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**EVALUATION REPORT**



**TRANSTEC**  
PROJECT  
MANAGEMENT

**UDF-RAS-08-239 Engaging Civil Society in a Democratic Election Process in  
Sudan, Bahrain, Tunisia, Jordan**

**Date: 22 April 2013**

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All errors and omissions remain the responsibility of the authors.

## **Disclaimer**

The views expressed in this report are those of the evaluators. They do not represent those of UNDEF or of any of the institutions referred to in the report.

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## I. Executive Summary

### (i) Project Data

According to the project document, the *Engaging Civil Society in a Democratic Election Process in Sudan, Bahrain, Tunisia and Jordan* project sought to strengthen electoral processes in the four named countries, with a particular focus on elections monitoring by independent civil society organizations (CSOs). Major activities included the formation of a regional expert group on elections monitoring, trainings, and provision of elections monitoring services.

This US\$ 370,000 project (US\$ 300,000 from UNDEF and \$70,000 from the grantee) was implemented by the Al Kawakibi Democracy Transition Centre (KADEM), located in Tunis and ran from 1 October 2009 – 31 March 2011 including an 8-month no-cost extension.

### (ii) Evaluation Findings

The project was highly **relevant** to the need for democracy support in the region, where early optimism about the Arab Spring has been replaced with concern over reversals of and slow progress in democratic reform. The project recognized that few Arab states had a culture of free and fair elections and determined that it would work in countries with no history of independent elections monitoring which were facing elections. Both criteria were sensible but came at a cost: countries with no such tradition were likely to be difficult to work in and placing the project at the mercy of the electoral calendar made planning difficult. To its credit, the project document identified the possible reluctance of governments to accept independent international (in effect, regional) elections monitoring as a major risk.

And so it proved to be the case. This raised issues for **effectiveness**, as the project was forced to leave a number of activities unimplemented and, as a result, a great deal of money (US\$ 50,000) was unexpended. The main achievement of the project, and the one most stressed in reporting, was the constitution of an expert group, the Arab Working Group on Elections Monitoring (AWGEM) consisting of high-profile members. The AWGEM was able to meet twice, carry out a limited number of trainings in the four countries, and engage in elections monitoring in Tunisia. In Bahrain, Sudan, and Jordan, blockage by governments prevented the AWGEM from carrying out its full menu of planned activities, although the latter two governments did accept national monitoring (Jordan) and international but non-regional monitoring (Sudan). In Tunis, the home base of KADEM, the project was able to carry out its full range of activities, including providing monitoring for the October 2011 parliamentary elections. In general, training and monitoring focused more on the quantity than the quality of monitoring, a strategy that can be defended but may pose problems for the longer term.

The only real issue for **efficiency** was the large under-expenditure. In the text below, the evaluators suggest a number of proposed activities which UNDEF would probably have agreed to and which would have wisely used the unexpended funds to advance project purpose.

Given the scope of the problems faced in the countries targeted, low initial capacities, and the unfavorable political context in which the project had to work, it is not surprising that the **impact** of the project was limited. Low initial capacities were a double-edged sword, however, because it is also clear that impacts at the level of individual beneficiaries of

training were significant. Scattered examples of concrete impacts were found, for example, an AWGEM member was able to propose a low-cost solution to a difficult practical polling-place question in Tunisia, saving many thousands of dollars to the Elections Management Body. Better reporting might have resulted in a more favorable assessment of impact.

Better **sustainability** would have required better project strategy. This would have included more emphasis on institutional capacity building and a less ad hoc approach – essentially, implement (and did so with admirable flexibility). The grantee has high confidence in the continued impact of the AWGEM, but it appeared to the evaluators that far more needs to be done to institutionalize this group.

UNDEF value added came in several forms. One, UNDEF's flexibility to changing project activities, has been noted many times. UNDEF's willingness to work in difficult environments is another: that said, however, donors are eager to support democracy in the Arab world and better coordination would have benefited the project. Most important was the UN "brand", as UNDEF support is politically much more palatable in the democracy field than bilateral support or even support from putatively supra-national organizations such as the European Commission.

### ***(iii) Conclusions***

Based on the evaluation findings, the team concludes:

- ***Effectiveness and impact of this project can be judged only in context, and the project performed reasonably well once the context is taken into account.*** The project took place in a revolutionary atmosphere. With hindsight, it is not surprising that a number of countries were not cooperative on the visa and election monitoring permission fronts. In fairness, the project identified this as a risk. In general, the grantee has displayed the needed dexterity and UNDEF has provided the flexibility that has been noted in a number of these evaluations. Given UNDEF's flexibility, the project could have proposed follow-on activities that would have avoided the large under-expenditure experienced and contributed to a more solid foundation for future progress. This conclusion derives from findings on effectiveness and impact.

- ***The importance and feasibility of putting in place international networks, even when country-level progress is difficult, was again demonstrated by the project.*** It would be overly optimistic to claim that this project had a near-term tangible, measurable impact on democratic development in the Arab world. Yet, the formation of a tightly networked, mobile elite of regional experts appears to be progressing. Mobilizing quality expertise can lead to real impacts. Given the poor initial conditions, individual-level impacts on persons receiving training were probably significant. This conclusion derives from the findings on impact.

- More doubtful is that the proliferation of training will lead to change, because **the quantity-quality tradeoff appears to have not been taken into account.** Nor was it ever made clear what trained trainers would do post-project, or what role the training of journalists was to play. In one sense the training delivered by the project probably had impact because as noted, the baseline conditions were poor and the project was operating in countries with no culture or tradition of free and fair elections. However, given government attitudes and the low quality of monitoring even in Tunisia, the sustainability of this impact can be questioned.

- **The project was relevant and effective in that it created baseline regional information.** Elections are typically planned in a setting where time is at a premium, and the existence of these baseline documents may help to identify priority problems and possible solutions. Even though the contribution of the case studies to the present project was not entirely clear, properly disseminated, these can serve as a valued resource for future work in countries throughout the region.

- The project set very general goals – create the AWGEM, lobby governments, deliver training, participate in monitoring – and then simply tried to do what it was able to do under the circumstances. **There does not appear to have been any attention to what newly empowered CSOs would do going forward after the end of the project; for that matter, even the reported continuing progress of the AWGEM seems to be something that was not explicitly considered in project planning.** This poses a significant problem for sustainability. Dissemination and reporting were generally weak. Better reporting might well have led to stronger or at least more reliable, findings related to impact. This conclusion is related to findings on effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

- There was **no evidence that the project sought to coordinate with other donor-led initiatives in the democracy field.** Such coordination would have to be initiated by KADEM and, in the current context, Arab countries are enjoying a surplus of offered democracy support aid. It appears that, once again the UN “brand” of UNDEF served as a positive factor, as governments in the region are deeply suspicious of bilateral support in the area (witness developments earlier this year in Egypt). Better coordination with the UN itself in the form of UNDP might have yielded benefits.

- **Some of KADEM’s practices are risky and need to be re-considered.** While the difficult circumstances in which KADEM works are appreciated, subterfuges can backfire. The expedient of sending trainers to one country on tourist visas (proper visas having been denied) placed the trainers, the trainees, KADEM, and UNDEF itself at risk.

