertise to demystify economic concepts and help CSOs identify areas for potential advocacy. At the same time, the resources and capacity levels of these organizations differ widely (YEF and LEA are small youth-led organizations, while LCPS is a well-established think tank). Capacity-building efforts should aim to build linkages and transfer knowledge and skills among like-minded organizations involved or interested in economic policy-making. Partnerships with university economic departments and experts would also be beneficial in this regard, as would linkages with USAID’s economic growth programs to help further USAID’s overall strategic objectives in Lebanon.

Developing policy briefs is useful to shape advocacy interventions, but should be combined with empowering CSOs to conduct their own policy analysis. Partners involved in advocacy interventions found the policy briefs developed by PACE useful to their work because they provided reliable data to help shape their campaigns and frame advocacy arguments. PACE partners recognized the importance of policy analysis for any advocacy effort in order to identify and promote realistic policy solutions. The training and coaching sessions in policy development, conducted by BRD and YEF as part of their PACE grant, also helped empower CSOs to use an evidence-based approach to formulating policies. By going through the policy analysis themselves, CSOs better understand the policy issue and feel a greater sense of ownership over the proposed solutions. That said, it must be recognized that not all CSOs have the interest and capability to engage in policy analysis. Developing and diffusing policy briefs can help CSOs craft consistent and evidence-based advocacy messages and strategies. In conclusion, the approach to policy development must account for the varying levels of capacity among Lebanese CSOs by combining the development of policy briefs with training and coaching assistance in policy analysis. This was effectively piloted by PACE but should be expanded further for deeper impact.

There is an opportunity to further enhance CSO capacity in policy development. Based on lessons learned from the PACE experience, future civil society strengthening initiatives should enhance linkages between organizations with policy development expertise and CSOs engaged in advocacy campaigns. Formulating a mechanism for continuous access to training, coaching, and technical assistance from policy experts throughout the project cycle would help elevate the capacity of CSOs to embark on advocacy interventions, formulate effective arguments, and refine their campaigns throughout implementation for greater impact.

Select Quotes from PACE Partners

“The LEA project topics are in direct relation with the policy briefs prepared by PACE... The briefs were in line with LEA’s vision for the solutions of these problems and helped in framing the main arguments of the advocacy campaign... The briefs will remain part of our ongoing project campaign, and future work related to these topics.”—*Georgina Manok, project manager, Lebanese Economic Association (LEA)*

“The policy briefs proved very useful in LOST’s advocacy campaigns implementation as they centered around enhancing civic engagement, increasing cooperation between public and private sectors, facilitating and upgrading public participation and accountability of local governments in addition to ensuring accessibility to public services... We have used the policy briefs to design other projects.”—*Salah Zeaier, project manager, Lebanese Organization for Studies and Training (LOST)*

“The policy briefs were very useful as they provided reliable background information... to design projects and campaigns according to the needs and priorities in Lebanon... Policy briefs are a strong baseline to start and design a campaign and it provides a higher chance of success for the campaign since it relies on solid background information.”—*Lama El Awad, Lebanese Center for Civic Education (LCCE)*

“The policy was more top-down while Nahnoo works with the community and decision-makers at the same time, but we got benefit from the study structure to develop our public space study and suggested policy... We used the study we made to get a new fund from NDI. The study took the [PACE] policy structure and suggestions into consideration.”—*Mohamad Ayoub, executive director, Nahnoo*

“It is always good to develop policy briefs in Lebanon particularly because a) access to information is limited, b) there is much replication in research and studies, and c) there is a large number of NGOs working on similar issues. For these reasons, compiling data, doing participatory analysis, and proposing policy recommendations can help in more focused and targeted efforts by NGOs... Developing a policy brief and diffusing it can inspire and engage a larger number of NGOs on the same policy issue.”—*Carmen Geha, partner, Beyond Reform and Development (BRD)*

“We believe the process of developing policy briefs is crucial prior to any advocacy effort by NGOs. A proper policy analysis helps NGOs... understand the root causes of a policy issue, the different alternatives to solving it, and the realistic solutions that they can push for... The coaching sessions proved to be a real success as they led to opening to channels of possible collaboration with other CSOs. None of the CSOs had been introduced before to the concept of policy development using an evidence-based approach to formulating policies. The positive impact could be felt as YEF kept on receiving requests for introductory coaching sessions even after completing the 5 sessions within the framework of the project.”—*Cedric Choukeir, project manager, Youth Economic Forum (YEF)*

Promoting Active Citizen Engagement (PACE)

Lessons Learned – Social Entrepreneurship

This document is part of a series of Lessons Learned Summaries developed by PACE in the final months of implementation. Each summary examines a key program component (policy development, media, civic engagement, social entrepreneurship, and capacity building).

Background

PACE adopted a two-pronged approach to social entrepreneurship: (1) we designed and supported the establishment of a social entrepreneurship incubator called Nabad, which was implemented by Arcenciel in partnership with Beyond Reform and Development (BRD) and (2) we provided small grants of up to \$15,000 to 15 social entrepreneurs incubated by Nabad after participating in a nationwide competition—the largest competition of its kind held in Lebanon so far.

This approach helped to build the capabilities of existing and aspiring social entrepreneurs by transferring knowledge and skills from local experts, coaches, and mentors, while providing financial start-up support to promising social entrepreneurs selected through a competitive process. PACE social entrepreneurship grantees include both individuals and CSOs working in various sectors, such as youth empowerment, income-generation for women, and the environment. Out of the 15 social entrepreneurship grantees, 12 successfully met grant objectives and are on a path towards sustainability; 1 is still in progress; and 2 were terminated for delays and performance issues (though both received incubation support that provides them with the skills to continue on their own initiative).

Objective

- Analyze lessons learned from PACE's approach to social entrepreneurship.
- Gain insights into program methodologies, results, and impact to inform follow-on projects.
- Document lessons learned for incorporation into the final program report.

Methodology

The following methodologies were used to identify lessons learned:

- An internal workshop involving the entire program team.
- Consultations with social entrepreneurship partners.
- Review and evaluation of social entrepreneurship grants.

The analysis focused on examining the following issues:

- Advantages and disadvantages of the incubator model adopted by PACE
- Challenges of integrating social entrepreneurship activities with other program components
- Social entrepreneurship as a model for generating income and enhancing the financial sustainability of CSOs
- Viability of social enterprises in the current enabling environment and legal context of Lebanon

Summary of Lessons Learned

Social entrepreneurship is a promising model for fostering innovation in tackling social problems.

Given the myriad social problems plaguing Lebanon, social entrepreneurship promotes innovative problem-solving in ways that produce both social impact and economic value. The entrepreneurial spirit is strong among Lebanese youth. Inspiring them to embark on social entrepreneurship ventures can help create

income-generation opportunities, reduce the brain drain, and offer scalable solutions to longstanding social problems.

Social entrepreneurship is a poorly understood concept that requires citizen and CSO education.

Social entrepreneurship is often confused with corporate social responsibility. While it is an evolving field, social entrepreneurship encompasses a set of key principles: identifying a social problem and an innovative solution that yields economic benefits, calculated risk-taking, dealing with failures as a learning opportunity, commitment to fair working conditions and business ethics, combining the best of the non-profit and business worlds, and seeking constant innovation for scaling and sustaining social impact. There is no single model or “one-size-fits-all” for social entrepreneurship. The range of options includes NGOs that incorporate income-generation in their activities, start-up businesses set up as social enterprises, and commercial businesses that reinvest all or part of their profit into social causes. More time and resources are needed to build a common understanding of the concept as well as educate existing and aspiring social entrepreneurs about the gamut of choices available to them. Through its design and support for the Nabad incubator, PACE contributed to building awareness about social entrepreneurship, but more must be done in this area given the novelty of the concept.

There is a need for a social entrepreneurship incubator. For the reasons above, there is a real need for a social entrepreneurship incubator in Lebanon. Existing business incubators do not specifically target social enterprises. Incubation support is critical because a social enterprise, particularly when led by an NGO, must adopt new ways of doing business, which requires changing mindsets as well as operational modalities. An incubator can train, coach, mentor, provide basic startup tools, and foster linkages with potential private sector sponsors and investors.

