

The World Bank Group

Region Middle East and North Africa		Country Lebanon
Country Dept. MNSHD	Task Manager Bassam Ramadan	Amount of grant requested US\$ 300,000
Title of proposed activity Streamlining of MOSA's Procedures and Improvement of its Monitoring and Evaluation Capabilities		

Purpose of grant (a brief description of the activities to be financed and likely outcome of grant)

Background

The new Government of Lebanon considers as one of its priorities the need to establish a social safety net to deal with chronic and transitional causes of poverty. Whether targeted at the chronically poor (those unable to work and earn), or at those whose incomes may fluctuate due to deteriorating economic conditions, safety nets constitute a key component of a poverty alleviation strategy. One of the main constraints to designing such a safety net and to delivering more social services effectively to the poor, is the weak government capacity. The civil war impeded the development of the public sector and rendered its systems and procedures obsolete. Today, the Government starts from the unique position of designing many of its programs from scratch, unhampered by the inertia of an entrenched and large bureaucracy. Building strong institutions to take charge of designing policies and programs that address the country's social issues is a priority for Bank support.

Role of the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA)

The Ministry of Social Affairs plays a central role in building social stability and development in the post-war era. It has undergone in the last few years noteworthy efforts to rehabilitate itself and resume its functions in carrying out social development activities and delivering basic social services to disadvantaged and marginalized groups. Despite its limited budget (0.4% of GDP) and stalled administrative processes, the Ministry is building close partnership with NGOs, which carry out most of the Ministry's social welfare programs. The Ministry executes, as well, several projects in cooperation with the UN agencies covering issues such as improving the living conditions of the poor; strengthening women's roles and capacities; setting up population policies; and, promoting reproductive health and family planning.

The Bank prepared a report on social expenditures in Lebanon in 1998, that covered social sector ministries, including the Ministry of Social Affairs. The report revealed weaknesses that inhibits the Ministry from achieving its full capacity and from playing a central role in assisting NGOs in better coordinating their efforts, in setting up criteria and specifications for the provision of services, and in establishing the basics for social work and insuring transparency and accountability. Some of the institutional weaknesses identified in the report were:

- The needs of marginalized groups (orphans, handicapped, elderly, etc) are not adequately fulfilled due to lack of unified set of national criteria for service provision and lack of awareness among the beneficiaries themselves;
- Lack of qualified, trained staff to carry out its specialized and broad mandate;
- Modest budget allocations compared to the functions it is expected to perform;
- Lack of technical and analytical tools to design and plan social policies and programs and to monitor their outcome through conducting surveys and collecting and analyzing social statistics, hence, little is known about the impact of the programs on the ground;

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- No clear overall strategy for social protection and development (not only for MOSA but for other ministries/agencies involved in the social sectors as well). The absence of a national social sector development strategy contributes to the lack of definition of the Ministry's mandate vis-à-vis other social sector ministries, such as health and education;
- MOSA used to operate an active network of Social Development Centers (SDCs) before the war through which it delivered basic health care services, literacy campaigns, self-employment programs and income-generating activities. At present, there are fewer well functioning SDCs run by the Ministry due to budget cuts and competing demands on the Ministry to allocate most of its financial and human resources to welfare programs. MOSA has recently proposed a major investment program that aims at making operational (including establishing new SDCs), a network of 86 SDCs and 208 branches all over the country;
- Though it is tempting to propose additional budget and expansion of the current activities, the Ministry lacks a proper definition of what constitutes an effective social safety net and the apparatus to initiate and oversee new social assistance programs that may complement this safety net. Also, restoring all the pre-war SDCs would be fiscally unsustainable.

