

ALGERIA – IDMAJ PROGRAM

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT FY13

OCTOBER 2012 - SEPTEMBER 2013

I. BACKGROUND

Initially called the Algeria Youth Opportunity Program (AYOP), the IDMAJ Program is a three-year, \$2.7 million, USAID-funded program that was created to develop the skills of young Algerians at risk of joining extremist ideologies to help them become more employable, better engaged members of their communities. Under IDMAJ, IYF initially proposed to work in four communities throughout Algeria by partnering with government institutions and local NGOs to build their capacity to implement high-quality employability, entrepreneurship, and civic engagement programming for at-risk young people, in order to better respond to their grievances and improve their attitude vis-à-vis the authorities at both local and national levels. Unfortunately, continued technical issues made it impossible to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the appropriate Government of Algeria (GOA) ministries and therefore in August 2013 the US Embassy in Algiers requested that IDMAJ be redesigned to implement programs through a combination of grants and capacity building efforts to Algerian NGO partners.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the first quarter, program implementation focused on conducting a Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop for IYF's life skills curriculum, held in Annaba in mid-October 2012. The training included 23 people from the Algerian government and civil society, and was very positively received by all participants. Following the workshop, the local government agency (DASS) in Annaba, with support from IYF, began preparations for youth life skills training to get underway. Unfortunately, in late December 2012, IYF received word that the planned training sessions for youth had been cancelled at the request of the Wali, who did not consider the previous "note" from the Ministry sufficient for allowing the training of youth to start.

Following the halting of program implementation in Annaba, the priority during the second quarter became finalization and signature of an MOU between IYF and the Ministry of National Solidarity, Family, and the Condition of Women (MNS).

During the third quarter, work focused on obtaining the approval of the text of the MOU by USAID legal staff. Also during the third quarter, Scander Soufi, President of association AnisS in Annaba (one of the organizations trained in October) visited IYF in Baltimore in May; and Mouloud Med-Meziani, IYF Country Advisor for Algeria, Nadia Guerch, IYF Country Director for Morocco, and Jean-Pierre Isbendjian, IYF Program Director, met with Grace Lang and Idriss Touijer at the USAID Mission in Rabat in June to discuss challenges and possible solutions.

During the fourth quarter, in light of projections of continued MOU delays, the focus of the program was shifted from partnering with GOA administration to developing a revised program design together with NGO partners, concentrating on employability,

entrepreneurship and civic engagement through community service activities. The geographic focus shifted as well to potentially include locations in the South at the request of the US Embassy. In late September and early October 2013, Linda Wafi and Mouloud Meziani held a series of successive meetings with three potential NGO partners who are interested in designing youth interventions to be funded under IDMAJ.

III. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Passport to Success® Training of Trainers (TOT) Workshop

October 2012: The TOT workshop for IYF's Passport to Success® (PTS) life skills curriculum took place in Annaba on 13–18 October, with a total of 23 participants. The workshop was led by Mr. Mohammed Dbiri, IYF's Master Trainer from Morocco, and was evaluated very positively. IYF Program Director, Jean-Pierre Isbendjian, conducted several sessions, including an introduction to the program and several training sessions on coaching.

Preparations for start of PTS training

November-December 2012: Following the PTS training, the DASS team started to take the lead in organizing a PTS training to a selection of DASS beneficiaries. The DASS team established lists of eight groups of beneficiaries, visited the potential beneficiaries and their current employers, and agreed upon a training approach. Training was subsequently delayed by the Wali pending signature of an MOU (*see Challenges section below*) defining the framework of the overall cooperation between the Algeria and the USA.

AnisS Implementation

Second quarter: Association AnisS (an attendee at the October TOT) started to train two groups of beneficiaries on PTS – one group of young, HIV infected women, and one group of young ex-detainees. According to AnisS, PTS gives trainees the drive and hope in the future that they need to make AnisS' micro-credit ventures successful. AnisS projected that its first training cycle would be completed in mid-July, at which point it planned to organize focus groups to seek qualitative data from participants. In March 2013, IYF granted AnisS a two-year license agreement to enable them to use PTS in all their activities. Since direct granting to AnisS was not possible without an MOU in place, IYF explored alternative ways to support the work of AnisS through possible direct contracts with AnisS' trainers. To date, AnisS has not followed through on this offer, even though they are the only organization to have implemented trainings for youth under the IDMAJ program.

Development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

October to December 2012: The draft MOU originally submitted in September 2012 was revised during this quarter to reflect additional comments from all parties. This was the highest priority for IYF staff during this quarter as it continued to delay further implementation of activities in Annaba.

January to March 2013: Two versions of the MOU were shared with the Ministry of National Solidarity (one which had also been shared with USAID and the U.S. Embassy and on which IYF received comments from USAID; and a revised version sent later in January) with the expectation that the later version, taking USAID remarks into account, could be further

discussed in person with the Ministry; however, a planned IYF visit to Algiers during January was cancelled at the last minute, after requests for meetings with the MFA and MNS were not granted.