Selecting the right partners is critical to successfully launch social entrepreneurship initiatives. PACE used a collaborative approach in selecting individual social entrepreneurship grantees, whereby the prime Nabad implementer provided input into the grant evaluation process. In hindsight, the PACE program should have maintained full control over selecting grantees, while welcoming input from Nabad experts as non-voting members of its grant evaluation committee. A program team is the best placed to carefully assess the grant-worthiness of individual entrepreneurs. This may have avoided some of the most problematic grantees, who were seen as strong candidates by Nabad experts but proved to be poor performers during the life of their grant. Since risk is inherent in supporting start-ups at the ideas stage, a more stringent set of selection criteria should be used for such applicants.

Grant systems and procedures need to be adapted to social entrepreneurs. Supporting start-up social enterprises requires time and dedicated resources given the unique set of challenges they face, which are significantly different from those facing other PACE partners. The time available for social entrepreneurship grants was very limited (3-6 months per grantee), and is not sufficient for effective start-up of a new venture. This was due to a number of factors, including delays incurred by the Nabad implementer, the challenges of developing grant documents for 15 applicants at a time, and the length of time for obtaining the necessary grant approvals. Future projects that seek to support social enterprises should adapt their systems and procedures to maximize speed, flexibility, and efficiency.

There is an opportunity to promote social entrepreneurship as a model for CSO financial sustainability. As part of its mandate, the PACE program was challenged to support social enterprises in a range of sectors, including individual entrepreneurs, so as not to miss opportunities to advance innovative ideas. This made it difficult to fully integrate social entrepreneurship into other program components. Future civil society projects should continue to promote social entrepreneurship but adopt a more strategic, targeted approach by (a) encouraging partner CSOs to incorporate social entrepreneurship components into

their activities and (b) supporting individual entrepreneurs based on selection criteria that require collaboration with CSOs.

The legal and enabling environment for the growth of social entrepreneurship in Lebanon is limiting. The legal context in Lebanon does not provide the necessary tax and other business incentives for the growth of social entrepreneurship. Consequently, there is an opportunity to advocate for a more enabling legal environment by forming a community of practice or body bringing together social entrepreneurs with legal experts to agree on needed legal reforms and formulate an advocacy plan.

Select Quotes from PACE Partners

“As for the Social Entrepreneurship project, it helped us develop all the systems, programs and tools for an incubator that are scalable today not only in Lebanon but across the region. The resources that we created are highly needed in the region and some of the methods and tools we developed, we are using in Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, Iraq and Kuwait...PACE grants requirements are not adapted to a social entrepreneurship endeavor; it is very bureaucratic, slow and creates grants dependency.”—*Gilbert Doumit, Partner, Beyond Reform and Development (BRD)*

“PACE has been really valuable in helping us go to the ‘next level’... We developed the foundation of transitioning into a social enterprise via our business plan, and were given the opportunity to bring a consultant on board to advise us more closely. Collaborating with a program like Nabad was very effective. It helped us go from one level to an entirely different, more advanced level regarding various aspects of our program (HR, legal, financial, governance, etc). The workshops and trainings were really valuable... I left feeling much more knowledgeable about the various aspects of running a social enterprise.”—*Zeina Saab, founder and executive director, The Nawaya Network*

“Support and motivation, through your dedicated PACE and Nabad team, was amazing and a push [that] helped in attaining better exposure... The three intensive [training] days was a great introduction to the program and social business. The coaching [and] transfer of know-how with experts covering all fields of the business (finance, accounting, marketing, legal, production, etc) was great, while the mentoring was weak... The model of placing a dedicated consultant expert (paid) with specific tasks would be of better effect.”—*Patrick El Zoghbi, founder, Gueco Upcycle*

“PACE helped us get started with our association, get exposure and push ourselves to organize a lot of activities in a short period of time. It also helped us... network with other key people and associations... I really appreciated the one-on-one assistance and follow up with PACE team... I think it’s very important for NGOs to incorporate an entrepreneurial dimension into their work and stop relying solely on external funding... Having said this I think new NGOs need a lot of support in order to adopt this model, and the current instability in the country and region increases the risk of the failure of income-generating projects.”—*Rita Khawand, co-founder, SOILS Permaculture Association*

“PACE helped me push Chreek to a higher level...The program is very professional, something we do not really have in Lebanon. More professionalism is needed to be taught to all entrepreneurs to get better businesses. Financial trainings should have been more elaborated...The incubator model was very good and it had a good impact on our social business. The mentorship part needed more studying in a way to be regulated with mentor and mentee... We are still in need of finances to grow more the business, as well as networking.”—*George Ghafary, founder, Chreek*

“The Nabad incubator model is a very successful model, it helped a lot of new ideas to become real social enterprises, and the ones already established to make considerable improvement.”—*Patsy Jarrouje, manager, Mommy Made*

ANNEX VIII: OTHER CIVIL SOCIETY PROGRAMS

Other civil society programs that operated in Lebanon prior to or during PACE's existence included:

- USAID programs
 - BALADI CAP, a four-year program ending in September 2017, that provides institutional support to up to 50 CSOs helping implement the BALADI municipal governance project. (BALADI itself is implemented by MSI and shared a chief of party with PACE for much of PACE's existence);
 - Expand Your Horizons, a three-year project ending in September 2015 implemented by World Learning that trains 400 individuals from 150 CSOs and promotes networking;
 - Lebanon Civic Support Initiative (LCSI), begun in 2007 by the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) and implemented by Chemonics. PACE was envisioned as the successor to LCSI, but OTI has continued some civil society work in northern Lebanon that relates to its larger program responding to the Syrian refugee crisis;
 - Transparency and Accountability Grants (TAG), a \$9.35 million project from 2001 to 2011 and implemented by AMIDEAST that aimed to promote and foster transparency, accountability and good governance;
- Other USG programs
 - CSOs Institutional Strengthening Program, begun in 2013 funded by MEPI and implemented by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the Université Saint-Joseph in Beirut. The program provides support to CSOs less than three years old;
 - MEPI/Lebanon overall has oversight of \$20 million in programming through 23 grants. Of that, \$500,000 is granted directly through the embassy's small grants program, with another \$1 million in MEPI local grants. The remainder is decided by MEPI offices in Tunis and Washington.
 - The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) provides support to Lebanese civil society through direct grants and the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE). Direct grantees in 2013 included two PACE partners, Maharat Foundation and Nahnoo;
 - The National Democratic Institute (NDI) has run several civil society initiatives in Lebanon. With USAID funding, NDI ran a 14-month program through May 2014 to support civil society organizations and build support for electoral reform. From 2010 to January 2013, NDI used NED funding to operate the Public Policy Initiative, which used policy development workshops, a policy hub, and policy forums to help civic organizations develop data-based policy solutions;
 - The International Republican Institute (IRI) uses MEPI funding to support a small CSO program to complement its consultations with the political parties, aimed at building grassroots support for moderate leaders through CSO coaching, consultation and subgrants. IRI conducts opinion polls and uses polling data to encourage inclusive and moderate politics among parties and to support moderate CSO voices.
- Other international donors
 - AFKAR III, a European Union program that in 2014 provided grants totaling 2.85 million euros to 12 Lebanese civil society organizations;
 - Peace Building Project Phase III, a United Nations Development Program (UNDP) project that runs through 2015 and builds on work since 2006 to promote social cohesion in education, balanced media coverage, local peacebuilding, and reconciliation.

ANNEX IX: PACE GENDER ANALYSIS

I. INTRODUCTION

In 2012, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) adopted a comprehensive set of interlinked policies and strategies designed to reduce gender inequality across USAID development projects around the world. This includes a Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy,¹ which calls for integrating approaches and actions to advance gender equality throughout the program cycle.

Among the new rules introduced by the Agency is the mandatory requirement for conducting a gender analysis at the onset of every project in order to inform project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. A gender analysis is designed to be used proactively to address gender constraints and gaps during project design; seize opportunities to promote women’s leadership and participation; and identify potential adverse impacts and/or risks of gender-based exclusion that could result from planned activities.

