

Final Evaluation Report for the project “Living for A Better Story”

Presented to

Media Arts for Development Association

MADEV

Prepared by

Dr. Rafeek Ramzey

Monitoring and Evaluation Consultant

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Introduction:

Media Arts for Development Association (MADEV) is the only NGO in Egypt that combines a development focus with the power of professional media. Its founders have worked in professional media production in Egypt for over 20 years, and were pioneers of edutainment – education through entertainment – in the Middle East.¹

‘Living for A better Story’ (LFBS) is a three years project supported by Norwegian Mission Society (NMS) and implemented by Media Arts for Development (MADEV) since September 2018. The project is a serious attempt to respond to the unmet psychological and emotional intelligence needs of both women and men in 5 cities in Lower Egypt.

Not surprisingly, the project ‘Living For a Better Story’ invests on the cumulative long experience of MADEV in promoting gender equality through building healthy community and creating safe haven for sound interactions. The project as well is a response for the escalated needs that were explored during MADEV’s previous gender related projects

This Final evaluation report presents the main achievements and shortfalls of the implemented project and points to the lessons learnt and the recommendations to be considered in future relevant programs. The evaluation as well sheds the lights on the level of empowerment that the project has achieved in the lives of its targeted groups. Adding to that, the final evaluation will also inform the implementing organization (MADEV) on the broadline for the next phase of the project.

¹ <https://tahrirlounge.net/partners/20>

Executive Summary

Living for a Better Story is a step in the long road MADEV has started since its inception. MADEV has taken serious steps towards women related issues with an ambition of moving the stagnant water and achieve tangible changes towards women realization of their rights. The project is addressing the forgotten psychological and emotional needs of both women and men with an overall goal of empowering vulnerable women and men to reach sustainable healthy communities in Lower Egypt through achieving three intersected outcomes: 1 Emotionally intelligent women in target areas. 2: Divorced women empowered to combat the social and emotional pressure. 3: Emotionally intelligent men in target areas.

The interventional logic of the project interventions are designated to support men and women by providing the following:

1. Awareness of emotional and psychological health, gender equality and human rights
2. Opportunities for people to learn and develop their own skills
3. Awareness of the importance of cultural diversity and inclusivity where all individuals feel appreciated
4. Reaches out to, and involves those who may be excluded or disadvantaged by active engagement and empowerment. Example is battered women and stigmatized divorced women.
5. Freedom of expression and creative environment.

➤ *Key Findings and recommendations*

- The project is relevant to the needs of both women and men and has addressed areas that are usually neglected in the development projects as most of these projects focuses on the economic development, the political participation, the legal aid but not the emotional and psychologic support.
- The project has reached to women in other non-targeted cities and the online activities were even followed by women from other Arab countries.
- The project interventions were perceived relevant to the targeted audience in terms of the topics addressed, the level of interaction, the secured space for expressing themselves.
- It is worthy to understand that both in person and online activities are very influential not only for raising the audience awareness about the emotional and the psychological health related topics but also in encouraging audience to seek for support and facilitate access to this support safely and providing a safe niche to speak out and express feelings and opinions without fear.

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- The midterm internal evaluation was a turning point in the project; documentation, the development of databases for trainers and writers besides the filtration processes to exclude inactive candidates and the speedup of the implementation process besides coping with COVID-19 strict regulations were clearly manifested owing to the corrective actions taken after the MTR.
- Representatives of divorced women in evaluation sample reported that they have gained “power within ” and “power with” and become self-confident, realizing their rights and entitlements and able to make life-changing choices and documented actions have been reported .Evidence of empowerment of targeted audience was clearly reported and it has been clear that the longer the experience with the project, the higher level of empowerment.The project has successfully managed to hire competent trainers who have demonstrated their competency in the conducted trainings.
- Representatives of men in evaluation sample as well reported that they have gained “power within” and become oriented on their needs and able to express the feelings and emotions and seek psychological support if neededThe project was effective in utilizing the available resources despite the challenges faced the startup and challenge of COVI-19 pandemic.
- The project has succeeded to develop training materials for ToT course and to cultivate the skills of the trained women to be able to facilitate the psychological support groups for divorced women.
- The success in addressing men and including them is one major highlight of the project successes.

➤ *Recommendations*

- Upon the successful implementation of the project ““Living for a Better Story”” and the persistent need of the underserved emotional and psychological needs of both women and men and the growing number of divorce , the evaluation would highly recommend developing a new phase of the project that extends the project coverage where MADEV can achieve greater impact in more cities particularly in the Upper Egypt and utilize its cumulative experience, tools and evident based approaches to serve more women and men.
- The use of volunteers in the project implementation sites (5 cities) has proved to be effective, however, the need to have local partners’ NGOs would have supported the offline activities and allowed more frequent interventions. The evaluation recommends to have local partner NGOs not only to support the implementation process but also to cascade the acquired learning and experience to the local communities which might enhance more sustainable

actions.