#### ***(iv) Recommendations***

To strengthen similar projects in the future, the team recommends:

- ***KADEM should generally tighten up its project cycle management.*** The project strategy paid little attention to how the AWGEM group would develop after the end of the project. Precisely what trained trainers could (?) do can be inferred from interviews but was never made clear in the Prodoc, nor was the role of training journalists. The goal of workshops / conferences was never made clear, nor was the purpose of the country case studies explicit. Reporting in general was weak. KADEM needs to insist on more systematic reporting of activities implemented by local partners. All of this falls under the rubric of “professionalization.” This follows from Conclusions (iii), (iv), and (v).

- The regional approach to KADEM’s activities makes sense but in the future **the evaluators would recommend not tying initiatives only to the electoral calendar.** As evidence by the failure to secure government authorization in three of the four countries covered, there is a great deal of ground work to be done before the time pressure and political stress of upcoming elections is upon officials. A plan tied to long-term development rather than the electoral calendar would permit the kind of ad hoc manoeuvring found in this project to be reduced. This follows from Conclusion (v).

- **KADEM should be more proactive when circumstances block the implementation of some parts of a project.** KADEM cannot be faulted for the inability to carry out 3 of the 4 planned international monitoring missions. However, the large amount of money released could have been used for multiple purposes – translation, an end-of-project international workshop, putting an AWGEM website in place etc. This is based on Conclusion (i).

- KADEM should continue to contribute to the development of the AWGEM but should, as a matter of urgency, **encourage that AWGEM be formalized as to membership and procedures and establishes a web presence.** In its current form, the group appears to be intangible and fragile. The AWGEM should be in touch with a range of donors, attempting to build on the achievements of its early efforts. This is based on Conclusions (ii) and (vi).

- If, as it states, it intends to become a regional force in implementing democracy support project, **KADEM will need to regularize its status in Tunisia and adopt stricter guidelines on its operations.** This follows from Conclusion (vii).

- **There are some obvious opportunities for innovative future work.** The religious dimension of the political process was consistently ignored in this project. A less controversial, but also pressing issue with a massive regional dimension is voter diaspora -- from all countries to the Gulf, from Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria to Europe, from Jordan to the United States – offers exciting opportunities for practical work to improve the functioning of elections processes. The same is true of the voting rights of refugees.

## II. Introduction and development context

### **(i) The project and evaluation objectives**

The project *Engaging Civil Society in a Democratic Election Process* (UDF-RAS-08-239) was implemented from 1 October 2009 – 31 March 2011, a 25-month span the last eight months of which consisted of a no-cost extension in order to cover the Tunisian parliamentary elections of October 2011. The project was implemented by the Al Kawakibi Democracy Transition Centre (KADEM), located in Tunis and covered Jordan, Sudan, Bahrain, and Tunisia. The total budget was USD 370,000; of which USD 300,000 was provided by UNDEF (of which \$25,000 withheld for evaluation). The remaining USD 70,000 (largely devoted to activities in Tunisia during the no-cost extension) came out of general KADEM funds provided by the Arab Democracy Foundation (ADF) in Doha with which KADEM is closely associated (the founder of KADEM is the Executive Director of the ADF), as well as other regular supporters such as IREX and the U.S. State Department's Middle East Partnership Initiative.

The goal of the project was to strengthen the role of civil society in elections in the Arab region while improving the electoral process specifically by involving civil society in independent elections monitoring. It sought to do this by forming a high-level expert group on elections monitoring to engage with government officials and coordinate efforts in the countries, and by providing training.

The evaluation of this project is part of the larger evaluation of the Round 2 and Round 3 UNDEF-funded projects. Its purpose is to contribute towards a better understanding of what constitutes a successful project which will in turn help UNDEF to develop future project strategies. Evaluations are also to assist stakeholders to determine whether projects have been implemented in accordance with the project document and whether anticipated project outputs have been achieved.<sup>1</sup>

### **(ii) Evaluation methodology**

The evaluation took place in September 2012 with the field work in Tunisia and Jordan conducted between September 17 and 21, 2012. The evaluation was conducted by Landis MacKellar and Aurélie Ferreira, both experts in democratic governance and development projects. The UNDEF Round 2 and 3 evaluations are more qualitative in nature and follow a standard set of evaluation questions that focus on the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and any value added from UNDEF-funding (Annex 1). This is to allow meta-analysis for cluster evaluations at a later stage. This report follows that structure. The evaluators reviewed available documentation on the project (Annex 2). Interviews were held with KADEM, various Tunisian and Jordanian local CSO partners and beneficiaries, country case study authors, and other stakeholders (Annex 3).

During the preparatory work, the evaluators identified several specific issues which they followed up on during the field work. These included:

- How, despite the practical difficulties experienced (see below), was the project able to have an impact in those countries?
- What have been the post-project activities of the AWGEM and of persons who received training?

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<sup>1</sup> Operations Manual for the UNDEF-funded project evaluations, p. 3.

- What sorts of relationships were formed with other internationally accepted monitoring groups? Why were the efforts of these groups judged insufficient for the region?
- Did the project deliver on its promise to pay special attention to vulnerable and marginalized groups including women and religious minorities?
- What has been the impact of the Arab Spring? Did the project react successfully in selecting Tunisia, whose Revolution and subsequent election occurred during the time span covered by the project, as a new country of intervention.

### **(iii) Development context**

The Arab region consists of 16 countries sharing similar political and economic challenges. In politics, these countries need to decide whether they are fundamentally strong-man presidential states or parliamentary democracies with a genuine division of powers. They need to decide on the degree to which independence of the judiciary



including administrative bodies and the rule of law will be institutionalized. Most in the headlines these days, they need to decide how they will navigate between the Scylla of secular modernity and the Charybdis of religious intolerance.

In economics, the development failures of the Arab world are periodically discussed in the regional UNDP report and do not need to be discussed here. The greatest economic challenge is mass unemployment of the educated young, which has come about because, while young men and women were stocked in expanding higher education establishments, the sector which traditionally provided them employment – the civil service and public-sector firms – was constrained from growth by fiscal limits and the sheer deadweight of inefficiency and clientism. Moreover, university graduates in the region are often deficient in the practical skills desirable in a man or woman of business and pursue survival strategies while queuing for a cherished public sector job.

Cutting across, politics, economics, culture, and religion is the communications revolution, which has eliminated the State monopoly on information. The dark side of this is that, as part of the same process, opportunities for disseminating views of the most biased and inflammatory kind have multiplied.

The Arab Spring and ensuing Winter have been so minutely dissected elsewhere that only a few sentences are needed here. Disappointingly, after as well as before the Arab Spring, strong-man regimes have shot themselves in the foot with spectacular and cruel repressive measures. In doing so they have demonstrated their difficulty in engaging with the complex, globalised world. In Egypt, the epicenter of the movement, military revanchists and Islamic forces are united in their determination that “progressives” favored by the West will not prevail. In fairness, progressive elites have failed to establish a legitimacy claim among the common people. The interests of women are particularly at risk of being compromised, not only in recent Egyptian constitutional changes, but in Tunisia as well.

This is clearly difficult terrain for international donors to work in. This impression is deepened by a review of the countries in which this project was active.