Ultimately, the gender analysis aims to set a foundation for advancing three overarching outcomes captured in USAID’s Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy:

- Reduce gender disparities in access to, control over, and benefit from resources, wealth, opportunities, and services (economic, social, political, and cultural);
- Reduce gender-based violence and mitigate its harmful effects on individuals and communities, so that all people can live healthy and productive lives; and
- Increase the capability of women and girls to realize their rights, determine their life outcomes, and influence decision-making in households, communities, and societies.

“Gender equality and female empowerment are now universally recognized as core development objectives, fundamental for the realization of human rights, and key to effective and sustainable development outcomes.”

—USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, 2012

The Promoting Active Citizen Engagement (PACE) program in Lebanon was launched in October 2011 and is scheduled to close in September 2014. While PACE was designed well before issuance of the Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, and was thus not engineered to generate gender-specific results, the program team has been cognizant of gender considerations from the very start and has made a concerted effort to ensure program benefits extend to both women and men.

II. PACE RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND INDICATORS

The strategic objective of PACE is to strengthen civil society’s ability to act as a catalyst for change through civic advocacy and participation that contribute to a cohesive national identity while preserving Lebanon’s social and political pluralism. Three program-level Intermediate Results (IRs) are designed to further the achievement of the strategic objective:

- IR 1: Policy alternatives developed based on expressed citizen concerns
- IR 2: Citizen concerns and policy alternatives publicized in media
- IR 3: Citizen concerns addressed or advocated by strengthened civic actors

The PACE results framework also incorporates two cross-cutting IRs that are reflected across program activities and approaches: “CSO and citizen networking platforms strengthened or created” and “cross-communal dialogue and conflict mitigation supported.”

¹ “Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy,” USAID, March 2012, http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pdact200.pdf.

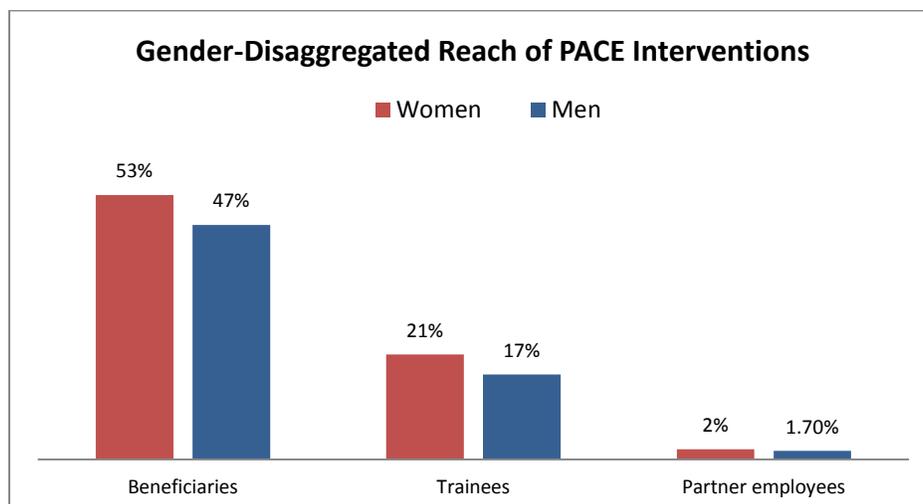
To advance these results, PACE partners with Lebanese civil society organizations (CSOs) and civic actors through civic engagement, media, capacity building, and social entrepreneurship grants. PACE partners include CSOs operating at the national and local levels in various parts of the country, including the North, Beqaa, South, and greater Beirut area, and targeting diverse beneficiaries with a particular focus on youth, women, and vulnerable groups.

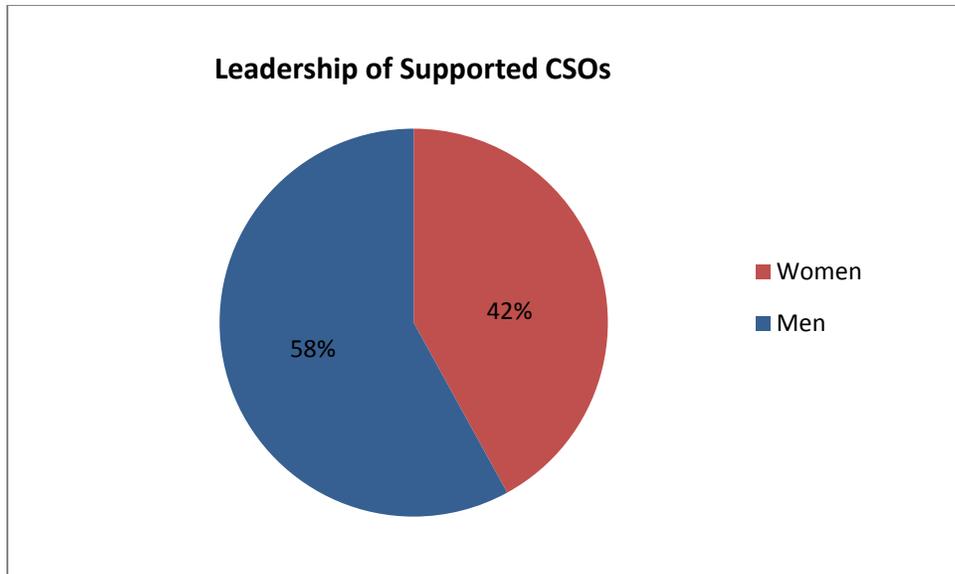
PACE falls under USAID/Lebanon’s Assistance Objective I in the Mission’s Country Strategy for 2009-2013: “Targeted Governing Institutions and Civil Society Organizations are More Responsive to Lebanese Citizens.” The program feeds into the Mission’s IR 1.4, “CSOs engaged on reforms that serve the national interest” and its two sub-IRs—IR 1.4.1, “CSOs are sustainable institutions” and IR 1.4.2, “CSOs effectively advocate and monitor at national and local levels.”

The PACE Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) tracks eight key impact and outcome indicators that are directly linked to the program’s results framework:

- Percentage of citizens who feel that their concerns are well-represented by civil society organizations
- Percentage of citizens who feel they can make a difference in their community
- Number of NGOs that use program-produced policy research/briefs and civic education materials in their activities and campaigns
- Percentage of grantee organizations expanding their use of media platforms
- Number of USG-assisted Media-Sector Civil Society Organizations (CSO) and/or Institutions that serve to strengthen the independent media or journalists
- Percentage of CSOs that have improved internal organizational, media and advocacy capacity
- Number of public civic engagement activities held by USG-supported CSOs
- Number of social entrepreneurship concepts incubated by the program

While none of the indicators in the PACE PMP are specifically focused on gender-related results, all people indicators are disaggregated by sex in order to measure differing impact and outcomes on women and men, and ensure that both women and men are benefiting equally from the program. As of January 2014, PACE had reached 3,616 female beneficiaries and 3,246 male beneficiaries, trained 1,428 women and 1,143 men, supported the employment of 142 women and 119 men within partner organizations, and assisted 18 women-led CSOs and 25 men-led CSOs.





III. GENDER ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY AND PURPOSE

“Gender analysis examines the different but interdependent roles of men and women and the relations between the sexes. It also involves an examination of the rights and opportunities of men and women, power relations, and access to and control over resources. Gender analysis identifies disparities, investigates why such disparities exist, determines whether they are detrimental, and if so, looks at how they can be remedied.”² Ultimately, gender analysis seeks to ensure that donor-funded programming reflects the needs and differing realities of both men and women, and can serve as a vehicle for promoting gender equality and female empowerment.

In 2013, the PACE Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP) and M&E Specialist attended two gender-related workshops organized by USAID’s Performance and Monitoring Program in Lebanon (PMPL), and then transferred the knowledge gained to the rest of the program team. The first workshop, held in June 2013, focused on “Gender Mainstreaming in USAID Programs” and aimed at introducing USAID implementing partners to the Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy and other relevant documents, such as the USAID/Lebanon Mission Order on implementation of the policy³ and ADS Chapter 201 on Planning.⁴ The second workshop, held in December 2013, introduced participants to a draft Toolkit for Gender Analysis specifically developed for USAID/Lebanon. The toolkit provides USAID implementing partners with guidelines, tips, and tools for undertaking a gender analysis.