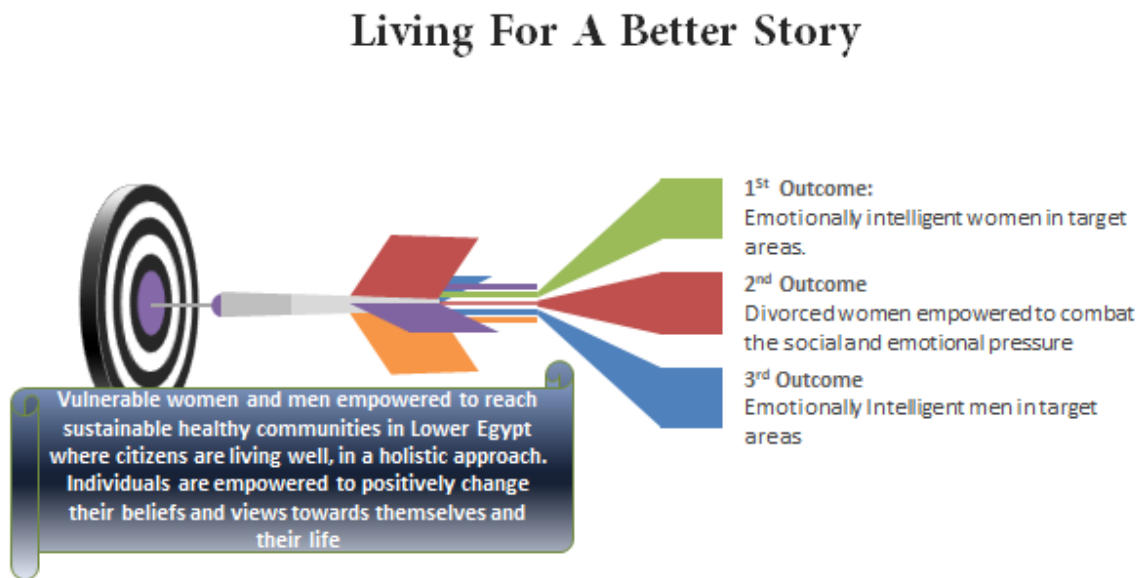
- The evaluation would highly recommend having qualitative indicators for intended results to measure the quality achieved periodically and foster timely corrective actions.
- The evaluation as well is encouraging the online activities of the project basically to cope with the protective procedures for COVID-19 pandemic and to extend the services to other Arab countries (psychological and emotional needs are common), However a robust feedback mechanism to collect participants inputs, suggestions and remarks should be emphasized in the future planning.
- The internal communication and coordination between the project main components should be a matter of focus in the following projects; regular staff meetings and knowledge exchange mechanisms (information flow and reporting pathways) should be well incorporated in the future phases.
- The evaluation would recommend having an elected consultation committee composed of women to help the project management team select the topics for the campaigns as well as the other project activities (Tell your Story Noon – Cinema Noon and the Good gathering “ اللهم الحلوه” with a similar committee for men for the same purposes.
- The project has helped the staff to acquire great experience in creating safe niche for free expression and managing a diverse portfolio of trainers, psychological coaches and writers. It is very crucial to keep the staff with its cumulative experience in the future phases.
- The project has succeeded in men inclusion which is a great leap in promoting for gender justice. (It is worth mentioning that almost all trials to include men in gender focused projects have not been very successful hence the need for a successful evident based approach for men inclusion).The recommendation is to document the process and continue the pursuit with men in the future phases of the project.
- MADEV has been keen to abide by its mandate and don't engage in activities that cast it away from its original mandate, however it is recommended for the future projects (new phase) to think of developing a simple directory for psychotherapist to be available for the targeted audience. Using the website or the Facebook page to publicize the directory to help the needy ones.
- MADEV is well-known with its media purposive productions. The role of Media in addressing the culturally sensitive issues and influencing people is unquestionable. MADEV should think of having new media productions (short films) to address both women and men' psychological and emotional needs. The media productions will serve as powerful sustainable tools for similar projects.

Overview on Living for A better Story:

Living for a Better Story project is a serious attempt to respond to the unmet needs in regard to the emotional and psychological aspects of both women and men. The philosophy of this project is based on the realization that women's issues is primarily men's issues as it is tied to the definition of manhood within a community.

LFBS aims at Empowering vulnerable women and men to reach sustainable healthy communities in Lower Egypt where citizens are living well, in a holistic approach. Individuals are empowered to positively change their beliefs and views towards themselves and their life.

The following graph presents the project intended set of results:



➤ ***The project target groups:***

Direct Target group: 150-180 women and men in each city per year, total of 2900 for the whole project lifespan.

Final beneficiaries of the project: Community members of various strata of the 5 selected cities in addition to Nooun women website's fans who are directly affected by the empowering women campaigns on the website.

➤ ***The interventional logic :*** of the project is designated to support men and women by providing the following:

1. Awareness of emotional and psychological health, gender equality and human rights

2. Opportunities for people to learn and develop their own skills
3. Awareness of the importance of cultural diversity and inclusivity where all individuals feel appreciated
4. Reaches out to, and involves those who may be excluded or disadvantaged by active engagement and empowerment. Example is battered women and stigmatized divorced women.
5. Freedom of expression and creative environment.

The pandemic of COVID-19 and the consequent strict regulations have both affected the mode of conduction of the project activities. Both online and on the ground activities have taken place. Nooun website and Facebook group are serving the online activities that have been in the form of specialized campaigns (I am against sexual harassment- Combating violence against women – FGM) or purposive articles and a free space for sharing your story. On the ground activities are in the form of one hour lecture followed by group discussions, tell your story Nooun workshops, Tomorrow is yours (for divorced women) and Cinema Nooun.

Hints on the Purpose and Methodology of the Final Evaluation:

This Final evaluation mission is aiming to inform the project key players (Namely, MADEV, NMS and the concerned stakeholders) on the overall situation of the project implementation and the achieved outcomes and level of empowerment acquired by targeted groups. It also sheds the light on the project progress and collects and documents lessons learnt and success stories. Through assessing relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and potential impact and sustainability of the project results, the evaluation has come up with a set of recommendations and documented the knowledge and experience gained through project execution, to be considered in future programming.

➤ Intended Outcomes:

- a) To evaluate what has been done in the project to date in relation to the project goals:
 1. Review the project accomplishments in relation to the project outcomes and the monitoring and evaluation plan.
 2. Identify strong and weak points in the project implementation.
 3. Evaluate the level of empowerment in the project with the use of the Digni Empowerment Assessment Tool (EAT)
- b) To advice on a possible 2nd phase 2022-2024
 1. Give advice also for a possible future second phase of the project (2022-2024),

2. Make necessary revisions and refinement of project indicators.
- c) To provide consultation for the project team along the process of the evaluation by:
1. Detecting and recommending main areas that need further capacity building.
 2. Guide the project team concerning analysis of collected data and the development of reports.
 3. Support the team with updated M&E concepts and principles based on the consultant's recommendations.

Evaluation Design:

Since its start the evaluation exercise has adopted a participatory approach and considered collecting data from all stakeholders to guarantee that all viewpoints are properly collected.

The process included four successive phases as follows:

1. Phase of inception: Kick off meeting- desk research- developing the first draft of the evaluation tool- set on the schedule for data collection
2. Phase of Data collection: actual and virtual meetings have taken place- Quantitative online survey – phone calls (precautions have been considered for the third wave of COVID_19 outbreak)
3. Phase of Data cleaning, entry and verification and the development of the first draft report
4. Phase of developing final report.

