

Evaluation of Media Cooperation under the Danish Arab Partnership Programme (2005-12)

Annex D: Detailed recommendations per intervention area



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Investigative journalism – 1) The Arab Spring is a window of opportunity that ARIJ must seize on with decentralisation and local onsite representation by recognized “names”. 2) The ARIJ management must develop into professional brand leaders and champions of a quality product-driven regional organisation with financial sustainability in mind. 3) Training and coaching of the investigative units should include a marketing element that addresses the issue of revenue generation. 4) ARIJ needs to build on its solid reputation in the region and cooperation with the BBC in its overdue marketing strategy. 5) ARIJ should start now with a campaign of interesting more editors and media owners in investigative journalism units by awarding prizes for supporting this idea. 6) ARIJ must insist that its training intake is dominated by fast-track achievers and mature candidates selected in a rigorous exam/experience-based process independent of considerations of convenience. 7) ARIJ should consider stocktaking of the investigative units’ policy and ponder a (better) integration of this team into newsrooms or how it can help by developing units into autonomous profit centres. 8) ARIJ must establish an M&E framework and tools to professionally track progress and maintain an inventory of success stories at hand.

Media monitoring – 1) The management of AWG needs to develop a marketing plan and tool kits for media monitoring of elections, gender, migration and hate-speech issues, in addition to briefing journalists on monitoring methodology. 2) The management of the EoM programme should seek funding to undertake a second round of audience research to measure its reach, output quality and impact. In order to boost impact (and sustainability), EoM should specifically target the public’s awareness of the significance of media and in doing so improve its audience’s media literacy, which would trigger demand for higher quality content. Higher audience interest will also lead to (more) advertising. 3) AWG must improve its communication (e.g. update agenda on website) with national chapters to meet its objectives as a regional network and forge a joint advocacy and action plan for international lobbying. EoM can be included in the advocacy strategy, making use of investigative stories from ARIJ that inform the strategy. 4) AWG board and management should devise a mechanism through which member organisations’ and national chapters’ work is audited every two years to ensure effective and efficient cooperation on the ground and between the field and HQ and the quality of output. 5) AWG management should seek phased marketing support for the network, including the national chapters and put in place a professional communication and marketing strategy that contributes to raising its profile, successful fundraising, advocacy and the positioning of AWG as the primary media monitoring reference in the MENA region. AWG should identify, and draw on, the strong points of each national chapter member, ensuring participation and fostering a sense of ownership within members.

Legal reform – 1) In recognition of the long-term and political nature of legal reform, MFA should ensure that MCP legal reform efforts are flexible and allow a realistic length of time to achieve results. 2) MFA and contract holder (IMS) should use momentum created by positive association with Danish partners to continue support for legal reform processes in Yemen and Egypt. 3) Potential partner synergies (i.e. CSOs active in media monitoring, Journalists’ Trade Unions) identified by IMS should be included by the MFA to promote future legal reform work on laws affecting the media sector. 4) Where politically and programmatically feasible, MFA should integrate media law reform in other governance programmes for the MENA region.

Online media – 1) Sustainability of institutional learning through twinning projects and training is limited through the need for constant upgrading of and adaptations to new technologies, therefore, close monitoring of online media innovations must be put in focus by the contract holder and flexible approaches developed. 2) Opportunities offered by media convergence should also be seized, particularly in respect to workflow, content production and income generation). 3) To enhance continual mutual learning, the contract holder should establish partner networks to function as forums for technical and content quality exchange through measures such as e-forums, LinkedIn discussion groups, etc. 4) A mentoring programme should also be developed, in which

most innovative partners become mentors to less developed partners in the region. 5) The assessment of online media projects for newspapers illustrate that in the Arab region multi-platform productions are also "the new business model."¹ The evaluation therefore recommends contract holder to discuss with the partners in the MENA region, how the development of realistic business models – that keep editorial rooms independent, but outlets sustainable – could be made an integral part of the MCP portfolio. 6) Fast growing access to web-enabled mobiles in the MENA region should be addressed when planning future MCP activities.² Mobile applications should not only be used to facilitate reporting, but also for the creating, receiving and interacting with media content and providing additional service offers to readers and users.