Based on information and knowledge acquired during these workshops, as well as recommendations from PMPL, the PACE program undertook a simplified gender analysis exercise in January 2014. With just nine months of implementation left, PACE recognized the importance of taking stock of

² “Guide to Gender Integration and Analysis: Additional Help for ADS Chapters 201 and 203,” USAID, March 31, 2010, p. 5, <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/201sab.pdf>

³ “USAID/Lebanon Mission Order No. 13/02: Implementation of Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment,” February 12, 2013.

⁴ “ADS Chapter 201: Planning,” September 30, 2013, <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/201.pdf>.

achievements, challenges, and lessons learned as they relate to gender issues in order to assist the program team in:

- Examining gender issues that affect the program and identifying any gaps in outcomes and impact on males and females at the program level;
- Supplementing quantitative sex-disaggregated data with qualitative analysis that can feed into results reporting and programmatic approaches;
- Identifying new opportunities for fostering women’s leadership and participation; and
- Presenting consolidated information on gender integration efforts, which may be useful for program evaluators in assessing the extent to which PACE sought to identify and address gender gaps.

As part of the gender analysis exercise, PACE used the Six Domains of Gender Analysis framework as its methodology, relying on the guiding questions contained in USAID/Lebanon’s Draft Toolkit for Gender Analysis as well as the Automated Directives System (ADS), particularly tips for conducting gender analysis at the program level.⁵

The analysis was carried out using a participatory process that involved the entire program team, including an internal workshop held on January 23, 2014, as well as knowledge-sharing discussions with the BALADI CAP and BALADI Plus programs managed by MSI. The analysis therefore captures our own observations and experience with program partners and beneficiaries since PACE was launched in October 2011, in addition to examination of the sex-disaggregated data collected since the start of the program.

IV. WHY CONSIDER GENDER IN CIVIL SOCIETY PROGRAMS?

Gender is an important dimension of work in the civil society sector. To be effective, civil society strengthening programs must ensure that there is a broad range of diverse organizations that have the capacity to represent the interests of men and women, involve both men and women in their activities, and work for the benefit of both sexes.

This goes well beyond simply targeting women’s CSOs as partners. While women’s CSOs are key stakeholders, they are not the only ones and some are not equipped to advocate for gender equality and female empowerment. By virtue of their geographic focus areas or missions, many CSOs in Lebanon focus on charitable activities along confessional lines, including women-led organizations, thus perpetuating the confessional divisions that inherently run counter to fostering inclusion and equality—albeit inadvertently in most cases. In addition, few women’s organizations have a clear understanding of basic concepts related to gender, gender mainstreaming, and female empowerment. This has resulted in a predominance of projects that target women but address their needs in isolation from the overall socioeconomic, cultural, and political context.

In fact, there appears to be a general lack of awareness within civil society of the connection between gender inequality and broader issues such as human rights, sustainable development, and poverty. Moreover, fragmentation within the Lebanese body politic and society at large also impacts the civil society sector, where coalition building is weak. This has undermined the ability of civil society to

⁵ “Tips for Conducting a Gender Analysis at the Activity or Project Level: Additional Help for ADS Chapter 201,” USAID, March 17, 2011, <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/201sae.pdf>

translate gender issues into national issues, to consider national issues from a gender perspective, or to develop a unified vision for women's empowerment.

Gender considerations in civil society programming are thus part and parcel of efforts to engage a broad cross-section of organizations in addressing the concerns of Lebanese citizens. There are many different types of CSOs with varying capacity levels, geographic areas of operation, sectors of work, and target beneficiaries. Lebanese CSOs range from sophisticated advocacy-oriented organizations working at the national level, to small community-based groups that seek to improve local conditions at the village level. Similarly, CSO mandates vary from advocating on behalf of particular groups to providing direct services, mobilizing citizens, conducting research, and lobbying for change.

Civil society programming must therefore take into account the vast differences between CSOs that have the potential to act as change agents in the Lebanese environment, with a view to encouraging the evolution of service delivery groups into advocacy-oriented organizations, enhancing the capabilities of existing advocacy CSOs, and fostering a coherent civil society approach to gender equality and female empowerment as a critical aspect of democratic reform and sustainable development.

V. CIVIL SOCIETY-RELATED GENDER ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN LEBANON

While Lebanon is generally recognized as among the most liberal countries in the Arab world, gender disparities remain significant. The 2013 Gender Inequality Index ranks Lebanon 72nd out of 186 countries, indicating persistent inequalities between men and women.⁶ In addition, Lebanon's overall rank on the 2013 Global Gender Gap Report is 123 out of 136 countries, with the lowest ranks obtained in "political empowerment" (133/136) and "economic participation/opportunity" (126/136), while the country fared better on "educational attainment" (87/136) and ranked high on "health and survival" (1/136).⁷ These international benchmark studies underscore the need to consider gender-related issues in civil society programming, particularly in the area of women's political participation.

To help narrow the area of inquiry for the gender analysis, PACE identified salient gender issues relevant to the civil society sector in Lebanon, which together form a web of political, legal, sociocultural and economic obstacles to women's empowerment.

Confessional power-sharing. At the political level, Lebanon is characterized by a confessional system of government that was designed, in principle, to ensure equitable power-sharing among the different sectarian groups represented in the country. Based on this system, key decision-making posts are assigned to specific sects and consensual agreement is favored among the rulers of the key sects that make up the Lebanese confessional mosaic. In practice, however, the confessional system has fueled clientelistic networks, undermined pursuit of the public interest in favor of parochial interests, weakened public accountability and transparency, prevented the emergence of a cohesive national identity, and increased the country's vulnerability to regional shocks and crises.

⁶ "2013 Human Development Report: Gender Inequality Index (GII)," United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2013, <https://data.undp.org/dataset/Table-4-Gender-Inequality-Index/pg34-nwq7>

⁷ "Global Gender Gap Report 2013," World Economic Forum (WEF), http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GenderGap_Report_2013.pdf

Both men and women are negatively affected by these developments as they translate into ineffective governance, low quality of public services, and lack of citizen rights. At the same time, certain factors are especially pertinent to the relative roles and status of women and men. One obvious example is the strong control exercised by religious establishments over matters that affect women's daily lives—from cradle to grave—through discriminatory personal status laws.

Personal status laws. A key element of the confessional system, personal status laws in Lebanon are detrimental to gender equality and female empowerment. While the country's Constitution recognizes gender equality in principle, Lebanese women are born unequal by virtue of their sect—both relative to men and relative to each other. Religious courts pertaining to each sect govern laws related to marriage, divorce, custody, inheritance, and related matters. Consequently, Lebanese women do not have equal rights in the eyes of the law.

By and large, the religious courts and personal status laws are widely perceived as more favorable to men as they consecrate patriarchal family structures and power relations. Moreover, they also formalize inequalities between women themselves. For example, a Sunni woman does not have the same inheritance rights as a Shiite or Christian woman. Likewise, a divorced woman has differing custody rights over her children based on her sect. Such discriminatory laws undermine the creation of a “culture of equality,” which has an overall negative impact on efforts to promote female empowerment.

Lack of legal protection. In addition to personal status laws that differ by sect, Lebanese women are generally disadvantaged in relation to men when it comes to legal protection. The legal framework is weak with regard to issues such as gender-based violence, marital rape, and domestic abuse, which are not recognized as priorities by the political establishment or society at large. Nationality laws also treat men and women differently as Lebanese women married to foreigners are legally prohibited from passing on their nationality to their children, unlike Lebanese men who are married to foreign women.

Recent advances have been made by women's CSOs to promote reform on these fronts, but much remains to be done for policy statements to translate into concrete action. Moreover, attitudinal change is needed to challenge the widely held perception that women are subordinate to men and must therefore accept their authority, particularly that of male kin, since these perceptions have a negative impact on efforts to improve the legal protection of women and to generate the political will for promoting gender equality and female empowerment.