What Should MOSA do to Revive its Role

- MOSA could benefit from an institutional building effort that would strengthen its future role in the areas of planning, regulation, monitoring & evaluation, rather than just in service delivery. However, before investing further in systems development and training at the ministry, we need to define its role through the development of a strategy that will establish a framework for the capacity building activities to be funded under the Grant;
- Technical assistance should be provided to the Ministry to improve the targeting and effectiveness of its major social welfare programs;
- More effort should be directed towards re-channeling public funding to NGOs in a transparent and cost-effective manner. This should be preceded by an exercise that will survey the purpose, type, size, capacity and geographical distribution of NGOs in the country;
- The selection of NGOs which benefit from the Ministry's support is done arbitrarily, based on past trends and subject to significant political pressures. MOSA should assess immediately the situation and establish standards and criteria that will guide the selection of NGOs which receive budget transfers from the Ministry. This is an important step towards improving the transparency, minimizing leakage and enhancing the effectiveness of these transfers;
- MOSA should explore new institutional arrangements and framework agreements with these NGOs, arrangements that will benefit from the legal and institutional framework of government and the flexibility and efficiency of the private sector. This will have positive fiscal implications.
- The proposal to make operational 86 SDCs and 208 branches is ambitious as it will entail recurrent cost implications that are beyond the financial means of the government. Fiscal realities have superseded this proposal. The role of SDCs, the package of services delivered through them and whether these services should be undertaken by SDCs or contracted out to NGOs should be revisited in light of the above. SDCs should not be seen as an alternative to NGOs, but as complimentary in purpose and outreach.
- More coordination is required among social sector ministries and agencies in order to avoid duplication of efforts and to better focus their missions and their allocation of resources.

The Purpose of the IDF Grant

The Ministry of Social Affairs, like most public institutions, suffers from redundant controls and formalities. Simple paper work and follow up requires time-consuming and arduous bureaucratic operations. The requested grant will be used to assist MOSA in:

1. Improving and streamlining the procedures which NGOs go through to contract with MOSA. This includes developing new guidelines and selection criteria for establishing eligibility of NGOs, and ensuring a faster and more efficient decision making process within the Ministry;
2. Evaluating the package of services offered through the Social Development Centers, with a view to revisiting their role in service delivery. The Grant will explore new institutional arrangements that will maximize the partnership between the Centers and NGOs for the benefit of the poor.
3. Establishing a monitoring and evaluation system to improve MOSA's ability to follow up on the beneficiaries of its programs, whether administered by NGOs or its own Social Development Centers, and to assess social changes and impact on the poor at the local level.

For the above to be implemented effectively, MOSA will need to undertake a beneficiaries needs assessment within a defined social development strategy that outlines clear priorities for intervention.

Activities and Outputs to be funded from the IDF Grant

The Grant will focus on two sets of activities to be undertaken concurrently:

Streamline procedures:

- Articulate a social development strategy with clear priorities, taking into consideration the role of MOSA in planning, monitoring and regulation and the role of NGOs in service delivery;
- Assess needs through field visits, interviews, and organizing workshops with beneficiaries;
- Evaluate the package of services delivered through the SDCs;
- Survey the major types of NGOs and assess their delivery capacity as social intermediaries;
- Develop eligibility criteria for NGOs to be used as social service intermediaries;
- Develop targeting mechanisms to reach the proper groups of beneficiaries;
- Develop criteria for the selection of projects to serve the needs of the targeted beneficiaries (test criteria and modify if necessary); criteria should answer the needs of the beneficiaries;
- Train relevant MOSA staff at all levels to handle all of the above.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Conduct a needs assessment through field visits to the Social Development Centers in the regions, meet with social workers at the Centers and with the beneficiaries, study projects and activities executed by the SDCs (or as joint projects with the SDCs), study the link between the project and the situation/needs of the local community;
- Develop a set of indicators to monitor and evaluate the impact of projects on the beneficiaries. These indicators should fit to the situation of each region/community and should measure changes at the local level;
- Design monitoring and evaluation models and reports/questionnaires to be conducted regularly;
- Design a simple and easily accessible database that includes: monitorable social indicators, information about programs, providers (NGOs, SDCs) and beneficiaries, standard computerized application and appraisal forms, as well as eligibility and selection procedures.
- Train relevant MOSA staff at all levels on monitoring and evaluation techniques, including the use of computerized forms and reporting procedures.