Evaluation Tool:

A mix of research tools has been developed. Both quantitative and qualitative research instruments were used to collect data from various stakeholders. The final evaluation tool has considered the mid-term evaluation tool as relevant. Each instrument of the evaluation tool has included special section to assess the level of empowerment as being described in the EAT. (Power to – Power with – power within – power over)

Copy of the developed tools are annexed to this report

Sampling technique

The selected sampling technique was the Stratified Random Sampling to include the different strata targeted by the project. Representative random sample from each identified stratum has been listed. Measures such, geographic, religious, age, sex, level of education and socioeconomic class representation have been considered in the assessment sample. A total number of **twenty two** participants interviewed through the FGDs, **six** divorced women have been interviewed in the premises of MADEV, **four** men interviewed in the FGD held online, FGD for the project management team and the online questionnaire (Survey Monkey) filled by **140** respondents on Nooun Website, Facebook page and WhatsApp groups of Tell your Story Nooun.

The following table displays the field work activities, the sample size and tools and method applied to collect data

Targeted group	Data collection methodology	Tools for Data collection	Location
Divorced women representatives & TOT graduates of the first round (6)	FGD	group discussion	- MADEV premises
Men enrolled in project activities (4)	FGD	-semi-structured discussion	Online Meeting
Women targeted by Tell your story Nooun online and offline activities (6)	FGDs	-Structured group	Online Meeting
Tell your Story Nooun facilitators (3)	FGDs	-Structured group	Online Meeting
Noon Magazine writers and trainers (3)	Individual Interviews	Tool questions	Over Phone
Online questionnaire (Survey Monkey)(140)	Individual questionnaire	Individual questionnaire	Online
Project Management staff	FGD	-Structured group discussion -	MADEV premises
MADEV representative (Executive Director of MADEV)	KII Key informant interview	Tool questions	MADEV premises

Each focus group comprised of 8 participants in average and took around 1.5: 2:00 hours. Guidelines for the focus group and interviews were developed and embedded in the evaluation tool. At the beginning of each discussion, the facilitator introduced himself to the participants and explained the

purpose of the FGD/ interview and emphasized that the information gathered is confidentially treated for the evaluation purpose. The participants were requested to introduce themselves and encouraged to talk freely and exchange opinions. Eventually, Participants (of FGDs/ Personal Interviews) were thanked for their cooperation.

Important Note:

- The FGD with men over Zoom was more close to the Key Informant Interview as targeted men have come successively with an interval of 10 minutes in between which allow the consultant to discuss many of the questions on individual bases.

Limitations of the Final evaluation research:

- The project Log frame has included activities oriented indicators which is neither helping in final evaluation process nor compatible with the Empowerment Assessment Tool (EAT). In the other hand the impact (overall goal) indicators are pointing to changes that might happen after the project reaches to its end and thus will not be practically assessed during the final evaluation process. The evaluation has considered the effective actions and progress towards achieving the project impact and has included it under the section for the EAT.
- As per the early discussions with MADEV team, it was planned to have a bigger sample for personal interviews and focus group discussion meetings. The precautions taken for COVID-19 has forced the evaluation to resort to online research techniques (using Survey Monkey questionnaire) in a big portion of the evaluation and considered the on the ground KIIs and FGDs for a relatively small portion. This mixed-method technique has resulted in a considerable sample size and enough data for the evaluation purposes.
- The participation of non- targeted participants (other non-targeted cities) in the Survey Monkey was a challenge , however the evaluator has excluded the answers received from non-targeted respondents and on the meantime the evaluator got the advantage of having the sense of the outreach capacity of the project interventions
- COVID -19 was one of the major challenges that faced this evaluation process. Relying on the online techniques in many of the Focus Group discussions and personal interviews was the best alternative.

Narrative Description of the Final evaluation's findings

1. Project Design:

1. The project “Living for a better story” “goes alongside with MADEV mandate and is a

continuation of the organizational pursuit towards Gender Justice. It has considered the cumulative experience gained by the organization through implementation of other previous relevant projects.

2. The project Geographical coverage: the project has targeted 5 cities in Lower Egypt as a continuation to the successful implementation of Noon initiative that has taken place in Cairo. The gradual expansion of the project to other cities in Lower Egypt (less conservative compared to Upper Egypt) would help MADEV to develop and examine the various approaches and be more able to select convenient approaches, in case the following phase of the project would address Upper Egyptian cities.

3. The problem analysis is well articulated and informative. It has provided an in depth analysis of the unmet emotional and psychological needs of women and men that are usually neglected.

4. The project adopted the results based management approach. Three outcomes were clearly developed to lead to the long term result (Vulnerable women and men reaching to sustainable healthy communities), however there is a doubt that this set of results would achieve the long term one. Legislative, structural and cultural changes are essential prerequisites for sustainable healthy communities. That is to say that the project's results didn't include results that addresses those essential prerequisites and focused mainly on the primary target groups. Nevertheless, the advocacy campaigns conducted through the project have targeted at least the cultural aspects.

5. Some of the project intended results at the output level are presenting completed activities not (positive change) results (e.g. Output 1.1: 50 women's meetings of "Tell your Story Nooun" organized in targeted governorates - Output 2.1: Workshops for divorced women organized. and so on)

6. The project rely on one implementing agent (MADEV). Other partners, like NGOs based in the targeted cities. Psychological support centers, women clubs,...etc. are not addressed. This probably because the project is still in its first phase where the focus could be to develop the tools and knowhow and to identify potential strategic partners in the following phases.

7. The indicators stipulated in the LFA are mainly quantitative. However, using the qualitative indicators is of great help in assessing the quality of the obtained results. In most cases the indicators are focusing on the implemented activities not the results of these activities (for instance: 2700 women participated in the "Ehkyya Noun/ tell your story nooun" workshops in the targeted cities- A total of 50 to 60 tell your story nooun sessions were held with women in the five cities/year)

8. The project design has considered the anticipated risks (poor participation of men- Community non-acceptance – social& political upheaval – delayed required approvals) during the conduction of the project activities and concluded the planned mechanisms to get over.

9. The project sustainability has addressed the replicability of the model, the future utilization of the ToT courses through ToT graduated cadre. Sustainability is well addressed given the project scope of

work, however MADEV is well-known with its media productions that work as a powerful sustainable tool to disseminate knowledge and create public platforms to advocate for the addressed cases (Dark white and Sargy Margy media productions for example).