Patriarchal values and gender stereotypes. In addition to inequalities in the legal framework, women face widespread discrimination resulting from the prevailing patriarchal culture. By and large, women are seen as best filling caretaker and child-rearing roles in the family, while men are perceived as the primary breadwinners. Although economic necessity and women's educational achievements have contributed to female participation in the labor force, disparities persist between women and men when it comes to employment in certain sectors, holding executive positions, and earning equitable wage levels.

Decision-making power at the family, community, and national levels largely remains within the realm of men. Patriarchal values and gender stereotypes are especially salient in rural areas when compared to urban settings, thus making it more challenging to foster women's participation at the village level. Moreover, the mainstream media tend to reinforce gender stereotypes through the objectification of women and frequent portrayal of women in domestic roles.

Low levels of political representation among women. Patriarchal values and gender stereotypes are also evident in the political arena, where women are rarely seen in top decision-making posts, particularly in the executive and legislative branches. “More than any other public field, politics in

Lebanon has traditionally been a male preserve and has largely excluded women regardless of their qualifications or contributions.”⁸

Lebanon ranks 136th out of 188 countries in the 2013 Women in Parliaments index. In the last parliamentary elections, held in 2009, only 4 women won parliamentary seats out of a total of 128 seats, marking a low 3.1 percent female representation in the legislature. By comparison with other Arab countries, Saudi Arabia has close to 20 percent female representation while Libya has 16.5 percent and Jordan has 12 percent. Even in conflict-torn Iraq, more than 25 percent of deputies are women.⁹

At the municipal level, the number of female mayors and municipal council members remain very low as well. Local electoral battles are largely waged along family and tribal lines, and women often tow those lines based on the expectation that the male head of the family determines his kin’s political stances.

The electoral system, which is based on winner-takes-all party lists, makes it difficult for women to run for office since political competition is dominated by traditional (male) sectarian leaders rather than based on electoral platforms. Sociocultural norms that depict men as leaders and women in supporting roles also have a negative impact on whether women run for office. In addition, the high cost of running electoral campaigns are beyond the reach of many women, who generally lack financial independence. Existing electoral laws lack the proper legal mechanisms to ensure equal opportunity for female candidates, and there are no quotas requiring female representation in elected bodies at any levels.

Economic inequalities. While Lebanese women have high education levels and have joined the labor force in growing numbers since the 1980s, they continue to face limited job opportunities. When employed, then tend to work in lower-paid jobs than men, mostly in the informal economy, with little or no social protection.¹⁰ Moreover, working women must balance their careers with family obligations imposed by prevailing patriarchal norms. It is widely accepted within Lebanese society that a woman should be the first to sacrifice her career and professional ambitions for the sake of her family and children. Working women must also work both outside and inside the home as men have not assumed greater responsibilities for domestic and child-related work.

By and large, women’s economic activity is concentrated in “soft” sectors such as health care, social services, banking, and education, while men are overrepresented in more profitable “hard” sectors such as construction, communications, transport, and energy. Across sectors, women are less involved in managerial, technical, and skilled labor occupations as compared to men.¹¹ In addition to women being visibly absent from top management positions and executive posts, income disparities between men and women with similar qualifications are common. This combination of factors has a negative impact on women’s control over economic assets and resources, thus reducing their financial independence.

⁸ “Gender Assessment for USAID/Lebanon,” Samira Atallah and Marguerite Helou, Social Impact, final draft, July 2012, p. 11.

⁹ “Women in National Parliaments,” Inter-Parliamentary Union, November 1, 2013, <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>.

¹⁰ “Women and Economic Power in Lebanon: The Legal Framework and Challenges to Women’s Economic Empowerment,” Delphine Torres Tailfer, Collective for Research and Training on Development-Action (CRTD-A), October 2010, <http://crt-da.org.lb/sites/default/files/Women%20in%20the%20Lebanese%20Economy.pdf>.

¹¹ “Gender-Based Differences Among Entrepreneurs and Workers in Lebanon,” World Bank Social and Economic Development Group, December 7, 2009, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/3164>.

VI. PACE GENDER STRATEGY

Despite the challenges outline above, Lebanon presents a number of opportunities for promoting change in line with the tenets of USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy. Lebanon has a vibrant civil society and a generally permissive environment for civic activism. Women enjoy high literacy rates and access to education, which provides a solid foundation for their active participation in the civil society sector, the workforce, and the social enterprise sector. The mainstream and digital media environment is among the most open in the Arab world, creating avenues for influencing public opinion through leveraging the power of media platforms to engage citizens and disseminate social messages.

Recognizing these opportunities, PACE had adopted gender-sensitive approaches both at the administrative and programmatic levels, as summarized below.

Gender Mainstreaming at the Administrative Level:

- PACE employs a no-discrimination policy when it comes to hiring staff. Candidates of both sexes are interviewed for vacant positions based on their qualifications and skills. The PACE team currently consists of two expatriates (a male and a female), and 8 local professionals of whom 7 are women. Female employees occupy positions involving technical assistance, grant development and oversight, monitoring and evaluation, media outreach, and finance/admin management. As a result of the knowledge and experience accumulated on the program, female employees on the PACE team have expanded their skill set, which has contributed to their professional development and will help broaden their career prospects in the future.
- PACE assigned gender focal points (the DCOP and M&E Specialist), who work together to sensitize other colleagues to gender-related issues and capture relevant data and information on women's participation in program activities. This has helped to institutionalize gender-sensitive approaches that had been a core element of program activities in a more systematic and deliberate manner.
- When hiring staff, especially migrant women (such as through outsourcing of cleaning services), PACE takes specific measures to ensure compliance with USAID's Trafficking in Persons provision (June 2012). Trafficking in Persons refers to the recruitment, transportation or transfer of people using force, fraud, or other forms of coercion and deception. Migrant women working in Lebanon are especially vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation since they are more likely than men to face discrimination, poverty, and limited economic opportunities. When outsourcing work that requires hiring migrant women, PACE ensures that the women employed have the required residency and work permits, and are thus accorded the legal protections applicable under local laws. The Trafficking in Persons provision is also included in all grant awards issued by PACE to help prevent the exploitation of women and girls, especially migrant workers, under any grant-funded activities.

Gender Mainstreaming at the Programmatic Level:

- From the start of the program, PACE has placed a strong emphasis on an inclusive approach to program and grants implementation. All solicitations issued by PACE, including Annual Program Statements and Requests for Applications, have included evaluation criteria stressing diversity and gender considerations.
- As a critical component of program design, PACE has deliberately sought partnerships with organizations that target women, youth, and vulnerable groups as beneficiaries, and that adopt a non-partisan, non-confessional approach to civic engagement.