**Bahrain** is a Constitutional Monarchy headed by Emir Sheik Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, who came to power on the death of his father in 1999. He allowed some degree of democratic opening after years of a repressive regime; freeing political prisoners and permitting exiles to return, recognizing the principle of equality among Bahraini citizens, abolishing emergency laws and restoring freedom of speech. A new National Charter, approved by public referendum in February 2001, cemented national reconciliation. But the Emir proclaimed himself king in February 2002, chief of Army and Chair of the Higher Judicial Council. Without any consultation, he promulgated a Constitution that established a bicameral National Assembly with 40 members elected and 40 appointed by the king with a blocking power on all the other Chamber initiatives. This “constitutional coup” was accompanied by a series of royal decrees limiting political freedom. The 2010 legislative elections unsurprisingly were tainted with controversy amidst boycotts and arrests. Political activists and international human rights watchdogs warned of a “drift back to full-blown authoritarianism.”<sup>2</sup> The credibility of the election was threatened by allegations of voting problems and voters disenfranchisement. About 292 Bahraini observers from non-governmental organizations monitored the elections and foreign observers were not allowed.

**Jordan** has some common features with Bahrain as a hereditary Monarchy. The legislative power pattern in Jordan is, to some degree, similar to Bahrain. The Senate has 60 members, all of whom are directly appointed by the King, while the Chamber of Deputies has 110 elected members – out of which 6 seats are reserved for women. Although opposition parties participate in elections, they win few seats. This is largely due to Jordan’s electoral law, which adopts the one person, one vote principle: voters cast one vote for one candidate, rather than for a party list, even when the electoral district is allocated more than one seat. Political parties, trade unions, professional syndicates, and civil society institutions in Jordan have long criticized the law, arguing that it stifles political development, fosters tribalism at the expense of modern civil society, and has supported a conservative, traditionalist-dominated Chamber of Deputies since 1993. This voting system created voter apathy and resulted in low turnouts in the past elections: 2010 – 53%, 2007 - 54%, 2003 – 58%, 1997 - 44%; 1993 - 47%; 1989 - 41%. The 2013 general elections attracted a similarly low rate of 56.5%<sup>3</sup>. However some progress has been observed as the country welcomed international observers for the first time in 2010 and plan to do the same for the next Parliamentary elections to be held on 23 January 2013. At the time of the Evaluation, the pressure from civil society had just led to the creation of a national committee for independent elections.

In **Tunisia**, President Ben Ali’ was head of state until being forced to leave the country in January 2011. His government was widely recognized as authoritarian and undemocratic by independent international human rights groups and, particularly in its later years, was deeply corrupt. In The Economist’s 2010 Democracy Index, the country was classified as an authoritarian regime, ranking 144th out of 167 countries studied. On October 23, 2011, Tunisians elected a national constituent assembly (NCA) tasked with drafting a new Constitution and preparing follow-on national elections for a new government. For the first time in the country’s history, an independent election commission organized the election and adopted measures to ensure that the vote transpired freely and fairly. Tunisia mobilized strong domestic forces to observe elections and invited all international counterparts to come. According to elections experts there is a real civic dynamic and international donors’ interest but, so far, a missed opportunity to build local observers’ capacity.

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<sup>2</sup> Agence française de presse :

[http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iS0wqxGZwKOPq32\\_87A4stKcFDdQ?docId=CNG.f64a3c11c51ce2fdec300da4be7d77e5.8a1](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iS0wqxGZwKOPq32_87A4stKcFDdQ?docId=CNG.f64a3c11c51ce2fdec300da4be7d77e5.8a1)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.idea.int/vt/countryview.cfm?CountryCode=JO>

**Sudan's** political profile sets in contrast with the three other project countries. Torn apart by persistent conflicts since its independence from the Anglo –Egyptian condominium in 1956; Sudan witnessed the confrontation of its Northern and Southern parts on economic, political and religious grounds. Since 1958, military regimes favoring Islamic-oriented governments have dominated national politics and there have been confrontations with the Animist and Christian minorities, mostly based in South Sudan. The country thus went through two wars (1958/1972 and 1983/2005) resulting in more than four million people displaced and, according to rebel estimates, more than two million deaths. Peace talks gained momentum and a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed in January 2005, granting the southern rebels autonomy for six years followed by a referendum on independence for Southern Sudan and establishing the National Election Commission. The Executive and Legislative elections held in April 2010 were the fifth competitive multi-party elections held since independence in 1956 and the first to be held in 24 years. The Sudanese people were asked to vote in six elections, held simultaneously, which raised enormous logistics needs. The civil society, but also the international community (African Union, League of Arab States, Carter Centre, European Union, etc.), participated actively in elections preparation; which did not prevent the process to be marred with distrust and security concerns. Independence of South Sudan was proclaimed on July 9, 2011 as a result of the referendum organized in January 2011. Project activities were all finalized by then as illustrated by the Sudanese case study; mentioning the referendum without further elaborating on its organization nor on the independence consequences on the electoral frame in both countries.

### III. Project strategy

#### (i) Project approach and strategy

The project was implemented by Al Kawakibi Democracy Transition Centre (KADEM). KADEM is a regional NGO based in Tunis and specialized in supporting democratization. Founded in 2006, its main objectives are spreading democratic culture and practices, building capacity, encouraging dialogue, and serving as a clearinghouse for expertise, all regarding democracy in the Arab region. It engages in knowledge dissemination, awareness raising and capacity building through seminars and conferences, summer schools and workshops, study tours, project implementation, and specialized studies and research.



Graduation after media training on elections in Sudan

The target group was civil society organizations (CSOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and electoral decision makers in the 4 target countries; the latter most of the time in Ministries of Interior or Political Affairs. The need for the project, which was conceived prior to the Arab Spring but continued through the Tunisian Revolution and ended after the Egyptian Revolution, was evident in the difficulties being faced by Arab countries in their democratic development. The Project Document candidly dismissed the

then-existing democratic elections process as “fake” because in all but a handful of countries, all aspects of elections, from electoral legislation forward to vote-counting, served only to legitimate the forces in power. The project had three overall goals: to increase the capacity of CSOs / NGOs to monitor elections, to help create the political space necessary for them to do so, and to generally contribute to a positive dynamic in the area of democratic elections. The prodoc identified three principal problems to be addressed: the low capacity of NGOs, the fact that most faced repressive regimes that actively perverted the democratic elections process, and the fact that national NGOs were poorly networked internationally.

Country selection was strategic at one level and ad hoc at another. The overall strategy explicitly targeted countries with no history or legal tradition of independent domestic elections monitoring (EM). Egypt, for example, was not included because EM was already in place. The decision on countries of intervention was left up to the upcoming elections calendar. At the time of project design it was hence decided to work (in chronological order) with the Sudan Presidential and legislative elections (April 2010), Bahrain Parliamentary elections (October 2010), Jordan Parliamentary elections (October 2010), and Yemen Legislative elections (initially planned in April 2011 but cancelled due to insecurity). With Yemen having cancelled and the Tunisian Revolution intervening, Tunisia was added to complete the list.

In each of the four countries ultimately selected KADEM chose to work with national partners with whom it already had a strong relationship. Outside Tunisia, these national partners were

National Civic Forum in Sudan, Bahrain Transparency Association in Bahrain, and Jordanian Women's Union in Jordan. In Tunisia, agreements were signed with a range of different national partners (Muwatana Center; the Journalist National Union; the Association Tunisienne des Magistrats; the Instance Supérieure Indépendante des Elections, the League Tunisienne de Citoyenneté). On the basis of its experience with the partners, KADEM gave the national partners carte blanche to select the NGOs who were to be trained, the only stipulation being that there be a reasonably large number of them to encourage diversity and representativeness. Also to promote diversity, each NGO was limited in the number of persons it could nominate for training. The issue of whether elections should be monitored by NGOs explicitly allied with one or another political party in hope of achieving balance was never deeply analyzed. In two cases, Jordan and Bahrain, national partners were clearly identified with opposition to ruling parties

The regional dimension is discussed below under Relevance.