2. Relevance

This section of the evaluation is going to discuss the questions of: is the project still relevant to the community needs and to what extent were the project interventions convenient to the community predominant culture and norms.

Living for a Better Story project has uniquely addressed some of the main needs (emotional and psychological) that are usually forgotten, as most of the women centered projects are addressing the economic and /or political spheres. Even those programs that address the gender based violence and combating harmful traditional practices are focusing on the legislative reforms and changing the community culture. The emotional and psychological needs are rarely addressed.

The project was seen relevant to men emotional and psychological needs. In fact the alertness of the project to include men needs is a matter of appreciation by all interviewed men. The Topic of stress management as well was seen as too relevant to men's needs.

The Focus Group discussion with “Tell your story Nooun” facilitators as well as the FGDs with representative sample of targeted women, have revealed that the project interventions have touched many of the real non-addressed needs of women, to the extent that most of the interviewed women were requesting more frequent interventions of the project as they have seen that a bimonthly event is not sufficient.

“We are looking forward to have our meetings more frequent (shorter gaps) because this is the time that helps us to continue our pursuit of life”.

One of Alexandria governorate Participants

COVID-19 has affected the way of implementation, thus all activities were shifted to the online when the pandemic outbreaks took place. Interviewed representatives have shown a remarkable preference to the on-the ground activities, however they do realize that protective precautions were mandatory.

The ToT course for the targeted divorced women in the first round seems to be very convenient to the trainees. The interviewed graduates have clearly reported that the course was condensed yet all the knowledge and skills they gained were relevant to their current task as facilitators for the new groups (following round)

The conducted campaigns as well (e.g. I am against sexual harassment- Combating violence against women – FGM) were perceived relevant to the prevailing women issues.

It is worth mentioning that the representative sample of targeted women included other Arab nationalities who have clearly expressed that Noon is not only a niche for Egyptian women but also for Arab women to express themselves and gain support.

On the other hand, some of the stakeholders expressed that the project interventions revealed the real needs for psychotherapy for some of them however; the project team could not provide guidance to them to psychological clinics and doctors. Some of them have seen that this step could be crucial to complete the service package. An available electronic directory for Psychotherapy clinics and centers would be a good suggestion for future programming. Yet it is quite important not to include any of specialized psychotherapy (apart from support groups) as this is not part of MADEV mandate and can cast the organizational programs away from its original focus.

Efficiency:

This section presents the answers to the questioning areas of the project management capability to optimally utilize the allocated resources (time, manpower, and money, equipment) to achieve intended results, as well as the challenges that faced the project and the project capabilities to respond to these challenges.

➤ *Challenges that faced the implementation:*

Since its early start, LFBS project was challenged by the change of the set of results. The first result related to developing the capacities of the ambassadors was canceled just before the implementation start, which was because of budget reasons. Such change has had its implication on the project scope of work and project sustainability.

In the other hand the lateness in receiving the fund installments, had forced the project implementation team to pause some activities and accordingly change the plan annually.

During the course of implementation, the project was managed by three successive managers. The second manager has worked only for four months (September 2020 to

Jan.2021). This situation has affected the efficiency of the project at least in the first half if we considered the time elapsed for each manager to understand and then direct the project team, the level of coordination of the project various components and the documentation processes. After the midterm internal evaluation and assigning the current project manager, corrective actions have taken place to improve the project performance which was clearly evident during this final evaluation.

Since March 2020, COVID-19 pandemic and the state regulations to contain the situation have altered the classical shape of life. LFBS activities were shifted to the online platforms in an on and off pace to cope with the fluctuant course of the pandemic.

➤ *Findings in regard to efficiency*

LFBS project is composed of two interdependent major components; the first is through the online magazine (Noon website) where various articles are composed and publicized in response to the needs identified by targeted women. The Facebook page is serving as a secured space for women inputs (stories and feedback) and it provides announcements on the upcoming activities. The other component is working on the ground (offline) and it provides a safe niche for women to express themselves after receiving lectures and engage in group support. Both components are meant to serve women (basically) and men to enhance their emotional and psychological well-being.

Two main aspects are considered in this regard, the first is that all the activities are needs driven and directly responds to the requests made by targeted women and men and the second aspect is the safe environment that should be maintained in both the online and offline activities. The staff meetings for the project main components were infrequent which constitute a missed opportunity for proper coordination and information sharing.

The disk revision as well as the meetings with the project management team has revealed that the project was very efficient to shift to the online activities. The shift has opened the opportunities for women from other non-targeted cities and women from other Arab nationalities to join the online activities and thus expanding the project impact beyond the planned. In most cases, topics of the online magazine are reliant on the national and international women events (women's day – National women campaign to combat Gender Based Violence 25th November: 10th December), decisions made by the editors' team and the writers and random feedback from women themselves. The evaluation couldn't find a systematic mechanism for selected topics and subjects.

The interviews held with the magazine writers and the used trainers have revealed that the

topics for the magazine as well as the training were partially reliant on the beneficiaries feedback and partially on the discussions with the project team. The campaigns topics were very influential on the decision made for the Noon magazine.

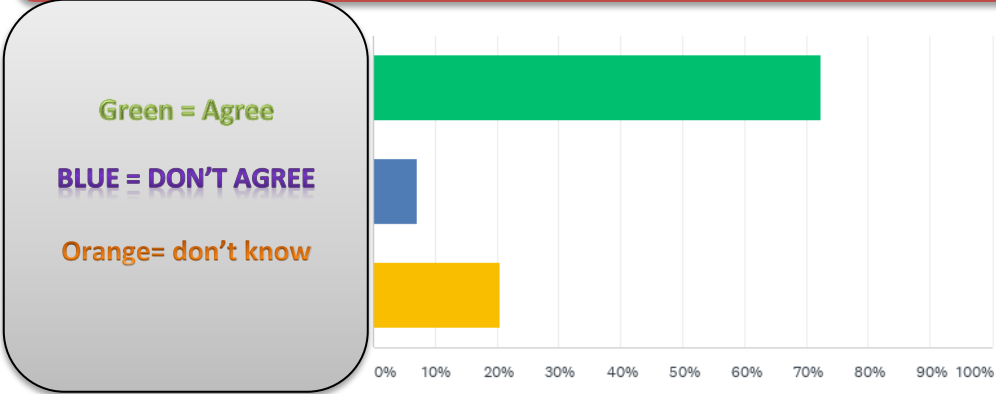
The desk revision revealed that, the project has conducted a needs assessment study for men to identify the best approaches and topics to be addressed. The needs assessment report is not informative as expected. Lack of ability to expression, denial of men's rights to cry and feeling lonely were the main items that were constantly repeated., however it could reach to few recommendations that contributed to lead the project team in designing the approach to men (e.g. The interactive approach is more preferred by men rather than telling your story)

The interview with the trainer who has conducted the men's workshop that addressed the stress management has revealed that there is a great need at the men's side to receive other trainings such the relationships, breaking the manhood stereotyping.

