

## CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

<b>Organization Legal Name:</b>	Amjad and Majdi Salameh Company
<b>Project Title:</b>	Capacity need assessment for Yemen Civil Society Organizations
<b>Date of Report:</b>	May 13, 2014
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### CEPF Region: Eastern Afromontane

**Strategic Direction:** This Project is directly related to CEPF Strategic Direction number three which targets "*Initiate and support sustainable financing and related actions for the conservation of priority KBAs and corridors*". However, the assessment scope addressed training needs related to CEPF first, second and third Strategic Directions.

**Grant Amount:** US\$ 19,950

**Project Dates:** 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014

**Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner):** The National Foundation for Watershed Management and Services (WAM) were involved in the organization of the project workshop held in Sana'a on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of November 2013, and also provided logistical support and umbrella to the project activities (workshop, survey and CSOs consultations). The relationship was governed by a service agreement signed on 20<sup>th</sup> of October 2013 (ended 30<sup>th</sup> November 2013). WAM was responsible for the Project Workshop organization activities and costs where associated costs were covered from the contracted amount, which was in turn allocated from the Project Budget-Workshop Budget Line. WAM took charge of venue reservations and arrangements, workshop logistics, preparation and distribution of invitation letters, informing Yemen EPA, participants accommodation arrangements at Mercure Sana'a Hotel, workshop lunch and coffee breaks, workshop assistants (participants registration, distribution of DSAs for transportation costs, records keeping, participants affairs, etc.).

### Conservation Impacts

***Please explain/describe how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile.***

The Project identified CSOs needed skills and resources to maximize their positive impact for improved conservation of biodiversity especially in critical ecosystems. At an individual level and for staff working in CSOs', the assessment identified professional development needs for building motivation and increasing effectiveness. At an institutional level, the Project targeted CSOs' eligible for CEPF funding and identified skills development needs with regard to institutional set-up, organizational and development, in addition to skills needed to mobilize resources needed for implementing KBAs conservation actions.

The project technical report also suggested capacity development solutions may take the form of mentoring and coaching, in-door training, information sharing and exchanges, and outdoor training. Training needs for CSOs in Yemen have been identified at all functional levels to achieve

the conservation of KBAs within the highlands of Yemen, hence helping to achieve the long term conservation outcomes identified for Yemen in the EAM investment strategy, as a long term sustainable plan.

Strengthening networking and build partnership between CSOs have been also addressed in needs assessment report prepared through the project, included the needed capacity to building strategic alliances between groups would motivate more efficient participatory efforts toward improved flow of information, skills and resources which will be leading to more successful conservation. Such arrangements might encourage CSOs/NGOs in Yemen to develop joint projects to approach CEPF and other donors interested in the conservation of KBAs in the country.

CSOs' positive internal and external factors which should be capitalized on, and also their internal constraints and external threats (capacity gaps) which needs to be addressed through capacity building were identified, overall to enhance and bring momentum to biodiversity conservation within Yemen EAM region.

Addressing capacity gaps identified by this project will not only help CEPF achieve their conservation outcomes, but will also improve the country's capacities to meet its obligation towards implementing MEAs. With CEPF funding to build capacities in conservation, enough qualified and trained national staff would positively contribute to ensuring successful implementation of conservation projects, which is a win-win situation for both CSOs and CEPF as a conservation donor and this will ensure sustainability of CEPF investment in Yemen.

***Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project against the expected results detailed in the approved proposal.***

- The Project workshop provided convenient arena to communicate CEPF investment strategy and planned interventions within Yemen EAM region. This opportunity was captured by Mr. Sharif Jbour from CEPF RIT who delivered a presentation on this respect and explained CEPF and its investment strategy. This enhanced CEPF visibility within the targeted region and more than 20 Yemeni CSOs and their local networks do have now better knowledge and understanding of CEPF investment in Yemen, how to gain more information about its funding calls, interest in the region and CEPF contact details. EPA, UNDP, Sana'a University and other organizations active in Yemen have been also made aware about CEPF through this workshop.
- Institutional capacity needs for Yemeni CSOs have been identified and reported to CEPF. The report also identified management capacity development needs and suggested actions to address institutional and management capacity gaps.
- Roles and responsibilities of environmental CSOs active in the Yemen highlands with respect to biodiversity conservation have been identified and reported to CEPF in adequate form to cross-link with identified training needs.
- The Project gathered many representatives of Yemeni CSOs within the EAM region and initiated discussions among them with regard to their involvement in the protection and conservation of critical ecosystems and improving livelihood of local communities in these areas. Coordination and collaboration between environmental actors, especially CSOs, was encouraged during the workshop and afterward communication during the implementation of the survey (through phone calls and discussions) thus to enhance and encourage future effective delivery of conservation projects agreed upon through collaboration mechanisms amongst key CSOs. The Final Assessment Report identified related gaps and constraints to such cooperation and suggested capacity building actions to address these gaps.