Specifically, the project aimed to

- Produce four case studies covering election codes, the role of civil society, and the stance of Government.
- Produce a training manual with versions appropriate for training of trainers, NGOs, and media.
- Establish a 10-12 person Arab Working Group on Elections Monitoring (AWGEM) consisting of eminent experts from the region, and hold two regional Working Group meetings. The AWGEM was designed as a steering committee for the project with responsibility for coordinating activities.
- Organize three trainings per country: one for trainers, one for CSO representatives and lawyers, and one for media.
- Implement two missions of the AWGEM per country, one during the period when the election was being organized, primarily for dialogue with Government aimed at obtaining clearance for national and international EM, and one during elections to support monitoring actions, including coordination of monitoring efforts and publication of a report on the elections.
- Publish a book summarizing experience and lessons learned.

The main risks identified were (i) Governments acceptance of the exercise and (ii) obtaining donor support. The diverse nature of the Working Group was identified as one response to the first, as was the threat of "name and shame" in the event that Governments refused to cooperate. The project document identified vulnerable and marginalized groups (including religious minorities discriminated against) and promised a special focus on women voters and candidates.

Key outcomes were defined as follows:

- Defenders of democracy trained on election monitoring
- Governments in Sudan, Bahrain, Jordan and Tunisia accept election monitoring (national and international) as part of fair and transparent elections, and
- A group of election experts, form the AWGEM.

The outputs expected to contribute were identified as:

- 4 high quality national studies on election and election monitoring are prepared;
- A Election Monitoring Working Group made of 12 prominent Arab experts is established;
- In each of the 4 countries, 3 groups (trainers, media representatives, civil society representatives) are trained on election monitoring;

- In each of the 4 countries, authorization granted to CSOs to monitor elections following the lobbying of the AWGEM,
- In each of the 4 countries, 4 consolidated post-election reports are prepared on elections process and the voting day.

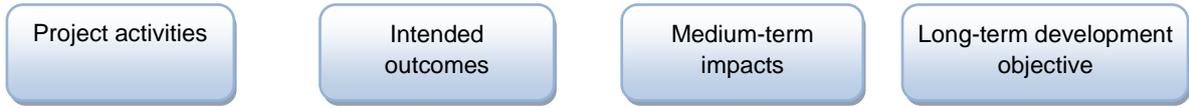
Activities expected to produce these outputs were:

- Hiring of experts to produce the reports;
- Formation of the AWGEM and two regional meetings;
- Preparation of training materials and selection of trainers;
- Implementation of trainings;
- Mission 1 of AWGEM to four countries, consultations with Governments, resulting in NGOs being given permission to monitor upcoming elections;
- Mission 2 of AWGEM to four countries to coordinate EM efforts during elections;
- Election monitoring by local NGOs, preparation of election report,
- Preparation of book.

### ***(ii) Logical framework***

The logical structure of the project, somewhat extrapolated from the version in the prodoc given above, is illustrated in the graphic below. The project identified three main areas of work: (i) producing country case studies to serve as background material, (ii) constitution and deployment of the AWGEM, which would first intercede with governments to allow more independent monitoring and then coordinate such monitoring in the upcoming election, and (iii) training. The monitors themselves would be CSOs representatives who had been trained by trainers identified by the KADEM project partners in each country. However, it is clear from the Final Narrative Report that the actual intention was for members of the AWGEM to themselves participate in elections monitoring. The exact nature of the coordination role foreseen was never clarified.

The risks and weaknesses are obvious, and the first were forthrightly addressed in the project document. Formation of a working group of experts is rather easy, so is the training of trainers and implementation of trainings themselves (although, as described below under Effectiveness, here, too, problems were encountered). Getting Governments to agree to elections monitoring is more difficult, and here is where the major roadblocks arose.



CASE STUDIES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire experts to write case studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case studies produced</li> </ul>	<p>Baseline studies on electoral processes available in four countries</p>
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ARAB WORKING GROUP ON ELECTIONS MONITORING

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify experts and affect them to WG</li> <li>• Hold two meetings</li> <li>• Mission 1 of AWGEM to the countries</li> <li>• Mission 2 of AWGEM to the countries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AWGEM established and functional</li> <li>• Governments agree to allow national and international elections monitoring</li> <li>• AWGEM members coordinate elections monitoring, themselves monitor, and produce reports</li> </ul>	<p>Elections monitored with coordination by regional experts and reports disseminated</p>	<p>Credibility of elections of four countries enhanced electoral processes strengthened</p>
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TRAININGS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop training materials</li> <li>• Select trainers</li> <li>• Implement 3 training (ToT, media ,CSOs) in each country</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainings implemented</li> </ul>	<p>Trained elections monitors available to monitor elections and do monitor elections</p>
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## IV. Evaluation findings

### (i) *Relevance*

The overall relevance of the project to needs for electoral democracy support in the four countries was high. Civil society has been weakened by years of repressive rule throughout the region, as have the professions (academics, lawyers, journalists etc.). The explosion in non-state actor activity in the region needs to be matched with an increase in professionalism; if not a loss of credibility may occur. The rise of anti-democratic forces also needs to be countered.

Some aspects of the project, however, appear to have been rather disarticulated. It was never made clear exactly how the training of media representatives related to the focus of the project, which was promoting independent elections monitoring by CSOs. Country case studies were, in three of the four cases, not commissioned by the local partner as foreseen but simply produced by someone affiliated with the local partner (in Tunisia, a possible exception, the author was a university professor and well-respected constitutional lawyer). While a general format was provided, as described below, there was no specific focus on elections monitoring. The case studies were essentially factual, a review of available national reports, rather than critical in nature. The text-box below illustrated how standard the recommendations were; rather in line with the existing elections literature than with a lobbying strategy. However the level of expertise of the authors was high. Like country case studies, the role of country workshops and conferences was rather amorphous. No common structure, theme, or purpose, was ever articulated; they are simply reported has having taken place.

#### **Recommendations to reinforce observation Bahrain case study**

- 1- The existence of a clear legal text authorizing NGOs to participate in the electoral observation.
- 2- The provision of unconditional governmental financial and moral support to associations intending to observe the elections.
- 3- Authorize observers to be present at candidates' registration centers and show them voters' charts to ensure a proper and adequate conduct of candidates and voters' registration process.
- 4- The Higher Committee responsible for overseeing the elections process provides elections observers, including journalists and candidates' representatives, with an identification card allowing their presence in absolutely all of the polling centers to ensure a proper conduct of the electoral process.
- 5- The Higher Committee provides all of the electoral observers with the official results of the elections.
- 6- Associations are responsible for undertaking a systematic and objective assessment of the electoral observation mission that occurred in the two previous rounds of the elections.
- 7- The elaboration of a training manual commensurate with the Bahraini political, social and legal contexts.
- 8- The inclusion of new and efficient groups/categories dedicated to the electoral observation process, in addition to the development and intensification of rehabilitation and oriented training programs targeting certain categories such as the press, political leadership and candidates' representatives.
- 9- Observation of all types of media and candidates' behavior by the associations, well ahead of the elections date, as well as the declaration firsthand of any violation observed and monitored by the observing associations.

KADEM – Case studies p 51, 2011.

