

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE



MIDDLE EAST PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE LOCAL GRANTS PROGRAM

Project Narrative Instructions

In order to help MEPI determine if your project idea meets the program goals for a MEPI Local Grant, we request that you use this Project Narrative worksheet to describe your project idea. Please follow all instructions below carefully.

We accept Project Narratives in English, French, or Arabic. We look forward to receiving creative proposal ideas that address the areas of interest and allowable activities outlined below. Your project will be reviewed by Embassy staff, and a MEPI representative will let you know if your project idea is suitable for further consideration as a MEPI Local Grant.

MEPI Mission and Objectives:

MEPI works in partnership with civil society organizations, the private sector, and government institutions throughout the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region to help achieve three overarching goals:

1. Building pluralistic societies in which diversity is reflected in social organizations, politics, business, media, and government, and where all citizens have equal standing, protected by guaranteed rights and by independent and effective judiciaries;
2. Building participatory societies in which citizens play an active role in making decisions that affect their lives and in holding their governments accountable; and
3. Building prosperous societies in which education, specialized skill training, and an environment conducive to business development inspire innovation and create a foundation for long-term economic growth and an internationally competitive private sector.

Local grants promote reform and civic activism at the local and national levels in countries of the Middle East and North Africa, build the institutional capacity of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and strengthen civil society. Funding is available for projects that protect and advance civil liberties especially political and civic rights, empower women and youth, strengthen the rule of law, develop independent and pluralistic media, foster economic opportunity and economic reform, and promote an educated, active and informed citizenry. Local grants projects are intended to support quick impact activities. They generally are completed in one year and should be designed to carry out proposed activities and make an impact within that one-year

period. Proposed local grant projects should involve activities in one or more of the following areas:

- Advocacy by civil society, NGOs, and professional associations, including grassroots level and community organizations, to promote legal or political reforms and raise public awareness of democratic values and processes.
- Development of networks, partnerships, and coalitions that could include local NGOs, civil society organizations, government officials, and/or the business community to promote reform.
- Expansion of opportunities for youth (ages 15-24), particularly those that to provide practical, hands-on experience in civic engagement, public service, and volunteerism, and that help to improve local communities.
- Expansion of women's participation in public life at the local, regional, and national levels.
- Promotion of the rule of law, including rights education, education of legal professionals, and advocacy activities to expand civic rights and to ensure legal systems protect the rights of all individuals.
- Promotion of legal frameworks and processes that expand citizen participation in politics and public life.
- Promotion of good governance, including anti-corruption efforts and initiatives to promote government transparency and integrity.
- Promotion of public awareness of current political issues and processes, including voter education.
- Development of media institutions that defend the public interest and provide credible and diverse sources of information.
- Promotion of economic reform that expands economic opportunity especially for youth, including promoting entrepreneurship and commercial and legal reforms, as well as workforce development training.
- Expansion of educational opportunities, including civic education activities that promote tolerance of different views, respect for democratic values and institutions, protection of ethnic and religious diversity, leadership development, and community service.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

1. Brief Summary: (Please provide a one-paragraph description of the project's objectives, beneficiaries, and general plan of action)

The Ngera Cooperative for Social and Charitable Causes in the Jordanian Badia is an established women's cooperative that has successfully raised funds to implement numerous community projects, and contributed to the empowerment of women through training programs on employment skills, math and English, and women's rights. The Ngera Cooperative is interested in sharing its experience with other Badia communities and proposes to partner with two emerging cooperatives, the Al-Rahmanya Association for Social Development and the Muharib Cooperative, to build capacity through a grassroots, participatory training approach targeted to women and youth. The objective of this project is to assist the development of the Al-Rahmanya Association and Muharib Cooperative, while developing a new capability for the Ngera Cooperative as peer trainers and consultants. This objective will be achieved through peer-to-peer trainings in organizational development, management and technical skills; consultations and support activities between established and budding women's cooperatives; and increased capacity of emerging cooperatives to secure additional funding. The Al-Rahmanya Association and the Muharib Cooperative will benefit by establishing effective cooperatives, providing educational and job opportunities for youth, increasing women's participation in civil society and promoting women's economic prosperity and entrepreneurship through a partnership approach. The Ngera Cooperative will benefit by developing a new enterprise as peer trainers and receiving training to strengthen technical skills. This project will enhance women's social and economic empowerment and promote entrepreneurship as well as participation in civic life.