As a result of informal feedback (that the MNS would feel more comfortable signing an MOU with the U.S. Embassy rather than with an international NGO, that references to other Ministries, to youth surveys and to extremism or ex-detainees should be removed from the text, and that they wanted more information about the program and program implementation to be included) two versions of a new draft MOU were developed by IYF: one that would be signed by the U.S. Embassy, and another one that could be signed by IYF. Controversial language (referencing other Ministries or Agencies, ex-detainees, surveys and/or data collection) was eliminated. An illustrative program description and timeline were created to accompany the MOUs in order to manage the Ministry's request for more details on the program, while preserving a relatively wider framework in the MOU itself.

April 2013: IYF shared with USAID, for approval by their legal services, the latest proposed revision of the draft MOU between the U.S. Embassy and the Ministry of National Solidarity. This version took into account language changes suggested informally by Mr. Bouzitoune of ANGEM, after his review of the document.

June 13 2013: IYF received a revised version of the MOU approved by USAID legal staff. After minor adjustments, the finalized documents were sent back to USAID and the U.S. Embassy in Algiers so that they could be approved at the level of the U.S. Embassy before being shared the latter with the MFA.

August 2013: The U.S. Embassy suggested that IYF abandon the idea of working with the Algerian authorities and change its implementation strategy to partner with local NGOs working on youth employment issues. This alternative was arrived at in light of the fact that the U.S. Embassy declared that it would need another six to eight months to clear the MOU and be in a position to submit it to the Algerian MFA. In consultation with the U.S. Embassy, IYF developed a list of potential NGOs in Algeria to be considered in designing a new strategy. This strategic change was projected to significantly alter the program design and to require a series of visits to meet with prospective NGOs and finalize their proposals.

IV. MEETINGS AND VISITS

October 2012: Jean-Pierre visited Algeria to supervise the TOT, as well as participate in a series of meetings with the DASS in Annaba (Mme. Mayouche, Director), ANGEM (Mr. Bouzitoune), and the Ministry of National Solidarity in Algiers (Mme. Benchérif, Mr. Bouzitoune, and Mr. Labani) to initiate discussions on the proposed MOU.

January 2013: IYF visit to Algiers was cancelled after requests for meetings with the MFA and MNS were not granted.

March 2013: During a visit to Algiers and Annaba, IYF was told that though the Ministry was still interested in pursuing program implementation, they needed a signed MOU in order to do so. IYF also heard from several institutions, whose representatives were trained under the October TOT, that they were enthusiastic for implementation to continue. None of the trainee institutions had been able to implement programs, with the exception of association AnisS.

May 2013: Scander Soufi, President of AnisS association visited Baltimore and reported that the delivery of the PTS training to two groups of twenty beneficiaries each (one group of young, HIV infected women, and one group of young ex-detainees) was progressing well with high levels of attendance. Despite many promises, AnisS failed to report further progress, despite many messages and requests.

June 2013: IYF visited the USAID Mission in Rabat where it was agreed that USAID would try to secure USAID and/or IYF presence at any relevant meetings between the U.S. Embassy and the MFA, so that program content could be better explained and promoted. Given the Ramadan period, it was agreed that such meetings would take place only after the end of the Ramadan.

September 2013: Linda Wafi, IYF Baltimore Program Manager visited Algiers, and along with Mouloud Meziani, IYF Country Advisor, met with representatives from three NGOs in Algeria: ANEJ, SEVE and the Scouts (SMA). These meetings followed a new programmatic orientation, suggested by the U.S. Embassy, of carrying out IDMAJ objectives by working through NGOs instead of government institutions. Ms. Wafi and Mr. Meziani met first with representatives from the three abovementioned NGOs at the US Embassy in Algiers, and invited them to cooperate in designing specific interventions in youth employment, entrepreneurship and community service.

During subsequent meetings, IYF and each NGO refined the proposed interventions, started to collect the necessary due diligence documents and began to develop program budgets to initiate the grant-making process. These proposals will inform a new program description and a no-cost extension request that IYF plans to submit to USAID in the first quarter of FY 14.

V. REVISED PROGRAM STRATEGY

The focus of the revised program strategy will be on employability, entrepreneurship and civic engagement/ community service activities, through the following partners:

ANEJ: Association Nationale d'Échanges entre Jeunes (ANEJ) is a non-profit organization that focuses on youth advancement through promoting youth-focused activities, citizenship, and volunteerism. The association has 5,000 member-associations structured with offices in fifteen wilayas across Algeria. ANEJ's members are local associations that are independent structures funded by the respective local municipalities and Ministry of Youth and Sports regional delegations. The independence of the member associations and partnership with local authorities allows ANEJ to reach youth in different areas, especially the remote and underserved communities, and effectively use available resources and existing structures for its projects.

Through the proposed partnership, IYF plans to support and strengthen ANEJ's capacity in providing employability and entrepreneurship programs to Algerian youth. Through IYF's employability and entrepreneurship training programs, ANEJ members and staff will be equipped with new skills and tools that allow them to better accompany and guide both young job-seeking and aspiring entrepreneurs. IYF will provide ANEJ trainers with PTS and entrepreneurship training. IYF will also provide training in coaching skills to help ANEJ coaches better accompany starting entrepreneurs through the various stages of business creation. ANEJ will in turn provide these training programs locally through its regional

offices or member associations located in different parts of the country. The ANEJ project plans to reach about 400 youth, aged between 18-30 years old, in four wilayas: Annaba, Adrar, Bejaia, and Tebessa.