As stated above, countries were selected on the basis of having no tradition of independent elections monitoring (or indeed free and fair elections culture as a whole) and having elections on the horizon. Both criteria had good points and bad points. Countries with no

tradition were, ipso facto, likely to be difficult to work in. Second, the fact that the project was formulated before election schedules had been set meant that forward-looking sequencing and programming were practically impossible. Nothing could illustrate this better than the entirely unexpected (and successful) participation of members of the AWGEM in the monitoring of the Lebanese municipal elections, which serendipitously coincided with their kickoff meeting in Beirut. This “calendar approach” made the project fragile from the outset considering the region’s propensity for delayed and rescheduled elections.

The regional dimension permitted the sharing of experiences closer to the needs of beneficiary countries than European experiences, although early post-transition electoral experiences of countries such as those of Eastern Europe, the Baltics, Spain, and Portugal should not be disregarded. In general, regional approaches are to be used when problems addressed have significant cross-border characteristics, when there is value added in sharing experiences at the regional level cross-border, or (closely related) when there is value added in encouraging a regional network. The first can be dismissed in this project, since elections are quintessentially national apart from voter diaspora issues which were not addressed. Clearly, it was the sharing of experiences and the strengthening of a regional network that were the foremost considerations in proposing a regional project. The academic expertise of a group of regional experts was very well deployed, a fact to be taken into consideration under Effectiveness, as well.

The unspoken assumption was that independent EM sends a powerful message to voters at this point of the Arab transition from authoritarian rule. Other pressing issues, such as registration, election financing and access to media were not dealt with, but this is understandable and to some extent, recommended. However, it needs to be kept in mind that fraud at the ballot box may not be the most serious problem in some countries. Certainly is in Tunisia, where out of an eligible population of about 7 million, only 4 million votes were cast in the 2011 parliamentary elections, registration is the most pressing problem. In Sudan, the registration challenge is presumably even greater due to country size and conflict.

One expert interviewed suggested that the project needs to be judged in a post-revolutionary context, one in which nuts-and-bolts decisions were being made while fundamental constitutional issues were not discussed. Also worthy of note is the opinion of the grantee, also expressed below, that the perception that elections were independently monitored, whatever the flaws of that monitoring or other aspects of the process, was a valuable first step.

## **(ii) Effectiveness**

Much of this discussion was anticipated in describing project strategy.

As made clear in the Final Narrative Report, some project activities were international and thus effectively under KADEM control. These included constitution of the AWGEM, which first met in Beirut and, thanks to the fact that elections were taking place, provided EM services that were not foreseen in the Project Document. The planned first missions of the AWGEM to Sudan and Tunisia took place. In Tunisia, the meeting with Government officials took place between a sub-set of AWGEM members and Government officials on the margin of a conference. The planned AWGEM missions to Bahrain and Jordan did not take place due to visa problems.

The first regional meeting of the AWGEM took place in Beirut as scheduled and, in July 2011, regional experts from the AWGEM from Sudan, Mauritania, and Palestine were brought to Tunisia to meet the Elections Management Body, the ISIE. Subsequently, the

Mauritanian and Palestinian experts were brought back for more focused support.

In Sudan, two trainings were held, the first for 17 CSO participants and the second for 15 media representatives, and a conference with about 50 attendees was organized. In Jordan, one training for 12 CSO representatives and legal professionals and one training for 18 media professionals were held. The training in Bahrain for 12 CSO representatives was possible only by bringing in trainers on tourist visas, a questionable practice that we criticize below. A conference for 35 participants was also organized in Bahrain.



Conference on elections monitoring in Bahrain

Non-training / workshop activities were more dependent on the attitude and permission of national authorities and here, activities deviated widely from initial plans. Because of the wide freedom of action in Tunisia, it was really only in this country that the project was able to deliver all of its planned range of interventions. The project:

- o Participated in the drafting of an Elections Law
- o Trained CSOs and media, and conducted ToTs. One NGO that received training from AWGEM experts expressed the view that the training provided through KADEM was superior to that provided through other donor-financed projects, because it utilised regional experts and was conducted in Arabic.
- o Worked with the Elections Monitoring Body ISIE to improve practices and devise solutions to problems,
- o Brought in 17 monitors (11 nationalities) including AWGEM members to monitor elections and assisted in drafting of a report by one of the beneficiary organisations. However, as evidence of the limited quality of EM in Tunisia, according to an international expert interviewed, none of the main NGOs who provided monitoring had yet delivered final reports (only preliminary) at the time of the field mission. The reason is lack of capacity to manage data and produce a professional report. Quality control mechanisms are not in place. Some observers do not even fill in forms correctly. The lack of professionalism in elections observation is of concern, because if observers are incompetent, monitors will ignore their reports. The initial capacity of the monitors trained by the project was extremely weak. One NGO representative thought the KADEM project was relatively successful in Tunisia, but attributed that mostly to the fact that the needs were enormous.

In Jordan, the Women's Union comments cited attitudinal changes as a direct result of project activities. One interviewee stated she did not know anything about elections at project

In 2010 visa applications [for Bahrain] were rejected for Arab delegation, except mine. I received a seven days visa; seven days to conduct training and provide support to local CSOs right before the elections. The regional dimension here proved to bring strong value added; it certainly facilitated the visa application but also enabled to provide recommendations and comparative analysis to CSOs who are barely accessible. [Indeed] Arab countries share some common problems such as the need for suitable electoral law, civil society recognition and protection; therefore the regional networking is fundamental."

**Dr. Awad, Electoral expert and case studies scientific coordinator**

start. Again, the project built capacity by disseminating knowledge and information.

The government of Bahrain refused all international elections monitoring, although it did permit the case studies scientific coordinator (though only before the elections) into the country for training; Sudan allowed other national and international monitors to operate, but denied the AWGEM access for monitoring by means of visa delay, while Jordan denied AWGEM members the necessary monitoring authorization. In the three countries where AWGEM members were unable to monitor, local partner organizations that had been trained under the project were able to participate in monitoring a second-best solution but the best possible under the circumstances.

Unexpectedly, as mentioned above, the project provided monitoring in Lebanon, as the AWGEM meeting there corresponded with elections. The partner in holding the first meeting, the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE) organized a monitoring mission of AWGEM to monitor municipal elections. Visibility was gained by meeting prominent persons, the Ministry of the Interior and Members of Parliament.

All evidence is that the project effectively mobilised regional expertise through the AWGEM. The quality of experts implicated was high. The scientific coordinator was a recognized regional expert. This promoted the development of a regional network, one of the main benefits of the project, despite the reservations expressed below on subsequent activities of the AWGEM.

Each country case study was prepared and distributed prior to the country workshop. The general format was (i) legal framework, (ii) historical background and development, (iii) civil society, (iv) needs and challenges. At a finer grained level, a standardized list of questions to be addressed was provided. The senior scientific coordinator provided quality control. The broad case studies served to underscore the weak regional baseline data for elections. It was difficult to collect data for the Bahrain case study and statistics for Sudan were of poor quality, Tunisian and Jordanian data, however were easily accessible. Information needs related to specific topics; such as registration practices, voting systems, gender quota systems etc. While the case studies were useful as background documents, it could also be said that in a project clearly focused on elections monitoring, a narrower focus might have been more efficient.

According to the Final Narrative Report, “tens<sup>4</sup>” of democracy defendants including lawyers, civil society representatives media professionals and representatives of women’s groups, were trained in Sudan, Bahrain, Jordan and Tunisia on election monitoring techniques,

The accompanying table summarizes the activities planned and those actually implemented.