The project has shown a remarkable progress after the internal midterm evaluation that was evident in the filtered database of the trainers, writers and volunteers and on the remarkable increase of Noon website followers. That is to say that the project has achieved a remarkable cost effective approach particularly after the internal MTR, however lack of sufficient coordination between the project main components as revealed by the discussions held with the project staff is reported.

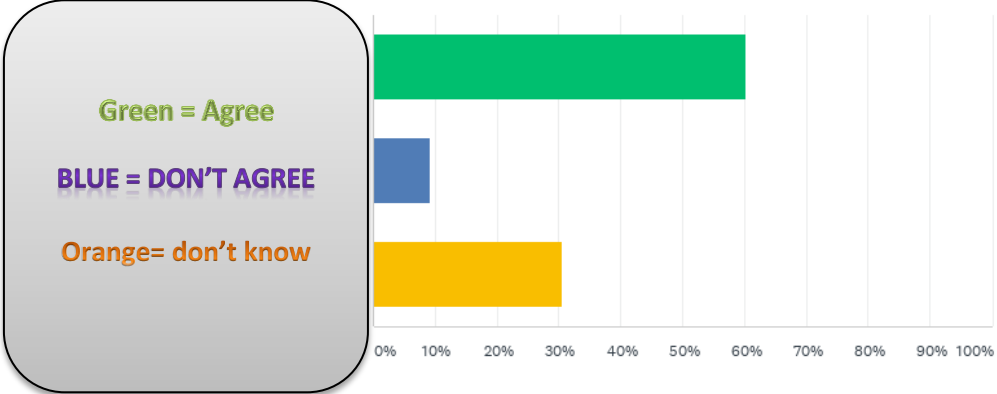
The individual online questionnaire (83 respondents from targeted cities) has revealed that the trainers were perceived (79%) as competent and efficient in transferring knowledge in regard to the different psychological problem which explains the increasing demand on the project interventions.

Trainers are competent in transferring knowledge in regard to psychological troubles



In regard to the ability to communicate with the project staff the results of the individual questionnaire were aligned with the results obtained through the FGDs with the project targeted representatives, where almost 60% reflected patent communication channels with the project staff and around 9% were incapable to communicate and almost 20% don't know. The relatively high percent of don't know is probably due to the inputs of the respondents of other non-targeted cities.

Ability to communicate with the project staff and express my opinion and suggestions



The following table reflects the project achievements compared to the planned one:

Activity	Indicator	Achieved So far	% of achievement
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Organizing 50 women's meetings with 15 meetings per year in each target governorate In the three years	2700 women participated in the "Ehkyya Noun/ tell your story noon" workshops in the targeted cities.	-170 women in offline workshops. - 7 workshops in Cairo & Alex during 2020 – 2021. -2800 women participated in online support groups. - 36 online lectures & 144 support group.	110%
Organize Capacity Building training in emotional intelligence skills in Cairo, capacity building to 25women facilitators, coordinators and trainers from the calibers supporting “Tell your story Nooun	25 facilitators participated in the capacity building workshops	Postponed	
Design monthly campaigns on the online page of "Noun"	Number of campaigns reports	16 campaigns	90%
Write articles that support these campaigns through a group of professional writers	Number of articles that support campaigns	24 – 30 Articles per campaign.	Over target
Organizing two workshops to support divorced women for 15 women annually -	30 divorced women were reached	Reached to 21 divorced women, 3 patches	70%
Emotional intelligent sessions to the same 15 equipped divorced women	Number of sessions directed to the divorced women (at least 18)	9 Online lectures were presented on private Facebook group followed by support group on zoom.	50%

Design training materials to support divorced women.	Training curriculum is in place	Accomplished	100%
Training of trainers to Females trainers by using the training materials	Number of trainees graduated from the ToT course	Seven divorced women/3 days offline workshop.	100%
Conduct a study on men's needs	Study is in place		100%
Design and implement interventions allocated to men	Number of interventions allocated for men	3 workshops addressing stress management	
Total Number of followers of Noon websites		847,788 men and women.	
Total number of events held for Divorced women		3 workshops, 18 sessions/workshop	

Conclusion:

- The midterm internal evaluation was a turning point in the project; documentation, the development of databases for trainers and writers besides the filtration processes to exclude inactive candidates and the speedup of the implementation process besides coping with COVID-19 strict regulations were clearly manifested owing to the corrective actions taken after the MTR.
- The project has surpassed the targets of many of the project interventions. This remarkable achievement was also evident after the MTR .
- The project has successfully managed to hire competent trainers who have demonstrated their competency in the conducted trainings.
- The participants' feedback process and its inputs on the selected topics for campaigns and other events is partially realized.
- Given the remaining time for implementation and according to the pace of achievement, the project still has to opportunity to implement postponed activities only if the budget allocations are in place

3. Effectiveness:

This section presents the answers to the questioning areas of the quality of implementation as well as results achieved. The evaluation discussions with various groups (Women targeted by Noon website, divorced women and targeted men)) aimed to measure the quality of achieved results as perceived by the project beneficiaries and key stakeholders and to measure the level of

empowerment achieved through the project.

It is of crucial importance to understand that the project aimed to create a positive and safe niche for the targeted groups where they can freely express themselves and interact openly. The project introduced a wide variety of activities (as mentioned under the efficiency sector) with the aim of empowering targeted groups to have the capability of making decisions and choices, negotiating, protesting, resisting, achieving solidarity and have joint actions and have the power to determine the outcome.

MADEV – according to its mandate- and the project “Living for a Better Story” are not entitled to introduce psychotherapy for targeted groups (like referring patients to clinics of psychotherapists). According to the project document, MADEV was only entitled to present awareness and motivate targeted women and men to enroll in psychological support groups where they can be empowered to make changes to their lives and seek for psychological therapy if some felt they need so.