- Training needs to achieving well-trained human local experts in subjects related to CEPF investment strategy, conservation of critical ecosystems and biodiversity within Yemen EAM region, and to address constraints related to respective multilateral agreements were identified and reported. A training framework was developed to discuss training priority and urgency this to ensure having adequate level of knowledge and skills among those eligible to apply for funding and for implementing conservation projects within the EAM region.
- Information on CSOs perception of priority interventions needed to contribute to the conservation of KBAs within the EAM region in Yemen, against which CSOs' are aligning their strategies and actions to achieve (See "CSOs Perception of Priority Environmental Interventions Needed" - pages 24 and 25 of the Training Needs Assessment Report). It is also important to note that though the information gap on this respect is reduced through this Project, however it is recommended that future training actions and project funding consider gathering more information about conservation priorities and actions within the KBAs and make effort to further reduce such information deficiency at KBA level.

***Please provide the following information where relevant:***

**Hectares Protected:** Not relevant  
**Species Conserved:** Not relevant  
**Corridors Created:** Not relevant

***Describe the success or challenges of the project toward achieving its short-term and long-term impact objectives.***

The project succeeded in achieving the outcomes discussed in the application and the project results section of this report (above). Specifically, the project conducted an assessment of CSO within the EAM part of Yemen, including a SWOT analysis with respect to CSOs' role in nature conservation and clear definition of priority needs for Yemeni CSOs' capacity development needs with respect to CEPF investment strategy. In addition, the Project delivered the following:

- A list of all contacted/assessed CSOs and the contact details of their representatives;
- A list of about 300 registered CSOs' from targeted Yemeni governorates especially those concerned with environmental issues, and active social development CSOs' with interest in sustainable use of biological resources within the action area;
- CSOs characterization summary;
- Summary of the main problems faced by CSOs in Yemen for later use in study tour/s;
- An overview of the recent investment to conservation CSOs with the aim of identifying areas in which CEPF investment could work effectively;
- Training needs for CSOs active in conservation within the EAM part of Yemen; and
- A brief plan of actions to address capacity development needs.

Overall the project achieved its short-term and long-term objectives, however there was few challenges which forced the need for more efforts to be made to address it. This particularly concern information availability and accuracy.

One of the major challenges was the huge number CSOs in Yemen and the shortage of easy to access and use data base of these organizations and their spatial geographic and scope/interest distribution. The challenge was a bit more complicated by the fact that many organizations do not

renew their registration status, do not update their details and information and also many are not registered.

To overcome this challenge the Project carried out extensive multi-database search of literature about CSOs and managed to obtain needed information from secondary sources. However, information about environmental CSOs were obviously less thorough compared to other CSOs in Yemen.

Another challenge was the witnessed discrepancy of answers made by the respondents to the survey questions. Though all questions were explained and discussed thoroughly with the respondents at the Project workshop, and though the survey purpose and type of information required were explained, however the respondent's provided in many cases less fulfilling responses and in a number of cases the responses were contradicting (this was noted from evaluating validation questions).

Overall responses for questions about training needs and capacity gaps are considered to be representative and of medium to high certainty, while the responses to CSOs staffing and organizational set-up, financial status, presence of strategic plans, projects, historic performance, etc. can be consider of medium to low certainty. Still, and from practice, this is considered common in areas with similar socio-economic and socio-political situations as CSOs tends to give responses not necessary based on their current status but more to do with their expectations of the consequences of their responses to be awarded grants and projects.

To overcome this challenge the Project team re-contacted those respondents with contradicting answers and tried to gather accurate and precise answers.

Finally, the challenge of security concerns and political unrest in the country was considered in the design of the project were the survey was designed to be filled by the CSOs representatives. However, and as discussed above, this arrangements reduced a bit the certainty of respondents answers to financial and management questions.

***Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?***

- For positive impacts please note the discussion Project overall impacts/results above. The project left no negative impact.