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<sup>4</sup> The project grantee was not in a position to provide more accurate numbers on the different Regions participants, partly because of partners geographical scattering.

	Tunisia	Jordan	Sudan	Bahrain
<b>Formation of AWGEM, 2 international meetings</b>	Accomplished, first meeting in Beirut with cooperation of LADE second meeting in Tunis			
<b>3 trainings per country (trainers, media, CSOs)</b>	9 trainings, 2 conferences	2 trainings (CSO-lawyers and media)	2 trainings (CSO and media),	1 training (CSO), 1 conference
<b>Case study report on electoral processes prepared by local partner</b>	Accomplished	Accomplished	Accomplished	Accomplished
<b>EMWG members undertake mission to lobby responsible officials to allow national and international EM as result of which permission granted to NGOs to monitor elections</b>	Representatives of WG met with decision makers "on margin of conferences"	No mission	Mission took place side meetings with Government officials	No mission visas denied
<b>EMWG representatives undertake a second mission to coordinate election monitoring efforts in-country</b>	Second mission took place. Meeting with decision makers 17 EMWG members participated in EM.	No monitoring cards issued to EMWG issued. Coordination of EM by local partner.	No visas granted. Coordination of EM efforts by local partner.	No visas granted. Coordination of EM efforts by local partner – except for the case studies scientific coordinator in Bahrain.
<b>Report on electoral process and the voting day prepared</b>	Beneficiary organisation, with support of EMWG members drafted report	Beneficiary organisation drafted report	Local partner drafted report	Local partner drafted report

### **(iii) Efficiency**

KADEM's practice of keeping staff to 4-6 and relying on a reliable network of external consultants was efficient. Apart from travel, there appear to have been efforts to keep costs down. National experts worked without honoraria. This can be both an advantage and a disadvantage, as it is difficult to impose deadlines and quality control on persons working pro bono, however, no problems were reported. There was an attempt to always work in 2-3 events per country trip to avoid 1-event travel expenses.

Yet, a project which left USD 66,091 of UNDEF funds unspent cannot be said to have been entirely efficient. The money went unspent when monitoring missions to 3 countries were abandoned, leading to savings on travel costs. The best solution would have been to develop and propose additional follow-on activities which, in view of its flexibility, UNDEF would have been likely to accept. Even simple add-ons such as translation of materials into English for dissemination to the broader democracy audience, or an end-of-project regional event, were apparently not considered. More active funder-grantee dialogue and joint strategy setting was needed as the project drew to an end with money still on the table.

#### **(iv) Impact**

The impact of the project was probably increased by the fact that it worked in countries with no tradition of EM. Based on comments from beneficiary CSOs in Tunisia and Jordan, the training was of high quality.

Project staff reported that the project moved elections monitoring up the political agenda in some of the countries visited like Jordan. The Women's Union commented that from 2010 many discussions have been held regarding voter registration, anti-fraud measures, voting system modifications, etc. eventually resulting in the creation of a National Elections Commission. Little by little, pressure from organized groups had an effect and the project here being evaluated may have made a contribution. Based in part on the very low initial capacity of election monitors trained, the project probably had significant impact at personal level too. The potential for high impact can also be seen in the novel situation in which the project worked. In Jordan for example, the right to have elections monitored was granted only in 2010 and the National Elections Commission was created only in 2012.

"Many women don't know what to vote; they vote from what they hear at home. They lack voter education.[...].The project's training gave us strength and a new spirit. People started to think the actual elections system is not satisfactory. [The voting system] "One man, one vote" disadvantaged women from CSOs [because of district delimitation] it [supported tribal vote] and maintained women from big families in power [among the 10% quota for women]. For the next elections [2013 Parliamentary elections], a boycott of the vote is planned if the elections and voter registration systems are not

In Sudan and Jordan Governments accepted the principles of independent monitoring. Both accepted national monitors but restricted international monitors (Jordan) or selected international monitors from outside the region (Sudan). Bahrain rejected all independent monitoring. This leaves Tunisia as the only case in which both national and international monitoring from within the region was accepted.

The issue of the quality, as opposed to quantity, of EM was never really a major project concern. This emphasis on quantity over quality can be tied back to the revolutionary context and the desire of all donors to be seen to be doing something concrete to support the Arab Spring. In Tunisia, one of the local partners, estimated that only a handful of EMs in Tunisia are really up to international standard. The explosion in the number of NGOs providing quantitatively impressive but qualitatively weak EM may pose long-term problems in the form of weakened confidence in elections observation as a tool for democracy. Some organizations doing elections monitoring are beginning to engage in activism and awareness raising, as well, posing the danger that they are setting themselves up as an opposition. Project staff argued that expanding the quantity of elections monitoring was a good first step, to be followed up by improving quality. They were of the view that Morocco, Palestine, Egypt, and Sudan may be now ready for the qualitative dimension. They added that the first requirement is that elections be seen to be monitored.

Finally the project had some unexpected impacts. On the positive side, in Tunisia, selected members of the AWGEM met with 7 members of ISIE and an expert (from Palestine) proposed a concrete solution to a problem (confidentiality of the ballot-marking act) that was instantly accepted, resulting in major cost savings for the election. ISIE briefing materials for registration agents and polling-place agents were designed in part based on own-country materials provided by AWGEM members. More nuanced the project has provided the foundation for various beneficiary NGOs to seek to become regional providers of elections monitoring, both directly, and in terms of training.

Project staff place great emphasis on the formation of the AWGEM as a force for improved electoral processes and democratic development in the region. The group has officially registered as an NGO in Lebanon and members have been invited to monitor elections in Egypt and Kuwait. Yet, a simple Google search turns up no reference and no further information have been provided on activities. More generally, the subject of elections monitoring is reported to be more visible and the subject of increasing interest across the region. This is plausible but no concrete evidence of it has been adduced.

#### **(v) Sustainability**

In general sustainability was limited because of the disorganized nature of activities, imposed in turn by the political context, and the lack of a consistent plan on the way forward. A good example is given by the case of Jordan. Women's Union volunteers are now going to universities to display information on the electoral process, a worthy step but one not envisaged at any stage of project design. At the time of the field visit the Union was not in a position to provide training on its own.

Dissemination was among the weakest aspects of the project. Online strategies were not considered either in project design or while the project was being implemented. The AWGEM, as mentioned, has no web presence. Simple dissemination strategies revolving around posting the agenda and participant lists of the two AWGEM meetings were not in evidence. It is suggestive that even the name of the group fluctuates in project documentation between the Elections Monitoring Working Group (EMWG) and the Arab Working group on Elections Monitoring (AWGEM). All in all, the principal focus of the project appears to have been forming the Working Group with an eminent scientific coordinator -- full stop. This is not to say that trainings and monitoring activities were purely ancillary, but in discussing project activities and results, the project narrative returns insistently to the Working Group and its quality. A stronger design would have stressed institutional capacity building for national partner organizations and in particular, for the CSOs receiving EM training. It is not the lack of potential elections monitors, but their professionalism and capacity to produce credible reports that appears to be the problem, at least to judge by the Tunisian and Jordanian cases.

Returning to one of the questions earlier posed, there does not appear to have been any strategy or attempt to forge links with other international elections monitoring or democracy support initiatives. In Tunisia, where there was a multiplicity of such initiatives, all seem to have run along separate tracks.

Some of KADEM's practices, such as the fact that it in some cases used tourist visas for project travel, are understandable given the difficult circumstances in which it works, but are not sustainable in the long run.