The focus groups’ discussions with targeted women have revealed that the off-line activities have been more attractive and influential for most of the interviewed women. However, the online events have allowed Arab non Egyptian women to participate and gain knowledge and awareness. Not surprisingly, discrimination and gender based violence were alike in Egypt as well as other Arab countries.

“I found myself in Noon. It tackles issues that have not addressed before. I follow Noon magazine and online activities and it really changed me. I have even become able to raise my younger sister more properly”

Said an Arab Woman attending Noon events

The project has conducted a study to identify the real men’s needs in order to address these needs in the men centered interventions. The study was perceived as poor one as not being able to propose the proper approaches for intervening with men. The project management team could not rely on the study findings as it couldn’t propose the proper approaches for intervening with men. Interviewed women have clearly stated that the awareness raising as well as the support groups are re-fueling them with energy to continue their pursuit in life. Some have clearly expressed that their lives have changed; they have become more expressive, they can negotiate, resist and protest against unfair situations either at home or at work. Tell your story Noon is among the successful interventions that allowed women to express themselves freely.

Noon changed my life. I can’t wait for the bi-monthly events cause this is the only few time that I feel free able to express myself in a safe environment. I recommend having more frequent gatherings and support groups (Participant from Alexandria)

The interviewed divorced women have shown gratefulness for the project interventions that supported them to pass this painful experience and become independent able to choose their path in their future lives.

The trainers (graduated from the first round of the ToT course for the divorced women) were basically participants in the first round and enrolled in the ToT courses. The training materials were developed earlier by a specialist and used for the ToT courses. They have become able to organize and facilitate sessions for other divorcees. Being through the same painful experience, they are more able to understand and properly pick and address the topics for the planned sessions.

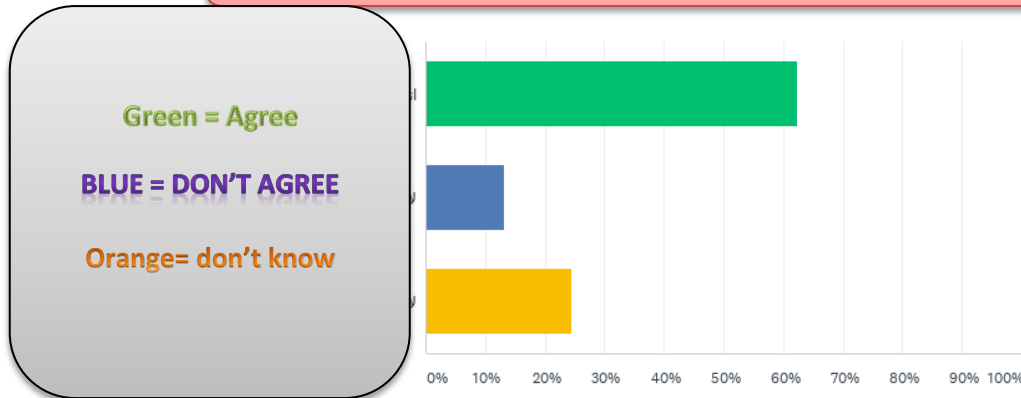
Volunteers (the ones who are preparing the activities in the targeted cities) have expressed the great demand of women and their continuous asking for more events. Volunteers have also reported that they have not received any training on how to conduct their tasks.

The focus group discussions with a representative sample of men enrolled in the Stress Management workshops (three workshops) revealed that the workshops were very influential and most of them have attended just out of curiosity but they become more interested during the workshops. Topics related to understanding women needs, how to deal with women and how to raise up your children were on the top of the list requested by men.

The online individual questionnaire has revealed the following:

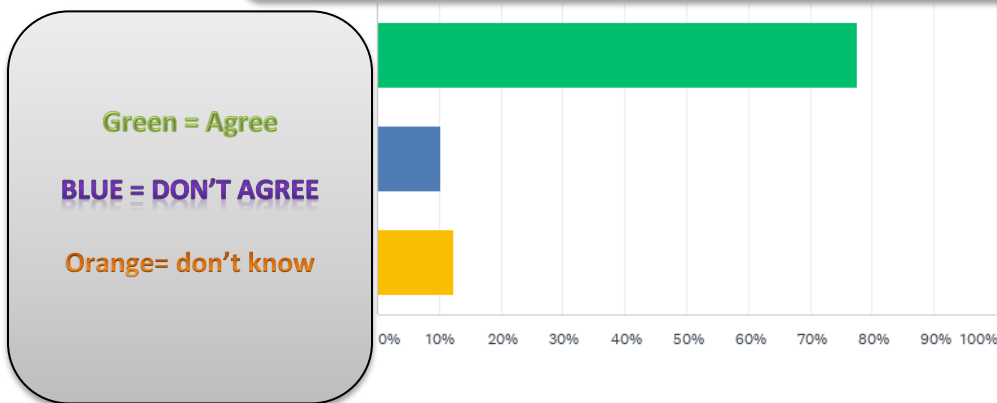
1. The project interventions that enabled targeted groups to express themselves:
 - Around 62% of the individual questionnaire respondents do agree that the project interventions have advanced their abilities to express themselves freely. It is worth mentioning that almost 45% of the respondents were from Cairo while around 16% of the respondents were from Alexandria. The remaining three targeted cities representation were seldom. Having said that It is worthy to notice that small percentages (not exceeding 2% per governorate) have responded to the questionnaire from 22 non-targeted cities who have been following the online magazine and the other interventions.

LFBS advanced my ability to express myself properly



- Around 78% of the respondents do agree that Noon website and its Facebook page have created a safe environment and encouraging atmosphere for active participation and sharing opinions.