Public service broadcasting – 1) The selection of partners to promote PSB values must be reconsidered by IMS and based on expected effective implementation of relevant PSB values—whether the broadcaster is a ‘traditional’ PSB, or a commercial broadcaster. Any such selection must not ignore state broadcasters, which are still able to reach all citizens in every country and can play a positive role (as in Yemen). 2) Support for PSB co-productions could contribute significantly to the strengthening of specific PSB content or at least quality content. This policy could be successfully extended to commercial or independent broadcasters. Support for the development of these co-productions must be carefully tailored for the broadcasters’ needs and editorial policy. 3) In the same spirit, IMS should promote partnerships between selected broadcasters and the SIB in order to create slots for documentaries in their programming grids and new opportunities for documentary circulation, 4) Projects based on common cultural backgrounds and sub-regional partnerships (for example, Jordan/Syria, Morocco/Tunisia) stand a better chance of circulating from one country to another and thus should be explored. 5) In recognition that the media reform objective cannot be reached through production of PSB content or promotion of PSB values and standards only, project advocacy should be expanded to include governments, top management and CSOs. 6) In the framework of digital switchover, PSB radios could represent solid opportunities for Danish broadcasters to strengthen win-win agreements in view of promoting PSB standards and values in countries such as Yemen.

Community radio – 1) In Jordan, IMS should undertake capacity assessments with current partners to determine if multi-platform productions are workable and devise a strategy that can evolve as capacities develop. 2) The partners in the more conservative governorates of Jordan should develop concepts to maintain gender balance post-training through e.g. strengthening and highlighting women's value-added role in reporting; provision of support to and protection for outside reporting assignments; establishment of a network with female board members of community radios and provision of support by public figures in the governorates. 3) The Jordanian partners should identify synergies where network capacities of the community radios could be strengthened through common approaches for i.e. programme exchange, co-production. 4) Jordanian partners should investigate joint approaches to income-generation through i.e. public subsidies from the governorates or local towns, crowd funding, sponsoring or advertising. 5) In its present form, the joint video project (with Roya TV) should not be continued. With reports coming from only three governorates, the scope of the "inclusion of local content from governorates" is too limited. If the project is continued, the contract holder should ensure that the partnership base is broadened. Preference should be given to universities that have journalism or mass communication faculties.. The production training could be made an integral part of the education to ensure that the high turnover of volunteers would not constitute a threat to the sustainability. If the Roya TV show is continued, the contract holder should ensure that the broadly formulated objective is further

¹ Ghannam, Jeffrey. *Digital Media in the Arab World. One Year After the Revolutions*. A Report for the Center for International Media Assistance. Washington: CIMA, 2012, page 10.

² The mobile access in many MENA countries outnumbers the number of inhabitants. According to *insight MENA* (<http://www.insightmena.com/en/#!place=home>) 57% of mobiles are already internet-enabled; the mobile internet usage amounted in 2012 to already 30% of the population. See also: see: World Bank. *Maximizing Mobile. Information and Communications for Development*. Washington D.C.: The World Bank, 2012.

supported by a detailed programme concept shared with the supervisors at the universities and the participating students. Moreover, the contract holder should ensure that continued collaboration with Roya TV entails regular planning meetings with and feedback to students for continual learning. Quality of reports should also be addressed, so that Roya TV is confident to broadcast what it receives. 6) In Tunisia, the contract holder should, together with local experts, support the development of strategies for financial and institutional sustainability of the community radio sector.

Documentary filmmaking – 1) Dialogue and mutual understanding through documentary filmmaking could be more effective and have greater impact by ensuring a better circulation of content if it clearly addresses distribution, promotion and sales issues. Moreover, all possible means to reach the audience should be explored, such as TV's VOD platform and alternative cinema networks like cinema on demand. Under SIB's control, partners who hold a modern vision, an adequate strategy, and in-depth knowledge of the markets in digital times must undertake this. 2) Due to the limited alternative cinema market and the limited regional festival audiences in the MENA region, SIB must create bridges with the MENA region's broadcasting community; persuading broadcasters to partner with SIB as co-producers in order to acquire broadcasting rights. 3) Due to specific cultural barriers between countries in the MENA region, and in order to strengthen the circulation of audiovisual works, SIB should implement sub-regional distribution strategies with professional partners. 4) DAPP's support to documentary production will have a stronger regional impact if MFA is supporting the concept of a main and well-financed single-entry-point that will be complementary to national or local funds. Based on today SIB's comparative advantage, MFA should therefore convince international donors to participate on a mid-term/long-term basis, (three-four years) to the funding of the fund. 5) The development and networking of local training institutions must be supported by NFSD's who need counterparts in various countries, to strengthen exchanges and partnerships for recruiting teachers, tutors and trainees.

Twinning – The contract holder should: 1) enhance transparency in application of partner selection criteria; 2) strengthen justification requirements of project proposal; 3) develop a web-page to facilitate partner brokering and to share twinning outputs; 4) ensure professional reciprocity in partnerships to enhance mutual benefits and sustainability based on needs' assessments and 5) undertake an Arab stakeholder study to assess means to enhance improved coverage of Denmark in Arab media and 6) train staff in the importance and conduct of institutional assessments.