One unintended effect of the project may bode well for sustainability, but it is not clear that it is what was intended. The experience gained by KADEM and by local Tunisian partners such as Mourakiboun has encouraged these and perhaps other NGOs to begin to compete in the international market for providing elections monitoring services and implementing democracy projects more generally in the region.

## V. Conclusions

Based on the evaluation findings, the team concludes:

**(i) Effectiveness and impact of this project can be judged only in context, and the project performed reasonably well once the context is taken into account.** The project took place in a revolutionary atmosphere, with all the hopes and fears that go along with it. With hindsight, it is not surprising that a number of countries were not cooperative on the visa and EM permission fronts. In fairness, the project identified this as a risk. “No risk, no gain” is as valid in project analysis as it is in financial analysis. UNDEF has had several examples of successful projects in difficulty countries (Myanmar, Zimbabwe, Somalia). It is not for these evaluators to judge whether foresight could have been better. In general, the grantee has displayed the needed dexterity and UNDEF has provided the flexibility that has been noted in a number of these evaluations. The project responded flexibly to the Tunisian Revolution, in the form of a no-cost extension permitting the project to contribute to the 2011 parliamentary elections. In the event, this proved to be the most successful project intervention. Given UNDEF’s flexibility, the project could have proposed follow-on activities that would have avoided the large under-expenditure experienced and contributed to a more solid foundation for future progress. This conclusion derives from findings on effectiveness and impact.

**(ii) The importance and feasibility of putting in place international networks, even when country-level progress is difficult, was again demonstrated by the project.** It would be Pollyannaish to claim that this project had a near-term tangible, measurable impact on democratic development in the Arab world. The situation is fraught and by most indications is getting worse. Yet, while democratic development continues to be stifled within borders, the formation of a tightly networked, mobile elite of regional experts appears to be progressing. As evidenced from the enthusiastic praise of Tunisian EMB representatives (the ISIE) for the solutions offered by members of the AWGEM to practical election problems, mobilizing quality can lead to real impacts. Given the poor initial conditions, individual-level impacts on persons receiving training were probably significant. This conclusion derives from the finding on impact.

**(iii)** More doubtful is that the proliferation of training will lead to change, because **the quantity-quality tradeoff appears to have not been taken into account.** Nor as it ever made clear what trained trainers would do post-project, or what role the training of journalists was to play. In one sense the training delivered by the project probably had impact because as noted, the baseline conditions were poor and the project was operating in countries with no culture or tradition of free and fair elections. However, given government attitudes and the low quality of monitoring even in Tunisia, the sustainability of this impact can be questioned. The response of project staff that quantity is the first step and that the perception of monitoring in place is a crucial first step is well taken, but democratic aspirations and frustrations are increasing rapidly and need to be matched by rapid progress.

**(iv) The project was relevant and effective in that it created baseline regional information.** Elections are typically planned in a setting where time is at a premium, and the existence of these baseline documents may help to identify priority problems and possible solutions. Even though the contribution of the case studies to the

present project was not entirely clear, properly disseminated, these can serve as a valued resource for future work in countries throughout the region.

**(v)** The project set very general goals – create the AWGEM, lobby governments, deliver training, participate in monitoring – and then simply tried to do what it was able to do under the circumstances. **There does not appear to have been any attention to what newly empowered CSOs would do going forward after the end of the project; for that matter, even the reported continuing progress of the AWGEM seems to be something that was not explicitly considered in project planning.** Dissemination and reporting were generally weak. Better reporting might well have led to stronger or at least more reliable, findings related to impact. This conclusion is related to findings on effectiveness impact and sustainability.

**(vi)** There was **no evidence that the project sought to coordinate with other donor-led initiatives in the democracy field.** Such coordination would have to be initiated by KADEM and, in the current context, Arab countries are enjoying a surplus of offered democracy support aid. It appears that, once again the UN “brand” of UNDEF served as a positive factor, as governments in the region are deeply suspicious of bilateral support in the area (witness developments earlier this year in Egypt). Better coordination with the UN itself in the form of UNDP might have yielded benefits.

**(vii)** **Some of KADEM’s practices are risky and need to be re-considered.** While the difficult environment in which KADEM works is appreciated, subterfuges can backfire, sometimes spectacularly. The expedient of sending trainers to one country on tourist visas (proper visas having been denied) placed the trainers, the trainees, KADEM, and UNDEF itself at risk. The ultimate partner of civil society is government; if government is unwilling to act as a responsible partner, it is not the role of civil society or its supporters to devise shady backdoor solutions.

## VI. Recommendations

To strengthen similar projects in the future, the team recommends:

**(i) KADEM should generally tighten up its project cycle management.**

From project design to reporting and dissemination, a number of aspects need to be strengthened. The project strategy placed emphasis on formation of the AWGEM with the very best scientific advice but paid little attention to how the group would develop after the end of the project. Precisely what trained trainers could do can be inferred from interviews but was never made clear in the Pro Doc, nor was the role of training journalists. The goal of workshops / conferences was never made clear either before or after they were held, nor was the purpose of the country case studies explicit. Reporting in general was weak. KADEM needs to insist on more systematic reporting of activities implemented by local partners. All of this falls under the rubric of “professionalization.” There is an abundance of international support available at the moment, but competition will inevitably stiffen and it is those who are able to deliver professional project result that will do best. This follows from Conclusions (iii), (iv), and (v).

**(ii)** The regional approach to KADEM’s activities makes sense but in the future **the evaluators would recommend not tying initiatives only to the electoral calendar.** As evidence by the failure to secure government authorization in three of the four countries covered, there is a great deal of ground work to be done before the time pressure and political stress of upcoming elections is upon officials. The fact that contacts were initiated with officials in Sudan, Jordan and Bahrain offers the opportunity to continue the dialogue, building relationships and laying the foundation for greater involvement in the next elections. A plan tied to long-term development rather than the electoral calendar would permit the kind of ad hoc manoeuvring found in this project to be reduced. This follows from Conclusion (v).

**(iii)** KADEM should be more proactive when circumstances block the implementation of some parts of a project. KADEM cannot be faulted for the inability to carry out 3 of the 4 planning international monitoring missions. However, the large amount of money released could have been used for multiple purposes – translation, an end-of-project international workshop, putting a AWGEM website in place etc. UNDEF is known for its flexibility and opportunities appear to have been missed. This is based on Conclusion (i).

**(iv)** KADEM should continue to contribute to the development of the AWGEM but should, as a matter of urgency, **encourage that AWGEM be formalized as to membership and procedures and establishes a web presence.** In its current form, the group appears to be intangible and fragile. The AWGEM should be in touch with a range of donors, attempting to build on the achievements of its early efforts. This is based on Conclusions (ii) and (vi).

(v) If, as it states, it intends to become a regional force in implementing democracy support project, **KADEM will need to adopt stricter guidelines on its operations.** This follows from Conclusion (vii).

**(vi) There are some obvious opportunities for innovative future work.**

The religious dimension of the political process was consistently ignored in this project. Perhaps the most pressing religious minority issue in the region, the issue of Christians in Egypt, was off the table because that country was not included. Yet, the obvious cleavage between Sunni and Shiite communities in Bahrain was not explicitly dealt with but presents an obvious theme for future work. In Tunisia and presumably other countries, the varied forces simply referred to across the region as “Salafis” were not engaged in any way because they were regarded as being inherently anti-democratic. That is too reductionist a response, and the sooner such shibboleths can be broken, the better for the democracy movement. A less controversial, but also pressing issue with a massive regional dimension is voter diaspora -- from all countries to the Gulf, from Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria to Europe, from Jordan to the United States – offers exciting opportunities for practical work to improve the functioning of elections processes. The same is true of the voting rights of refugees. All in all, there is an enormous amount of constructive work to be done on elections and voting in the Arab region, and KADEM is in a strong position to contribute.