Description of the Training Component

- The training to be conducted will be in the following areas: development planning, programming and priority setting; beneficiaries needs assessment; impact evaluation; use of targeting, eligibility and selection guidelines; participatory approaches in local programs development and implementation; project appraisal and proposal writing; organizational and communication skills.

- The target groups for training are: key staff of central depts.; technical staff of the social devt. centers; members of NGOs currently on contract with the ministry as well as potential others, and heads of local municipalities.

A breakdown of the courses and possible attendance.

The estimated cost per trainee per day (all inclusive) is around \$45. Therefore, the allocated budget for training (\$78,400) will fund a total of 1740 trainee-days, as follows:

- development planning, programming and priority setting: 120 trainees for 2 days each = 240 trainee-days
- beneficiaries needs assessment: impact evaluation: 90 trainees for 3 days each = 270 trainee-days
- use of targeting, eligibility and selection guidelines: 90 trainees for 3 days each = 270 trainee-days
- participatory approaches in local programs development and implementation: 120 trainees for 2 days each = 240 trainee-days
- project appraisal and proposal writing: 120 trainees for 3 days each = 360 trainee-days
- organizational and communication skills: 180 trainees for 2 day each = 360 trainee-days.

Relationship of grant proposal with country economic and sector work (or business plan)

As mentioned above, this proposal falls within the Bank's recommendations (as per the mission's report on social expenditures in Lebanon), and also complements the Bank's efforts in Lebanon in rehabilitating and upgrading the capacity of public institutions (through the Bank's loan that supports the Office of the Minister of Administrative Reform). This work also complements the current poverty review that the Bank is conducting and which aims, among other things, at identifying institutional weaknesses in key government agencies delivering poverty reduction programs.

Government agency responsible for execution

Ministry of Social Affairs

Government Contribution (cash or in-kind)

The GOL will contribute in-kind and cash to the above exercise by providing the time of relevant MOSA staff at the central, regional and local levels, and by providing office space and facilities to the consultants who will undertake the work above. The estimated contribution of MOSA will amount to \$100,000 over 22 months and will cover cost of local contractuals as well as logistical support such as: office space, communications, secretarial support, transportation, copying, printing, etc.

Preliminary timetable

A tentative time-table to implement the above activities would extend for 24 months as follows:

May - August 2000	Articulate a social development strategy with clear priorities, taking into consideration the role of MOSA in planning, monitoring and regulation and the role of SDCs and NGOs in service delivery. Design the needs assessment (methodology and survey tools, etc.).
September - December 2000	Conduct the beneficiaries needs assessment, and evaluate the role of SDCs and NGOs in service delivery. Survey the major types of NGOs to determine capacity. Evaluate the package of services delivered through the SDCs.
January 2000 - April 2001	Formulate eligibility and selection criteria and develop manuals for MOSA operations to be followed by relevant Ministry staff at all levels.
May - July 2001	Develop targeting mechanisms to reach the proper groups of beneficiaries.
August - October 2001	Develop a set of social indicators to monitor and evaluate the impact of projects on the beneficiaries, and design monitoring and evaluation models and reports/questionnaires to be conducted regularly.
November 2001 - May 2002	Design a simple and easily accessible database that includes: monitorable social indicators; information about programs, providers (NGOs, SDCs) and beneficiaries; standard computerized application and appraisal forms, & eligibility and selection procedures.
October 2000 - May 2002	Train relevant MOSA staff at all levels. Training should be ongoing and should be provided on the job and formal by the consultants and professional trainers.
March - May 2002	Test procedures and modify (where necessary).

Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Quantity	Costs (US\$)		Financing (US\$)	
				Unit	Total	Grant	Local
1. Streamline Procedures	Articulate a social development strategy with clear priorities, taking into consideration the role of MOSA in planning, monitoring and regulation, and the role of SIDCs and NGOs in service delivery. Design the needs assessment (methodology and survey tools, etc.)	Social Development Strategy	Fees - Int'l. (20 days)	680	13,600	13,600	
			Travel - from Europe	2,000	2,000	2,000	
			Subsistence - (day)	200	4,000	4,000	
			Fees - Local (60 days)	140	8,400	8,400	
			Subsistence & others	60	3,600	3,600	
			Local contractuals	140	10,000		10,000
			Fees - Int'l. (10 days)	680	6,800	6,800	
			Travel - from Europe	2,000	2,000	2,000	
			Subsistence - (day)	200	2,000	2,000	
			Fees - Local (90 days)	140	12,600	12,600	
2. Develop a Monitoring and Evaluation System	Conduct the beneficiaries needs assessment, and evaluate the role of SIDCs and NGOs in service delivery. Survey the major types of NGOs to determine capacity. Evaluate the package of services delivered through the SIDCs.	Beneficiaries Needs Assessment Survey and Evaluation of SIDCs and NGOs.	Subsistence & others	60	5,400	5,400	
			Surveyors - all inclus. (320 days)	50	16,000	16,000	
			Local contractuals & field researchers	140	20,000		20,000
			Fees - Int'l. (20 days)	680	13,600	13,600	
			Travel - from Europe	2,000	2,000	2,000	
			Subsistence - (day)	200	4,000	4,000	
			Fees - Local (60 days)	140	8,400	8,400	
			Subsistence & others	60	3,600	3,600	
			Local contractuals & field researchers	140	15,000		15,000
			Operations Manuals				
	Formulate eligibility and selection criteria and develop manuals for MOSA operations to be followed by relevant Ministry staff at all levels.						

Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Quantity	Costs (US\$)		Financing (US\$)		
				Unit	Total	Grant	Local	
	Develop targeting mechanisms to reach the proper groups of beneficiaries.	Targeting Map and Tools	Fees - Int'l. (10 days)	680	6,800	6,800		
			Travel - from Europe	2,000	2,000	2,000		
			Subsistence - (day)	200	2,000	2,000		
			Fees - Local (50 days)	140	7,000	7,000		
			Subsistence & others	60	3,000	3,000		
			Local contractals	140	15,000		15,000	
			Fees - Int'l. (10 days)	680	6,800	6,800		
			Travel - from Europe	2,000	2,000	2,000		
			Subsistence - (day)	200	2,000	2,000		
			Fees - Local (50 days)	140	7,000	7,000		
			Subsistence & others	60	3,000	3,000		
			Office facilities, transportation printing & secretarial services		10,000		10,000	
	Design a simple and easily accessible database that includes: monitorable social indicators; information about programs, providers (NGOs, SDCs) and beneficiaries; standard computerized application and appraisal forms, & eligibility and selection procedures.	Computerized database	Fees - Int'l. (20 days)	680	13,600	13,600		
			Travel - from Europe	2,000	2,000	2,000		
			Subsistence - (day)	200	4,000	4,000		
			Fees - Local (60 days)	140	8,400	8,400		
			Subsistence & others	60	3,600	3,600		
			Office facilities, secretarial services, printing		10,000		10,000	
			Computers, Software &	4,000	40,000		40,000	

Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Quantity	Costs (US\$)		Financing (US\$)	
				Unit	Total	Grant	Local
			Accessories (10 stations)	per station			
		A set of training materials and manuals.	Fees - Int'l. (30 days)	680	20,400	20,400	
			Travel - from Europe	2,000	2,000	2,000	
			Subsistence - (day)	200	6,000	6,000	
			Fees - Local (150 days)	140	21,000	21,000	
			Subsistence & others	60	9,000	9,000	
			Office, training & workshop facilities, printing		20,000		20,000
			Seminar & travel to Ireland	4 staff	20,400	20,400	
	Study Tours		Social Welfare Org. Re Social welfare programs.	MOSA for 2 weeks			
			Total		400,000	300,000	100,000

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 Office of the Minister of State for Economic Studies
 Center for Public Sector Reform
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