SMA: Les Scouts Musulmans d'Algerie (SMA) is the Algerian affiliate of the World Organization of the Scout Movement, and focuses on educating youth by promoting volunteerism and community engagement. Since its founding in 1936, the SMA has established a strong track record in youth education and civic engagement and has delegations in all 48 wilayas. Its activities range from combating illiteracy to promoting entrepreneurship.

IYF proposes to partner with SMA to build on its civic engagement programs by strengthening its community service programs across the country. IYF will train SMA members and partners in PTS. IYF will also offer a training program entitled "I serve and I'm engaged" that guides youth through the process of identifying, designing and managing projects that benefit their communities. Through these newly acquired skills, the SMA will be able to better guide the young men and women they serve and equip them with skills that improve their employability as well as help youth respond to local needs, by designing and managing community service projects.

The SMA project hopes to serve 500 young Algerians (between the ages of 18-26) in five regions to include the East (Sétif/Constantine), the West (Oran/ Mostaghanem), the Central area (Algiers and its suburbs), the South West (Béchar/Adrar), and the South East (Ouargla/Biskra). As a result of the training programs, SMA will work with the trained youth to develop community service programs to teach youth new skills such as working in teams, communication, problem-solving, and project design and management. SMA will then select a shortlist of 25 projects (five in each region) to receive seed funding to enable project implementation.

SEVE: The Association of Algerian Women Entrepreneurs (SEVE) was established in June 1993 by a number of women entrepreneurs to support other women entrepreneurs in Algeria and further their contributions to the Algerian economy. SEVE's organizational mission is to support women entrepreneurs by providing access to information, training, and encouraging women to start or grow their own businesses.

In line with its goal to promote entrepreneurship among women, IYF proposes to partner with SEVE in order to help the association expand the reach of its activities as well as improve its technical capacity to provide entrepreneurship skills and coaching services. The SEVE project will target 280 women between the ages of 18-35 in four regions: the East (Annaba/Constantine), the West (Oran/ Sidi-Bel-Abbès), the Central area (Algiers/Bougie), and the South (El Oued /Ouargla/Adrar) and provide entrepreneurship training and post-training coaching services. In order to reach both aspiring and existing women entrepreneurs, SEVE will reach out to young female graduates and stay-at-home women who have marketable skills that can be turned into a business project. SEVE will provide entrepreneurship training that includes project design, budget management, and developing and growing a business, and will complement the training by offering coaching services to beneficiaries as they pursue their business after the training. Additionally, SEVE will educate and connect these women with the existing support structures in their respective regions that can either provide additional startup support or funding such as

ANGEM (Agence Nationale de Gestion du Microcrédit), or ANSEJ (Agence Nationale de Soutien à l'Emploi des Jeunes). SEVE will also select up to 24 projects to receive a prize in the form of a small "symbolic" financial contribution through this project.

VI. CHALLENGES

During quarter one the difficulty of obtaining a finalized MOU between U.S. parties and the Ministry of National Solidarity significantly delayed expansion of the IDMAJ program; specifically, in late December 2012, a second implementation step (a planned PTS training intervention with youth beneficiaries) was canceled due to the absence of a signed MOU. Additionally, the administrative process followed by the DASS in Annaba during quarters one and two was slow and contributed to delaying progress.

During the second quarter, the nomination of a new Minister at the head of the Ministry of National Solidarity, as well as a new Minister at the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and other key personnel introduced a number of setbacks by delaying the handling of non-priority issues, such as IDMAJ. This also necessitated a re-opening of negotiations with the GOA and partly explained their reluctance to accept meetings and move forward with regards to IDMAJ.

During the third quarter, the internal MOU review and approval process within USAID took more time than anticipated; Ramadan delayed opportunities for organizing meetings with the MFA and other GOA stakeholders; and staff changes relevant to IDMAJ within the U.S. Embassy added delays to IDMAJ implementation as well.

During the fourth quarter, one of the main challenges facing the new NGO program approach was the inability of local NGOs to receive grants from foreign or international NGOs without prior approval from the relevant authorities; however, none of the three partner organizations expressed any concern on that matter and have all previously been able to work with international and multi-national organizations. In the next quarter, IYF will continue to work closely with the three potential partners to ensure the appropriate steps are taken to obtain the needed approval.

VII. LOOKING AHEAD: ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR NEXT QUARTER

The principal activities planned for the tenth quarter of the program include:

1. Finalization of partner NGOs project proposals and budgets, including conducting the financial and legal due diligence requirements. IYF hopes to complete this process within the next couple of months and formalize the partnerships with the three NGOs by mid-December.
2. Complete IYF/USAID budget realignment and/or NCE, and revised Project Description and Results Framework.
3. The IYF team anticipates a trip in late November or early December in case the organizations require further support to finalize their respective project work-plans. If no additional support is needed, the IYF team will plan to travel to Algeria in the second half of January to participate in and attend the launch activities of the program.