Noon Website (online magazine) and its Facebook page allowed me to participate actively and share my ideas and experience

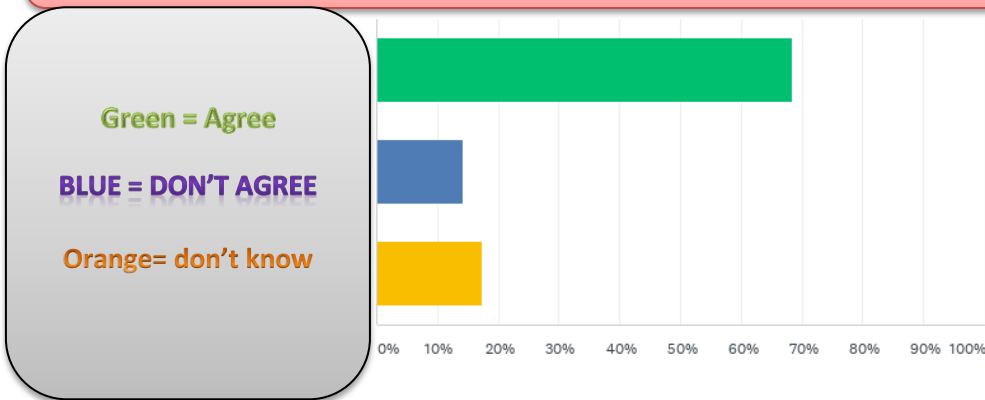


2. The ability to ask for psychological support :

Knowing that you need psychological support is the first step toward sound psychological health. The fact that people get ashamed if the others discovered that they receive psychotherapy is fully true in Egypt, therefore it needs courage to confess and seek psychological support. Almost 70% of the respondents have declared that the project

interventions have enhanced their abilities not only to discover but also to ask for psychological support

I was not able to ask for psychological support and have become able to ask for it and know where to receive it



Conclusion:

- The project has achieved remarkable progress with enhancing the emotional and psychological intelligence of a greater number (than targeted) of women (the project reached to 2800 women instead of 2700 as planned and 78 % of the respondents to the questionnaire reported that they have become able to express themselves freely and share their thoughts and ideas on Noon online activities while 68% have been able to ask for psychological support – besides live quotations and testimonies made by women in the FGDs revealed remarkable progress in self-expression and making critical life choices) . It could even cross the borders to other non-targeted cities and governorates of Egypt and extends its umbrella to include women from other Arab Countries.
- The project is a turning point to many of divorced women and empowered them to take their own decisions and choose their new path after the painful experience of divorce.
- The Psychological support (group support – Art therapy and psychodrama) were very effective approaches in achieving remarkable empowerment for the project targeted groups. The safe house approach (safety measures and preserving privacy) has been the success highlight for all online and offline interventions, adding to that the competency of the used trainers and facilitators.
- Men related interventions seemed to be very powerful tool and the level of demand and

acceptance proved to be relatively high.

5. Sustainability:

A. Organizational Sustainability:

- Meeting with the executive director of MADEV has revealed that “Living for a Better Story” project is a continuation of MADEV efforts towards the fulfillment of the women’s rights and empowering women to their lives in a dignified manner as confirmed by the revision of the organizational vision and mission mandate and the previous record of the organization’s programs. Thus, MADEV according to its mission mandate and based on its cumulative experience is intending to build on the current experience (gained through the project implementation) and develop further project proposals to extend the development action to other underserved communities and to consolidate and scale-up the achievements obtained through this project.
- The ToT cadre with the developed training materials is also a great sustainable asset to build on in the future phases of the project.
-

B. Community Level Sustainability:

- “Living for a Better Story “project has remarkably influenced the targeted audience lives. The project was very successful in empowering people (particularly women) to make their own choices and become motivated (power within) and to have a collective power (power with) through the joint online and offline activities such, Tell your Story Noon, The good Gathering (اللهم الحلوه). The project as well succeeded to advance their level of empowerment to be able to make their own life choices and even taking a new path (power to and power over) in their lives. The least level of achievement is related to discovering the need for psychological support and seeking for psychological advice.
- Those who have experienced these magnificent changes have invited others which explains the huge demand observed (note the huge number visiting Noon website besides the feedback received from Egyptian and Arab interviewed women)

C. Financial Sustainability:

Some of the project activities have been in place even before having the funds (Stat in Chat then turning into Noon website), this could be encouraging in terms of financial sustainability however we have to be cautious as MADEV was financing the website from its own resources.

As these types of projects are not creating any revenues that can support the operational costs of the project main activities, it is of crucial importance to rely on the staff capacity to

continue pursuing new funds for new phases of this successful project.

Impact

Living for a better Story has addresses one of the most forgotten needs of both women and men; the emotional and psychological intelligence. This section is representing the anticipated long term impact of the project not only at the end beneficiaries' side but also on MADEV's team.

I had a breast cancer; I thought my life has reached to an end. The psychological trauma was beyond my ability to bear. Noon was my only window to live and strive again. You can't imagine how I wait to Noon events eagerly

Alex. Woman Beneficiary

The project real impact is manifested in the testimonies of targeted women and men who have loudly stated that the project has changed their lives.

I thought my life collapsed after my divorce; couldn't think that I will rise again. I enrolled In Noon and nominated for ToT, I got the training and graduated and I am now providing coaching to other divorced women. I know their pain and I have become capable to coach them as needed

One of the ToT graduates

- The project has succeeded to a great extent to break the silence toward the psychological need to wide variety of targeted groups including men. Psychotherapy is considered as stigma in many of the Arab countries including Egypt, however, a relatively big portion of the interviewed sample (including the questionnaire respondents) have clearly started that they are motivated to seek psychological support.
- Models of empowered women (power within –power with – power to and power over) were identified among the relatively small sample size (indicative sample). in general those women who have long standing experience with the project have shown progressive levels of empowerment.
- The project has also succeeded to impact the lives of divorced women through qualified trained cadre who have had the experience and the required knowledge and skills necessary for coaching and facilitation.

- It is really important to shed the lights on MADEV’s commitment toward its mandate. As MADEV is not mandated to provide psychotherapy – despite the excessive demand from the beneficiaries’ side), MADEV through the project has utilized its experience in using arts and media to provide psychological support. The need to have a directory for the best psychotherapists can be proposed in the coming phase of the project.
- The project has surpassed its intended geographical coverage and many women from other Egyptian cities and other Arab countries have participated in the project online activities.
- The project has succeeded to address men’s psychological needs; this unprecedented experience is one of the highlight of success of the project. The philosophy of : all women issues are originally manhood issue has been tested in the ground. The fact that men are eager to be properly addressed is a great learning experience generated by the project. Topics of the relational dimension and the psychological well-being are still a matter of demand from interviewed men.
- The project has enhanced the capacity of the PMT particularly in the areas of using media, psychodrama and group psychological support. It has also generated some of the knowledge (training manual for ToT training) that can be a valuable asset for future similar projects/ programs

To What Extent the project succeeded to Empower Targeted Groups?