- In the first year of PACE, the program used an evidence-based approach to program design by conducting a national opinion poll to identify the priority concerns of a statistically representative sample of Lebanese men and women. Based on survey findings, PACE selected a number of priority themes to be targeted over the duration of the program to ensure selectivity and focus in the allocation of program resources. The priority themes selected by PACE are thus inclusive by design since they reflect the concerns expressed by Lebanese men and women, and take into account any observed gender differences in the survey responses.¹²
- Informed by the findings of the initial opinion poll, PACE then supported the development of a set of policy briefs addressing priority citizen concerns based on stakeholder consultations across the country. Applicants to the policy development solicitation were required to “ensure that the stakeholder consultations used to identify policy options involve a broad cross-section of actors and reflect gender, confessional, and geographic balance. The stakeholders consulted should represent a variety of political viewpoints, confessional affiliations, and include both women and men in roughly equal numbers.” Applicants were graded on the extent to which their proposed technical approach reflected gender and diversity considerations. During implementation, PACE conducted close monitoring to ensure adherence to this inclusive approach. The partner CSOs involved in policy development consulted 142 stakeholders around the country, of whom 67 were women (47%). The policy briefs resulting from these consultative processes were used to design solicitations for civic engagement grants. The allocation of program resources in specific thematic areas was therefore shaped by the viewpoints of both women and men.
- PACE systematically disaggregates M&E data by sex where relevant and places the same requirements on all of its grantees. All PACE partners also develop their own grant-specific M&E plans in which they are required to disaggregate indicator data by sex and to report on any gender-based constraints. The PACE team monitors grantee activities through frequent site visits, formal progress meetings, informal communications via phone and email, and review of all grantee deliverables. Through these interactions, PACE emphasizes the importance of women’s participation in grantee activities, events, and training workshops, and makes a concerted effort to capture gender-related data. In addition, the PACE program team has developed simple tools that grantees are encouraged to use and adapt to their specific needs in order to facilitate the capture of sex-disaggregated data. These include attendance sheet templates and activity report forms used to track and report on trainings and events.
- As part of routine monitoring and evaluation tasks, the PACE program team reviews sex-disaggregated data and initiates discussions with partners whenever these reviews reveal low levels of female participation in order to determine the possible reasons and identify remedial actions or solutions. For example, past remedial actions have included modifying the dates and venues of activities to facilitate female participation in light of space and time constraints facing women.
- When solicitations target sectors where women are at a strong disadvantage, applicants are encouraged to adopt specific measures to ensure program benefits extend to women. For example, a solicitation aimed at supporting the establishment of a Social Entrepreneurship Incubator required applicants to “identify ways to engage women-run social enterprises and/or to target social

¹² “Survey of Lebanese Citizens’ Priority Concerns and Attitudes Towards Civic Engagement,” Statistics Lebanon, PACE, July 2012.

enterprises whose end-beneficiaries are women.” In the same vein, the evaluation criteria used for awarding social entrepreneurship start-up grants cited “diversity considerations, including a plan for ensuring benefits extend to both men and women and to vulnerable groups.” This emphasis on gender considerations reflected recognition of the fact that women are less inclined than men to have access to and control over the resources necessary to start their own businesses. As a result of these efforts, PACE supported the incubation of 15 social enterprises and awarded start-up grants to each of them. Of these partners, 8 are women-led social enterprises while 7 are led by male entrepreneurs.

VII. GENDER ANALYSIS FINDINGS USING THE SIX DOMAINS FRAMEWORK

The Six Domains Framework analyzes gender relations, gender data as well as gender-based constraints and opportunities in six areas:

1. Access to assets and control over resources
2. Knowledge, beliefs, and perceptions
3. Practices and participation
4. Time and space
5. Legal rights and status
6. Balance of power and decision-making

The matrix that follows summarizes the outcomes of the simplified gender analysis conducted by the PACE team. Under each domain, we have added a brief snapshot of relevant PACE data as well as gender integration measures taken.

THE SIX DOMAINS OF GENDER ANALYSIS IN THE PACE PROGRAM

What are the key gender relations related to each domain that affect male and female participation in PACE?	What other information about gender relations is needed?	What are the gender-based constraints hindering the achievement of PACE objectives?	What are the gender-based lessons and opportunities for design of future civil society projects?
Access to Assets and Control Over Resources			
<p>Lebanese women generally have less access than men to the resources necessary to be active participants in society at the political and economic levels. When they have access to those assets, women usually have less control over those resources than men.</p> <p>While women are active in the workforce, few hold senior managerial positions. Women are well-represented in the social services sector but under-represented in more profitable sectors such as energy, transport, and construction. In the media, many women are journalists but few are media executives or owners of media outlets.</p> <p>Women are at a disadvantage in the enterprise sector because domestic property, such as a house or land, is commonly registered in the name of the male head of the family. While women have access to such property, they cannot make legal decisions about how it will be used, such as offering it as collateral for a loan to start a business.</p> <p>Women have access to education and training opportunities, but they do not always control the resources needed to seize those opportunities, such as tuition fees and transportation costs.</p>	<p>More information is needed on the extent to which women have access to and control over CSO resources as compared to men, including financial, human, and physical assets, so that major gender gaps can be strategically addressed in future civil society strengthening programs.</p> <p>Data is needed on the level and nature of women's participation in the social entrepreneurship sector as compared to men.</p> <p>Data is needed on income disparities between men and women in the civil society, media, and social enterprise sectors.</p> <p>Where women have access and control over resources in the political and economic fields, Lebanon-specific case studies are needed to illustrate the extent to which this contributes to greater gender equality and female empowerment.</p>	<p>Within some CSOs based outside Beirut, where patriarchal norms are more pronounced, strategic decisions are often concentrated in the hands of male founders, board members, and executive team members. This undermines women's potential to influence decisions over resource allocations and CSO programs.</p> <p>Few CSOs make a proactive effort to ensure that gender relations are taken into account with regard to access to assets and control over resources in their areas of work or even within their own organizations.</p> <p>Most media outlets have political affiliations and ownership structures controlled by men, which limits the ability of female journalists to impact editorial policies.</p> <p>In social enterprise, women have more limited access than men to the financial and technical resources needed to start and manage their own businesses.</p>	<p>Civil society projects should require partner CSOs to articulate a strategy for ensuring equal access to assets and control over resources for men and women within their own organizations as well as within the communities and sectors they target. Partner CSOs should also be sensitized to the gender dimensions of their work at the onset of a project to ensure such considerations are integrated by design.</p> <p>Given women's more limited control over financial resources, CSO trainings should be free of charge to facilitate access to women. Transportation and access to necessary IT resources should also be secured so women can participate equally.</p> <p>In the social enterprise sector, special measures should be taken to empower women, including targeted assistance to female entrepreneurs and promotion of reduced collateral requirements among funding institutions.</p> <p>In the media sector, efforts should be made to strengthen organizations that advocate for the interests of media professionals, with a focus on developing strong advocates for the rights of female professionals working in this field.</p>
<p>PACE Gender Integration Measures and Data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women-led organizations, CSOs, and social enterprises have had equal access to grants, training, and technical assistance provided by PACE. Among the 43 PACE grantees, 25 are led by men while 18 are led by women (i.e., 42% of grantees are led by women). • Female beneficiaries of PACE activities have had equal access to training and capacity-building opportunities. To date, women (1,428) have outnumbered men (1,143) as participants in trainings delivered by PACE grantees. • Administratively, women professionals have had equal access to job opportunities created by PACE and make up the majority of the program team. At the grantee level, more 			

What are the key gender relations related to each domain that affect male and female participation in PACE?	What other information about gender relations is needed?	What are the gender-based constraints hindering the achievement of PACE objectives?	What are the gender-based lessons and opportunities for design of future civil society projects?
women are employed by PACE grantees than men (142 women versus 119 men).			
Knowledge, Beliefs, and Perceptions			
<p>A patriarchal culture and gender stereotypes are prevalent in Lebanon. Men are perceived as the main providers for their families, while women are seen as inherently better suited for care-giving and domestic responsibilities.</p> <p>While men are seen as more business-oriented, social work is considered more appropriate for women. The prevailing belief is that women can better afford the lack of job stability in the civil society sector (due to CSOs' dependencies on donor funding) since men are in greater need of stable jobs.</p> <p>In the political arena, men are seen as natural leaders while women are perceived—and often perceive themselves—as unsuitable for politics and less capable of winning tough electoral battles. Gender stereotypes perpetuate the belief that women's domestic and childcare responsibilities naturally prevent them from playing top leadership roles in politics and in business, which are seen as male affairs.</p> <p>Young women have more liberal attitudes while young men tend to be more conservative and tied to traditional social norms. Compared to their female counterparts, young males are less accepting of the notion of equality between the sexes, whether at home or in the public domain.¹³</p>	<p>Up-to-date data is needed on gender-related perceptions and attitudes held by men and women, taking into account different age groups, rural versus urban settings, sectarian identity, and socioeconomic conditions.</p> <p>More information is needed about how women perceive themselves to help shape female empowerment initiatives.</p>	<p>Gender stereotypes make it more difficult for women to advocate for change to decision-makers, who are mostly male and may be more responsive to males. Patriarchal attitudes also mean that age is a factor, whereby young women and men may not be taken seriously by decision-makers in advocacy campaigns or lobbying efforts.</p> <p>While social and civil society work is seen as appropriate for women, this kind of work is primarily viewed as involving charitable activities rather than fostering change. There is a misperception that women in civil society are—or should be—mainly involved in charities, volunteering, and administrative tasks, rather than as CSO leaders and decision-makers, particularly in sectors that touch on political reform since the political arena is dominated by men.</p> <p>The media and advertising sectors largely perpetuate gender stereotypes and tend to objectify women, which contributes to entrenching traditional perceptions of gender roles.</p>	<p>Advocacy campaigns should consider the extent to which key decision-makers are impacted by gender stereotypes and patriarchal attitudes. This may call for engaging reform-minded community leaders and public figures that decision-makers will consider on an “equal par,” i.e. engaging prominent men as key allies.</p> <p>Given that gender stereotypes are perpetuated in the media, civil society projects should seek to build women's capacity to act as effective media spokespersons, in tandem with engaging male allies in challenging such stereotypes.</p> <p>Efforts should also be made to present female role models as leaders and change makers and to counter the objectification of women in the media.</p>
PACE Gender Integration Measures and Data:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PACE conducted a national exploratory poll in 2012, followed by a baseline survey of target geographic areas in 2013, to gauge citizen knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions, using 			