2. State the problem, and describe how this project will address the problem.

The Badia rangeland Muharib and Majidyya communities in Jordan are characterized by a dry climate with an average annual rainfall of less than 200 mm, poor vegetation cover and accelerated soil erosion. Women in these communities are mainly engaged in agriculture, especially livestock production, cultivation of herbal and medicinal plants, and dairy product processing. Cooperatives have formed in these areas to support such activities. The Al-Rahmanya Association for Social Development was established this year in the Majidyya community and has 80 members, 40 male and 40 female farmers. Their motto is "We are all partners in development" and the group is active in goat, herb and mushroom production. With proper training and facilities, the cooperative wants to expand their activities to include dairy processing and youth employment. An established Muharib Cooperative with 60 members, half men and half women, is active in civil society issues. The Muharib community has recently developed a dairy processing facility; the cooperative would like to increase the community's ability to add value to their dairy products through processing and marketing and provide employment to young women.

While the Majidyya and Muharib Cooperatives have registered with the government and formed a management structure, their next steps are to locate sources of funding and prioritize potential activities. The Ngera Cooperative for Social and Charitable Causes is well-established and has demonstrated success; they propose to partner with the emerging Majidyya and Muharib

Cooperatives to build capacity through a grassroots, participatory training approach targeted to women and youth. The proposed activities for one year are as follows:

1. The Ngera Cooperative will provide peer-to-peer training in women's leadership, cooperative management, and business, marketing and fundraising skills.
2. The Ngera Cooperative will provide peer-to-peer technical training to women and youth in computer/IT skills and value-added processing and marketing for dairy products.
3. All three cooperatives will receive co-training from external experts in microfinance and cultivation of medicinal, herbal and cosmetic plants and mushrooms.
4. The Ngera Cooperative will provide consultation and support services to the Muharib and Majidyya Cooperatives to help with startup issues.

3. Explain how this project meets one or more of the MEPI priorities outlined above, on page two of the "Project Narratives"

The described project meets several MEPI priorities: 1) Expansion of opportunities for youth; 2) Expansion of women's participation in public life; 3) Expansion of educational opportunities; and 4) Development of networks, partnerships and coalitions. By establishing effective cooperatives, youth will have access to technical training for livelihood opportunities, will be able to engage in organizations working to improve their local communities and gain hands-on experience in public service. The project promotes women's participation in civil society, economic prosperity and entrepreneurship through a partnership approach. Increasing women's participation in the public arena will result in shifting attitudes among men in Muharib and Majidyya with regard to the capability of women to positively participate in civic life. Such a shift should create a more democratic society in these communities. The project also expands educational opportunities for women and youth. Participants will receive training in leadership development, fundraising, cooperative management, dairy processing and marketing and microfinance. Such trainings will provide the necessary skills to enable participants to support their prosperity through new income-generating activities and to serve their communities. Lastly, the project promotes the development of partnerships. Linking the three cooperatives will strengthen all of them, provide a valuable support network for the members, and hopefully increase the cooperatives' influence in their communities.

4. What are the main objectives of the project, and how will you will measure achieving the objectives? *(A good project should have 1-2 objectives. If possible, for each of the intended results/objectives, please describe how you intend to measure these objectives.)*

This project will assist in the development of the Majidyya and Muharib Cooperatives, while cultivating a new capacity for the Ngera Cooperative as peer trainers and consultants. The outputs of this project are peer-to-peer trainings in organizational development, management and technical skills; consultations and support activities between established and budding women's cooperatives; and increased capacity of emerging cooperatives to secure additional funding.