## **VII. Overall assessment and closing thoughts**

This project operated under challenging circumstances and in an atmosphere of revolutionary change. Through its flexibility and adaptability, it managed to deliver results despite the many challenges it faced. While major impacts are difficult to identify, it doubtless made a significant contribution to the movement towards democracy in the Arab region. Moving forward, however, a better strategized and more carefully planned approach will be required. The experience gained in this project will serve KADEM well in the future as it continues to work in this area. It needs to be aware, however, that competition will increase and that few donors are as flexible as UNDEF. The evaluators hope that some of the recommendations they have provided will prove useful as KADEM continues to develop its involvement in democracy support in the Arab region.

## VIII. ANNEXES

### Annex 1: Evaluation questions:

DAC criterion	Evaluation Question	Related sub-questions
Relevance	To what extent was the project, as designed and implemented, suited to context and needs at the beneficiary, local, and national levels?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were the objectives of the project in line with the needs and priorities for democratic development, given the context?</li> <li>Should another project strategy have been preferred rather than the one implemented to better reflect those needs, priorities, and context? Why?</li> <li>Were risks appropriately identified by the projects? How appropriate are/were the strategies developed to deal with identified risks? Was the project overly risk-averse?</li> </ul>
Effectiveness	To what extent was the project, as implemented, able to achieve objectives and goals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent have the project's objectives been reached?</li> <li>To what extent was the project implemented as envisaged by the project document? If not, why not?</li> <li>Were the project activities adequate to make progress towards the project objectives?</li> <li>What has the project achieved? Where it failed to meet the outputs identified in the project document, why was this?</li> </ul>
Efficiency	To what extent was there a reasonable relationship between resources expended and project impacts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and project outputs?</li> <li>Did institutional arrangements promote cost-effectiveness and accountability?</li> <li>Was the budget designed, and then implemented, in a way that enabled the project to meet its objectives?</li> </ul>
Impact	To what extent has the project put in place processes and procedures supporting the role of civil society in contributing to democratization, or to direct promotion of democracy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent has/have the realization of the project objective(s) and project outcomes had an impact on the specific problem the project aimed to address?</li> <li>Have the targeted beneficiaries experienced tangible impacts? Which were positive; which were negative?</li> <li>To what extent has the project caused changes and effects, positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen, on democratization?</li> <li>Is the project likely to have a catalytic effect? How? Why? Examples?</li> </ul>
Sustainability	To what extent has the project, as designed and implemented, created what is likely to be a continuing impetus towards democratic development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent has the project established processes and systems that are likely to support continued impact?</li> <li>Are the involved parties willing and able to continue the project activities on their own (where applicable)?</li> </ul>
UNDEF value added	To what extent was UNDEF able to take advantage of its unique position and comparative advantage to achieve results that could not have been achieved had support come from other donors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What was UNDEF able to accomplish, through the project that could not as well have been achieved by alternative projects, other donors, or other stakeholders (Government, NGOs, etc).</li> <li>Did project design and implementing modalities exploit UNDEF's comparative advantage in the form of an explicit mandate to focus on democratization issues?</li> </ul>

## Annex 2: Documents Reviewed

### Project documentation:

Project Document, 2009

Mid-term Review

Final narrative report, March 2012

Country case studies, 2011 Al Kawakibi Democracy transition center

### About Tunisia:

[http://eeas.europa.eu/eueom/missions/2011/tunisia/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/eueom/missions/2011/tunisia/index_en.htm)

[http://aceproject.org/regions-en/countries-and-territories/TN/default-fr?set\\_language=fr](http://aceproject.org/regions-en/countries-and-territories/TN/default-fr?set_language=fr)

### About Sudan:

[http://www.eueom.eu/files/pressreleases/english/final-report-eu-eom-sudan-2010\\_en.pdf](http://www.eueom.eu/files/pressreleases/english/final-report-eu-eom-sudan-2010_en.pdf)

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/su.html>

[http://eeas.europa.eu/eueom/missions/2010/sudan/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/eueom/missions/2010/sudan/index_en.htm)

[http://aceproject.org/regions-en/countries-and-territories/SD/default-fr?set\\_language=fr](http://aceproject.org/regions-en/countries-and-territories/SD/default-fr?set_language=fr)

[http://eeas.europa.eu/eueom/missions/2011/sudan/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/eueom/missions/2011/sudan/index_en.htm)

### About Jordan:

[http://aceproject.org/regions-en/countries-and-territories/JO/default-fr?set\\_language=fr](http://aceproject.org/regions-en/countries-and-territories/JO/default-fr?set_language=fr)

### About Bahrain:

<http://www.electionguide.org/country-news.php?ID=18>

## Annex 3: Persons Interviewed

15 September 2012	
Team arrives in Tunisia and prepares for the mission.	
16 September 2012	
Mrs. Lucia Scotton	Media specialist - Technical assistance team for the European Union – experte détachée from the Observatorio di Pavia
17 September 2012	
Mr. Amine Ghalli	Program Director at Kawakibi Democracy Transition Center
Mr. Rafik Halouani	President at Mourakiboun
Mr. Amine Halouani	Responsible for deployment at Mourakiboun
18 September 2012	
Mr. Jérôme Leyraud	Expert for the Electoral Reform International Services (ERIS for the EU technical assistance project)
Mr. Amine Ghalli	Program Director at Kawakibi Transition Center
Mrs. Manel Koubaa	Finance officer at Kawakibi Democracy Transition Center
19 September 2012	
Dr. Mohamed Sghaier Achouri	Member in charge of training for the Instance Supérieure Indépendante pour les Elections (ISIE)
Junior expert travels to Amman, Jordan	
20 September 2012	
Meetings arranged in Amman, Jordan	
Dr. Taleb Awad	Scientific Coordinator for Kawakibi case studies – President of the Jordanian National Coalition for Elections monitoring
Dr. Amer Bani Amez	General Director AYAT Center for Civil Society Development
Mrs. Teresa Al Rayan	Center Manager of the Jordanian Women’s Union
Ms. Wajd Al-Shamayleh	Volunteer for the Jordanian Women’s Union – trainee on domestic observation
Meetings arranged in Tunis	
Mr. Nedhir Ben Yedder	Ligue pour la citoyenneté tunisienne
Mr. Moez Bouraoui	President of « Association tunisienne pour l’intégrité et la démocratie des élections » (ATIDE)
21 September 2012	
Mr. Chafik Sarsar	Expert for the Tunisian national case study
Debriefing meeting in Kawakibi Democracy Transition Centre	
Mr. Amine Ghalli	
<i>END OF MISSION</i>	

## Annex 4 : Acronyms

ADF	Arab Democracy Foundation
AWGEM	Arab Working Group on Elections Monitoring
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EM	Elections Monitoring
EMB	Elections Management Body
EMWG	Elections Monitoring Working group
KADEM	Al Kawakibi Democracy transition Centre
ISIE	Instance Supérieure Indépendante pour les élections
LADE	Lebanese association for Democratic election
NCA	National Constituent Assembly
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
TOT	training of trainers
UN	United Nations
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
UNDP	United Nations development programme