## **Lessons Learned**

***Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project, as well as any related to organizational development and capacity building. Consider lessons that would inform projects designed or implemented by your organization or others, as well as lessons that might be considered by the global conservation community.***

The Training Needs Assessment Report prepared by the Project provides detailed account of organizational development and capacity building needs. The report also suggest framework for implementing programmatic interventions to address these gaps and needs, and would inform the design for future capacity building projects. It also sheds some light on priority conservation actions needed within Yemen EAM region which can be considered by applicant to CEPF funding mechanisms.

***Project Design Process: (aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/shortcomings)***

Lessons learned with regard to the design of the project can be summarized in the following:

1. Workshops and small discussion groups would be of great value to gather collective understanding of CSOs strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities. It is also important to identify environmental and conservation issues at regional and local levels. Equally important, it is required to prepare the participants to fill in survey tools or to respond to interview-based survey questions, and to provide additional source of information for validating respondents answers to survey questions;
2. Interview-based survey techniques can be more efficient with regard to certainty of respondents answers, however it is more time demanding, costly and is usually constrained by security and accessibility factors; and
3. In areas similar to the Project mandate region there are socio-economy, cultural, political and security considerations which needs to be carefully taken into account during the planning and preparation phase. Having well-trusted local experts and partners are vital to efficiently address such considerations.

***Project Implementation: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/shortcomings)***

Lessons learned with regard to the design and implementation of the project can be summarized in the following:

1. Validation of respondents answered to survey questions is critically important as some respondents may twist some facts or hide information;
2. Statistical (i.e. quantitative) analysis of CSOs surveys is important, however baseline information about the distribution and scope of CSOs will be needed to arrange for efficient sampling. If this is not possible then qualitative and participatory approaches would aid more cost-effective results;
3. Time needed to carry out analysis and reporting of related data can be higher than originally envisaged especially if data are insufficient and/or if results validation is at question. The project witnessed demand for addition working days to address information deficiency and need for further validation of survey respondents answers; and
4. Directors of CSOs tends to dominate representation of their CSOs in events and in training courses, giving little chances to employees and members to benefit from participating in similar events. They are not necessarily always the right person to attend similar events, and in most cases they give no feedback to their staff and CSO members.

***Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:***

CSOs varies significantly in their specific training needs based on many variables like for example the education and training background of its board and members, number and age range of employees, proximity to capital city, economic resources, proximity to protected areas, being connected to powerful political parties, language skills and access to communication/internet, etc. However, and without doubt, investing in capacity building and training is crucial for Yemen especially given socio-economic and socio-political changes and unrest the country is undergoing which is driving huge pressure on its phenomenal biodiversity and people. Training needs are numerous for CSOs in this country, however prioritization of these needs, taking into account CEPF investment strategy, is a critical path.

**ADDITIONAL FUNDING**

***Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.***

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes

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**\*Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:**

- A** *Project co-financing (Other donors contribute to the direct costs of this CEPF project)*
- B** *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF project.)*
- C** *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

**Sustainability/Replicability**

**Summarize the success or challenge in achieving planned sustainability or replicability of project components or results.**

For similar projects, sustainability can be achieved following implementation of recommended training and capacity building actions. The assessment report provides the Project best understanding of sustainability options, in particular through following TOT approach which allows for replicating training at different levels, communicating knowledge and skills to a wider segment of the community, and maintaining development of such capacity for this generation and for future generations. Institutionalization of similar programmes is recommended thus to ensure continuity of programme delivery and offering mentoring advice.

The assessment approach is replicable for Yemen for environmental and non-environmental causes, as it is also replicable for other countries. Some adaptation to the approach and methods, especially with the number of workshops and survey technique can be made to best suit replication area and timing as factors like budget, security concerns, reach, virtual communication infrastructure and tools, targeted CSOs capacity to fill in related questions, etc.

**Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.**

**Safeguard Policy Assessment**

**Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.**

None

**Additional Comments/Recommendations**

None

**Information Sharing and CEPF Policy**

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned, and results. Final project completion reports are made available on our Web site, [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net), and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

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**\*\*\*please complete the tables on the following pages\*\*\***

## Performance Tracking Report Addendum

Project Results	Is this question relevant?	If yes, provide your numerical response for results achieved for project from inception of CEPF support to date	Describe the principal results achieved during project period (Attach annexes if necessary)
1. Did your project strengthen management of a protected area guided by a sustainable management plan? Please indicate number of hectares improved.	No		Please also include name of the protected area(s). If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?	No		Please also include name of the protected area. If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
3. Did your project strengthen biodiversity conservation and/or natural resources management inside a key biodiversity area identified in the CEPF ecosystem profile? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	No		
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	No		
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.	No		

**If you answered yes to question 5, please complete the following table.**