The definition adopted by Digni for empowerment is inspired by Naila Kabeer definition of empowerment. “The expansion of people’s ability to make strategic life choices where this ability was previously denied them. Changes in the ability to exercise choices to live the one life values involver three inter-dependent dimensions as follows:

Resources: The conditions under which decisions are made (Being)

Agency: The process /power by which the choices are made (Doing)

Achievements: The outcomes of the choices.

Having a deeper look on the project achievements compared to the planned results revealed that the project has been successful to empower the targeted groups to various degrees. The following section discusses the achieved level of empowerment according to Digni adopted measurement tool:

Outcome1. Emotionally intelligent women in target areas:

The mar	Level 1 Output	Level2 Output	Level1 Outcome	Level 2 Outcome	Impact Community/so
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		Individual/ Community	Individual/ Community	Individual/ Community	Community/ society	ciety /structural
	Gender Equality			X		
	Total Assessment of the Project			X		

Some Important notes have to be considered in this assessment:

1. The project is under the final evaluation thus the impact is hard to be realized within the project lifetime and even towards its end. It is anticipated that an impact assessment can take place 3: 5 years after the project ends.
 2. Some of the impact indicators have been realized (Empowering women in cities to speak for themselves fluently and willing to receive self-awareness) while other indicators were not (Rights holders and victims are present in an environment with a conscious and healthy approach.)
 3. The word community in the indicator (for example: Communities are able to express themselves. which is the second impact indicator stipulated in the M&E plan) is misleading. It is not clear whether it points to the psychological support groups formed by the project (which have become secured niche for women) or the community in the broader sense.
 4. The indicators of the outcomes and outputs are in general pointing to the activities not to the changes obtained out of the implementation of these activities (results).
- From a qualitative point of view, the evaluation found that the project has achieved empowerment at various levels with the targeted groups :
- Outcome 1: Emotionally intelligent women in target areas.
Resources: Have increased as being provided by the project to targeted women in Ehky Ya Noon “Tell your story Noon” and other community events.
Agency: Representatives of targeted women in evaluation sample reported that they have gained “power with” and documented actions have been reported.
Achievements/Results: There are documented actions in targeted women.(e.g. ability to express themselves, seeking psychological support and treatment, active participation in community events held by the project)
- Outcome 2: Divorced women empowered to combat the social and emotional pressure..
Resources: Have increased as being provided by the project to targeted divorced women in workshops allocated for them

Agency: Representatives of divorced women in evaluation sample reported that they have gained “power within ” and “power with” and become self-confident, realizing their rights and entitlements and able to make life-changing choices and documented actions have been reported.

Achievements/Results: There are documented actions among divorced women.(e.g. Holding new life choices such as entering the labor market and providing coaching to other divorced women in joint actions held by the ToT graduated women)

Outcome 3: Emotionally intelligent men in target areas.

Resources: Have increased as being provided by the project to targeted men in workshops addressing stress management

Agency: Representatives of men in evaluation sample reported that they have gained “power within” and become oriented on their needs to express the feelings and emotions and seek psychological support if needed.

Achievements/Results: There are few documented changes in men situation (e.g. seeking psychological support)

Recommendations

- Upon the successful implementation of the project ““Living for a Better Story”” and the persistent need of the underserved emotional and psychological needs of both women and men and the growing number of divorce , the evaluation would highly recommend developing a new phase of the project that extends the project coverage where MADEV can achieve greater impact in more cities particularly in the Upper Egypt and utilize its cumulative experience, tools and evident based approaches to serve more women and men.
- The use of volunteers in the project implementation sites (5 cities) has proved to be effective, however, the need to have local partners’ NGOs would have supported the offline activities and allowed more frequent interventions. The evaluation recommends to have local partner NGOs not only to support the implementation process but also to cascade the acquired learning and experience to the local communities which might enhance more sustainable actions.
- The evaluation would highly recommend having qualitative indicators for intended results to measure the quality achieved periodically and foster timely corrective actions.
- The evaluation as well is encouraging the online activities of the project basically to cope with the protective procedures for COVID-19 pandemic and to extend the services to other Arab countries (psychological and emotional needs are common), However a robust feedback mechanism to collect participants inputs, suggestions and remarks should be emphasized in

the future planning.

- The internal communication and coordination between the project main components should be a matter of focus in the following projects; regular staff meetings and knowledge exchange mechanisms (information flow and reporting pathways) should be well incorporated in the future phases.
- The evaluation would recommend having an elected consultation committee composed of women to help the project management team select the topics for the campaigns as well as the other project activities (Tell your Story Noon – Cinema Noon and the Good gathering “ اللهم الحلوه) with a similar committee for men for the same purposes.
- The project has helped the staff to acquire great experience in creating safe niche for free expression and managing a diverse portfolio of trainers, psychological coaches and writers. It is very crucial to keep the staff with its cumulative experience in the future phases.
- The project has succeeded in men inclusion which is a great leap in promoting for gender justice. (It is worth mentioning that almost all trials to include men in gender focused projects have not been very successful hence the need for a successful evident based approach for men inclusion).The recommendation is to document the process and continue the pursuit with men in the future phases of the project.
- MADEV has been keen to abide by its mandate and don't engage in activities that cast it away from its original mandate, however it is recommended for the future projects (new phase) to think of developing a simple directory for psychotherapist to be available for the targeted audience. Using the website or the Facebook page to publicize the directory to help the needy ones.
- MADEV is well-known with its media purposive productions. The role of Media in addressing the culturally sensitive issues and influencing people is unquestionable. MADEV should think of having new media productions (short films) to address both women and men' psychological and emotional needs. The media productions will serve as powerful sustainable tools for similar projects.

Thanks and Gratitude

The evaluator would like to thank the sincere efforts paid by the project implementation team to make this evaluation mission well organized and a fruitful learning experience. The evaluator would also like to extend our gratitude to MADEV Executive director Dr. Cherry Ramsis for availing all requested information timely and on ease and finally we are so grateful to all community members who have voluntarily participated in the FGDs and personal interviews .

Annexes

1. The Evaluation Tool Arabic Version
2. Survey monkey Results