Success will be measured quantitatively and qualitatively through indicators such as the number of women and youth participating in trainings, the number of women taking leadership/decision making roles in the cooperatives, number of grant proposals prepared by the new cooperatives, number of women engaged in developing training curricula and the qualitative shift in attitudes of men regarding the capability of women to participate in public life. Data will be collected through recorded observations, program training records, primary information from individuals,

and cohort surveys of the cooperatives and interviews with men in the community, such as husbands and community leaders. When possible, data will be disaggregated by age to measure youth participation in activities. Pre-project surveys and post-project surveys of the indicators will be conducted to accurately measure results. Assistance and training in monitoring and evaluation will be provided by the Water and Livelihoods Initiative (WLI), a joint effort by USAID, the International Center for Agriculture Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), the Central and West Asia and North Africa (CWANA) project, and the National Center for Agricultural Research and Extension (NCARE) in Jordan.

5. List the name(s) of the person(s) who will be responsible for implementing and managing the project. Please attach a copy of each person's CV or resume.

Dr. Samia Akroush of NCARE will assist the cooperatives in designing training, grant proposal writing and monitoring and evaluation of project activities. Miss Samia Jbour, the head of Ngera Cooperative for Social and Charitable Causes, will be responsible for providing peer to peer training to the community members of the Muharib and Majidyia cooperatives. She will also be responsible for conducting activities with the leaders of the Majidyia and Muharib cooperatives.

6. Describe how you plan to publicize the work and to incorporate MEPI into this publicity (if appropriate).

The cooperatives will acknowledge MEPI support at any events held and training materials will include the MEPI logo. Should this project be mentioned on the Water and Livelihoods website (www.icarda.org/wli) or the NCARE website (www.ncare.gov.jo), the MEPI logo will be included and MEPI support will be acknowledged. If cooperative members take part in any press interviews, members will mention MEPI support by name.

7. Please briefly describe your organization and partner organizations by answering the following questions:

7.1 What type of organization are you (e.g., non-profit, for-profit, institution of higher education)?

Ngera is a non-profit cooperative for social and charitable causes and registered through the Jordan Ministry of Social Development.

7.2 When was your organization established?

1994

7.3 What is the approximate size of membership?

60

7.4 What is the mission and purpose of your organization?

The Ngera Cooperative for Social and Charitable Causes in the Badia was established by a group of women who saw successful activities in other communities and wanted the same for their community. This cooperative has successfully raised funds to establish a kindergarten school, a working dairy operation for market, and a staffed computer center. Cooperative members have participated in training programs for food processing, math and English, cosmetics, public health, computer/IT, the role of women in peace and

elections, women's rights, and employment skills. Women members are responsible for fundraising, management, and the hiring and supervising of employees.

Mission Statement: To provide services to all members and citizens on a voluntary basis, without aiming to reap profits, aid specific people or achieve any political goals.

7.5 What is the primary source of funding for your organization?

The main sources of funding for the organization are:

1. Kindergarten fees
2. Youth computer courses fees
3. Membership dues
4. Donations from companies and factories
5. Renting the dairy unit
6. Donations from local and international organizations (FAO, Queen Noor Foundation, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Social Development, Hashemite Fund, National Institute for Women's Empowerment)

7.6 Describe its status under applicable law.

All cooperatives involved in this proposal are registered with the Ministry of Social Development.

7.7 What is the name(s) of your partner organization(s) (if applicable)?

The Al-Rahmanya Association for Social Development
The Muharib Cooperative
ICARDA
NCARE

7.8 What is the role of your partner organization(s) (if applicable)?

The Ngera Cooperative will partner with the Al-Rahmanya Association for Social Development and the Muharib Cooperative to strengthen these emerging organizations. In-kind assistance will be provided by ICARDA and NCARE for training, grant proposal writing and monitoring and evaluation of project activities.

8. Has your organization received or expected to receive financial assistance from other donors? If so, please name any donors, their contact information, the amount of financial assistance received, and briefly describe funded projects.

Projects at Majidyya and Muharib receive technical support from the Water and Livelihoods Initiative (WLI), a joint effort by USAID, the International Center for Agriculture Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), the Central and West Asia and North Africa (CWANA) project and the National Center for Agricultural Research and Extension (NCARE). Additionally, the Muharib cooperative has received 36,000 Euros of funding from a private organization of German race car drivers. This funding was funneled through the Hashemite Fund. The race car drivers donated old cars to the Hashemite Fund, who then sold them and granted the money to the cooperative to purchase land and equipment to set up a dairy processing unit.

End of Worksheet — Thank you.