¹³ “Study Underlines Opposing Views on Gender Roles in Lebanon,” *The Daily Star*, December 29, 2007, <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2007/Dec-29/48380-study-underlines-opposing-views-on-gender-roles-in-lebanon.ashx#ixzz2rrPwXomR>

What are the key gender relations related to each domain that affect male and female participation in PACE?	What other information about gender relations is needed?	What are the gender-based constraints hindering the achievement of PACE objectives?	What are the gender-based lessons and opportunities for design of future civil society projects?
<p>gender-sensitive analysis. Survey findings were used to help shape programmatic strategies and approaches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PACE has supported women-led CSOs, such as Akkarouna, the Akkar Network for Development, the Maharat Foundation, the Lebanese Center for Civic Education, and MARCH, and assisted them in capitalizing on multiple media platforms, helping to project an image of female role models in leadership positions. Another PACE partner is leading a campaign against the objectification of women in the media and advertising industries to influence sexist perceptions and attitudes towards women. 			
Practices and Participation			
<p>As more women join the workforce, men have not assumed greater domestic responsibilities, which means that working women must work both in and outside the home.</p> <p>About 18% of employed women work in the public sector, 21% in the private sector, and almost 50% in the NGO sector.¹⁴ Women participate more visibly in CSOs engaged in service delivery, charitable work, and “soft” sectors that are not perceived as politicized. Men participate more visibly in activities that involve lobbying decision-makers and acting as media spokespersons, especially in “hard” sectors like political and economic reform.</p> <p>Patriarchal attitudes discourage women from participating in public decision-making at the local and national levels. Women vote but very few run for office. As a result, women are under-represented in elected bodies such as parliament and municipal councils. Female turnout in the last parliamentary elections (2009) was about 50%, but only 12 out of 587 candidates were women and only 4 of them won seats in the 128-member parliament. Since Lebanese women were granted suffrage in 1953, there have</p>	<p>A targeted study is needed to produce gender-sensitive data about the nature and level of female and male participation in the civil society sector.</p> <p>Up-to-date data is needed on the employment status of women in various sectors and their level of participation in the public domain at the local and national levels.</p>	<p>In marginalized communities, women’s lower levels of education, professional experience, incomes, and domestic roles disadvantage them as compared to men when it comes to participating fully in civic activities and advocacy campaigns.</p> <p>The lack of women in politics undermines women’s participation in political life and public decision-making, which has a negative impact on advocacy and reform efforts that seek to foster gender equality and female empowerment.</p>	<p>Civic education programs are needed in marginalized communities to educate women about civic rights and duties, and build a foundation for increasing their participation in civic life.</p> <p>Given that women are well-represented in the civil society sector, this offers opportunities for building their leadership skills and encouraging them to transfer those skills to other women as well as use them to advance in their careers. Women’s leadership roles in CSOs can provide a stepping stone for promoting their participation in political life, including running for office.</p> <p>Alliances should be fostered between women in civil society and women in media to help enhance the visibility of female civic activists and leaders, and thus contribute to increasing women’s participation in civic and political life. Female civic activists involved in political and economic reform—fields that are traditionally dominated by men—should be especially targeted by these efforts.</p>

¹⁴ “Mapping of Gender and Development Initiatives in Lebanon,” Consultation and Research Institute, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), March 2006, http://www.undp.org.lb/WhatWeDo/Docs/Lebanon_Gender_Strategy.pdf.

What are the key gender relations related to each domain that affect male and female participation in PACE?	What other information about gender relations is needed?	What are the gender-based constraints hindering the achievement of PACE objectives?	What are the gender-based lessons and opportunities for design of future civil society projects?
never been more than six women parliamentarians at a time. ¹⁵			
<p>PACE Gender Integration Measures and Data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the 2013 PACE survey, 54% of female respondents and 50% of male respondents reported interest in volunteering in CSO activities. PACE disaggregates program-level data by sex and has achieved good gender balance in extending program benefits to both men and women. All PACE grantees are also required to develop grant-specific M&E plans in which relevant data is disaggregated by sex to help ensure the equal participation of men and women. The data collected to date indicates that both women and men are participating in trainings and events, and women are doing so in higher numbers. Of the 15 social enterprises incubated and supported by PACE, 8 are led by female entrepreneurs. 			
<p>Time and Space</p>			
<p>Men generally spend more time at work and outside the home. Women are presumed to spend more time at home given their domestic and childcare responsibilities. Working women, however, face time pressures because they work both in and outside the home.</p> <p>Mothers are more available to participate in civic activities when children are in school, while young single women may have more time availability but face greater constraints on mobility depending on their family and community's social mores. In some settings, particularly rural areas, young unmarried women are discouraged from taking part in activities outside the home, especially mixed-sex events.</p> <p>There is a high level of brain drain and rural-urban migration, especially among young men. Many remote areas and villages have few male youth since most of them work away from their homes in Lebanese cities or abroad, only to return during holidays. There are more women and elderly persons in remote villages during most of the year.</p>	<p>Up-to-date data is needed on the impact of the brain drain and rural-urban migration on gender relations.</p>	<p>The combination of time availability, domestic responsibilities, and patriarchal attitudes restrict women's ability to participate on an equal footing in civic and public life.</p> <p>Men have more control over their mobility and are thus more likely to attend CSO trainings and events outside their area of residence.</p>	<p>Female heads of households and women whose husbands work abroad have specific needs and different time and space constraints that should be taken into account in project design.</p> <p>Civil society activities should be designed to maximize female participation by considering timing, venues, and mobility to accommodate the specific needs and constraints faced by female beneficiaries.</p> <p>When planning training activities, applicants should be asked to identify factors that may affect their ability to attend so that solutions can be adopted to maximize women's participation.</p> <p>In areas with conservative social mores, where women are discouraged from participating in activities away from home, efforts should be made to deliver training and assistance locally and to capitalize on information technology tools that reach women in their homes.</p>

¹⁵ "Twenty Percent Women's Quota in Polls 'Not Enough,'" by Dalila Mahdawi, *The Daily Star*, February 2, 2010, <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2010/feb-02/62044-20-percent-womens-quota-in-polls-not-enough.ashx#ixzz2qTpS3rqx>

What are the key gender relations related to each domain that affect male and female participation in PACE?	What other information about gender relations is needed?	What are the gender-based constraints hindering the achievement of PACE objectives?	What are the gender-based lessons and opportunities for design of future civil society projects?
<p>Due to limited job opportunities in Lebanon, many married women remain in the country to care for their children while their husbands work abroad to send remittances home. These women effectively act as head of the household in the husband's absence. While they face significant time constraints, they are also assumed to have more control over decisions related to their family and participation in activities outside the home.</p>			
<p>PACE Gender Integration Measures and Data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the PACE 2013 survey, female respondents cited lack of time as the main reason preventing them from participating in CSO activities (43%). • PACE advocacy campaigns combine offline and online activities, thus reaching women and girls in their homes through social media, mobile phone applications, online petitions, and other alternatives. • PACE training and technical assistance is often delivered locally to facilitate access and participation for both women and men. 			
<p>Legal Rights and Status</p>			
<p>Parliament ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1997, with reservations related to nationality, personal status, and arbitration.</p> <p>There is an imbalance in the legal rights of women as compared to men, which increases their vulnerability to discrimination, abuse, and gender-based violence. Existing laws related to honor crimes and adultery flagrantly discriminate against women by using double-standards and legitimizing violence against women. Legal protection of women who are victims of domestic violence or marital rape is weak.</p> <p>Personal status laws create strong inequalities between women and men, and between women of different sects. Nationality laws also discriminate against women married to foreigners. Social security laws disadvantage female employees, who have more limited and conditional access to benefits as compared to men.</p> <p>While women have the right to vote, local and national</p>	<p>More information is needed on women's knowledge and understanding of their legal rights.</p> <p>Policy studies, based on broad stakeholder consultations, are needed to guide CSOs and women's rights organizations in developing a unified vision for gender equality and female empowerment in Lebanon.</p>	<p>Personal status laws consecrate discrimination against women and discrimination between citizens at large based on their religious sect, which undermines equality, civil rights, and formation of a cohesive national identity.</p> <p>Because they favor male leaders and candidates, existing electoral laws pose impediments to women's full participation in political life and representation in decision-making bodies. They also cement the power of traditional sectarian leaders, perpetuate patron-client relationships and favor parochial interests over the public interest.</p> <p>The legal framework fails to provide adequate protection for women against gender-based violence, thus making them more vulnerable to abuse, intimidation, and pressures from male relatives.</p>	<p>Civil society projects should make strategic investments in supporting reform of laws that discriminate against women and hinder gender equality.</p> <p>Awareness-raising and training programs specifically designed to empower women and educate them about their legal rights should be supported.</p> <p>While they affect both men and women, personal status laws and electoral reforms will go a long way towards enhancing the status of women in particular, and citizen rights in general.</p> <p>Coalition-building between women's CSOs and the wider civil society should be supported to foster the emergence of a unified vision and strategic priorities for advancing women's rights.</p>

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<p>elections have not included a women's quota to ensure the inclusion of women as political candidates. In 2010, the government approved a 20% woman's quota for candidates in municipal elections; enforcement remains to be seen.</p> <p>Recent years have seen an increase in CSO campaigns promoting women's rights, but these campaigns suffer from fragmentation, which has constrained their ability to achieve meaningful change.</p>			
<p>PACE Gender Integration Measures and Data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy briefs produced by PACE partners include policy recommendations that advance the legal rights and status of women, including legalization of civil marriage, passage of an optional civil status law, and electoral reform with a women's quota in parliament. • An opinion poll commissioned by PACE in 2012 showed a high degree of consensus on priority national issues between women and men. However, gender differences were noted on issues linked to women's rights, such as gender-based violence, which women view as a higher priority than men. 			
<p>Balance of Power and Decision-Making</p>			
<p>Men have more decision-making power than women at the household, community, municipal, and state levels. Men are also more influential in the political sphere and the private sector.</p> <p>Far more men than women run for office at all levels of government, where gender inequalities are exacerbated by confessional power-sharing, which means that neither men nor women have equal opportunity to run for office given that top posts are reserved for specific sects.</p> <p>Because women are well represented in the civil society sector, they are more involved in decision-making within CSOs, but many CSOs, especially those led by men, still pose limits on women's leadership and decision-making as compared to men.</p>	<p>More information is needed on the decision-making roles of men and women in advocacy-oriented CSOs as compared to service delivery CSOs.</p>	<p>CSOs involved in advocacy and lobbying activities face challenges in engaging female decision-makers or advancing women's issues since most decision-makers are men at both the municipal and national government levels.</p> <p>CSOs also face constraints in involving women in decision-making processes at the community level, where men tend to exercise more influence and authority.</p>	<p>Civil society projects should address internal CSO governance, with an emphasis on ensuring balance of power and participatory decision-making between women and men. Partner CSOs should be required and assisted in involving women in decision-making processes and structures throughout the project cycle.</p> <p>CSO programs should include leadership training for women to empower them to play decision-making roles.</p> <p>Successful women leaders in various sectors should be engaged as role models in civil society and media programs in order to inspire young women to seek and assume leadership positions.</p>
<p>PACE Gender Integration Measures and Data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PACE has engaged women-led CSOs as well as CSOs with gender balance on their boards. The ratio of males versus females serving on the boards of PACE grantees is 1 to 1.56 (60 women versus 94 men are board members). Women-led organizations have more women on their boards than men. 			

What are the key gender relations related to each domain that affect male and female participation in PACE?	What other information about gender relations is needed?	What are the gender-based constraints hindering the achievement of PACE objectives?	What are the gender-based lessons and opportunities for design of future civil society projects?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PACE staff make a deliberate and conscious effort to ensure grantees seek gender balance on project steering committees, advisory boards, and community assessments used to shape project design so that women have an equal say in decision-making. • The Capacity Assessment Tool (CAT) used by PACE prompts partner CSOs to adopt best practices in CSO management and institutional development, including the inclusion of women and marginalized groups in beneficiary feedback mechanisms so they have a voice in CSO decision-making. • By design, the concerns of both women and men have shaped decision-making within the PACE program since priority themes were selected based on a national opinion poll of 2,000 respondents (50% women), with gender-sensitive analysis. In turn, these priority concerns informed the elaboration of policy briefs through broad consultations with 142 stakeholders, including 67 women, and the allocation of grant funding in thematic areas. 			

VIII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REMAINING DURATION OF PACE

The above gender analysis identified critical gender issues that affect civil society programming and provided a snapshot of the current status of PACE in relation to gender integration. The quantitative and qualitative data collected to date indicates that PACE is successfully engaging both women and men in program activities and ensuring program benefits extend to both sexes. At the same time, the analysis identified entry points and opportunities for empowering women through civil society programming, which should be considered by any potential follow-on projects.

With just eight months left in the life of the PACE program, the below recommendations were formulated by the program team based on what can realistically be achieved to enhance gender integration within this timeframe. PACE will aim to implement these recommendations within its existing resources:

- Have PACE program staff take the 90-minute online course “Gender 101: Gender Equality at USAID”¹⁶ by the end of February 2014 to deepen understanding of gender issues and integration among team members.
- Regularly review, assess, and report on gender outcomes at the program level (at least quarterly).
- As part of their regular progress reports, ask grantees to formally report on gender-based constraints, as well as intended or unintended positive and negative impacts on female empowerment and participation.
- Develop success stories about women partners/participants in PACE activities and about gender outcomes at the program level.
- Incorporate gender-related questions in the final opinion poll to be commissioned by PACE by the end of Year 3 (based on F indicators related to gender equality) to provide baseline information for other civil society projects or potential follow-on programs. Specifically, questions related to F indicator GNDR-4 will be incorporated into the final opinion poll (“Proportion of target population reporting increased agreement with the concept that males and females should have equal access to social, economic, and political opportunities”).¹⁷
- As part of regular M&E, report on an additional gender-related F indicator (GNDR-2) measuring the “proportion of female participants in USG assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income, or employment)”. This indicator will measure the proportion of women assisted by the Nabad Social Entrepreneurship Incubator and the PACE social enterprise start-up grants, disaggregated by age group per the indicator definition in the F framework.¹⁸
- Highlight gender outcomes in end-of-program reporting and incorporate gender-related lessons learned and recommendations in the final program report to inform future civil society projects.

¹⁶ “Gender 101: Gender Equality at USAID,” USAID Learning Lab, http://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/media/GLS_USAID_Gender101_SCORM_20130918/index.html#9A69C53F-52C7-1A80-1BE5-E45BC1907FCD

¹⁷ “Cross-Cutting Issues Indicators and Definitions: Gender Equality/Women’s Empowerment,” U.S. State Department, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/101761.pdf>.

¹⁸ Ibid.

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