



Project Title: **Final Evaluation of Convenio Improvement of the Social Integration of Disabled Persons in the Middle East through accessibility – Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt**

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Final Project Evaluation Report

Final Project Evaluation of
Convenio (10-C01-091) for
the Improvement of the
Social Integration of Disabled
Persons in the Middle East
through accessibility –
Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt

Conducted and reported by Q perspective

Commissioned by Fundación Promoción Social de la Cultura

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EX-POST EVALUATION SUMMARY SHEET

1. Outline of the project			
Project Title:	Convenio for the Improvement of the Social Integration of Disabled Persons in the Middle East through accessibility – Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt		
Period of cooperation:	Partner organisations:		
2010 – 2015	Fundación Promoción Social de la Cultura (Spain), Arcenciel (Lebanon), Yadan Bi Yad (Syria), Al Hussein Society (Jordan), Coptic Evangelical Organisation for Social Services (Egypt)		
2. Evaluation team			
Parallel Perspective Management Consulting s.a.l. (Q perspective)			
Zeina Osman – Lead Evaluator			
Hana Asfour – Senior Evaluator			
Sari Kassis – Senior Evaluator and Coordinator			
Noor Alfar – Junior Evaluator			
Period of evaluation:	February 12, 2016 – June 6, 2016	Type of evaluation:	Ex-Post Evaluation
3. Evaluation Results			
3.1 Evaluation Overview			
<p>The overall purpose of this evaluation was to assess the extent to which the Convenio for the Improvement of the Social Integration of Disabled Persons in the Middle East through Accessibility in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt has started to bring about anticipated changes, to examine which factors have proved critical in helping or hindering change, and to draw lessons for future programming. The main objectives of the evaluation were to:</p>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Evaluate the output/outcomes and impact of the Convenio against its objectives. 2 Assess the core project structures, methodologies, and capacity development 3 Appraise the project partnership approach (including management structures, communications, and relationships) to community implementation, research, and advocacy in relation to the Convenio’s achievements. 4 Assess the project’s financial management and value for money. 5 Draw lessons for future programming. 			
3.2 Summary of evaluation results			
(1) Relevance			
<p>This Convenio is a continuation of the first Convenio, <i>Improving Infrastructures, Community Services, and Training Programs of People with Disability in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt</i> and reflected the strategic approach undertaken by the partner organisation in determining complementary objectives and activities to build on the results of the first Convenio.</p>			
<p>The relevance of the Convenio was measured by the appropriateness of its project concept and design in relation to the overall situation of persons with disabilities in the four countries. This Convenio has demonstrated that it was relevant to the needs of the targeted beneficiaries in each of the countries and that it proved timely. The testimonials from the groups interviewed, especially beneficiary groups, converged on these two aspects of the Convenio and indicated that the project remains relevant today, both in spite and because of the current situation affecting the region.</p>			

The Convenio sought to tackle accessibility issues through targeted activities that, while not entirely interdependent, were complementary and contributed towards achieving the objectives.

The Convenio partners demonstrated strategic thinking in the adaptation of the Convenio to reflect the changing priorities resulting from the deterioration of the situations in Syria.

The Convenio's relevance was verified in the assessment of the baseline study and the final survey, conducted 9 months after the commencement of the second Convenio and then at its conclusion, respectively.

(2) Effectiveness

The main focus was on the extent to which the Convenio achieved its stated results and purpose in a sustainable way, with a focus on the progress made in achieving the outputs of all the project's activities. The Convenio Logical Framework was used as the basis for analysis and assessment.

The overall objective of the Convenio was to ensure an accessible environment to people with disabilities with the purpose of improving their quality of life and integration in four target countries: Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt.

Overall, the project was effective and was able to perform relatively effectively in a very challenging operational environment in the four target countries, with the extreme circumstances in Syria factored into this assessment.

There were some shortcomings in the effectiveness of the second activity, Vocational Training and Employment, which resulted from the design of the project which left the planning of this component up to the individual country partners, who in turn based their approaches on their expertise, resources, and need assessments, which resulted in different outcomes. This resulted in three different initiatives, in Syria, Jordan, and Egypt respectively, that cannot be compared, in terms of details, but can be compared in terms of outcomes. A clear conclusion reached by the evaluators, based on assessment of outcomes alone, is that the CEOSS approach to this component was more effective and worth reviewing in greater detail to gain a more comprehensive understanding in order to design a more effective programme for any future initiatives.

(3) Efficiency

Efficiency of the Convenio was assessed by how well the activities transferred the available resources into the intended results in terms of quantity, quality, and timeliness through sustainable and participatory processes.

Overall, the project was delivered within the planned period with delays resulting from the various political and security situations in the four countries.

The Accessibility Adaptations component, as a core Convenio project, met the overall efficiency criteria. There was clear evidence that this project benefited from comprehensive planning and efficient implementation in all the target countries, all of which, it could be concluded, resulted from a unified clarity of objectives and outcomes. This was also clearly demonstrated by the achieved results, the number of which exceeded the goals set out at the beginning of the project.

The Vocational Training and Employment component was also concluded to have been implemented efficiently, with the allocated resources assessed to be appropriate to achieve, and in some cases exceed, the desired results.

The Website and Portal component was assessed to be the most inefficient out of all the Convenio's activities, suffering from time delays and wasted resources due to technical challenges and problems with implementation.

Observations by the evaluators and staff interviewed indicated that the project resources allocated to the key areas of site adaptations, knowledge transfer through technical training and capacity building,

and the vocational and employment components yielded the expected results and, in some cases, exceeded them, such as the site adaptations and emergency relief activities.

Stakeholders interviewed indicated that they were satisfied with the quality of most of the outputs.

The Convenio was very responsive to changes in the environment it operated in: risks were assessed appropriately and appropriate mitigation measures put in place. This was clearly demonstrated in the addition of the Emergency Relief activity and the diversion of funds from the Syrian components of the project towards emergency relief for Syrian refugees with disabilities.

(4) Sustainability

The sustainability of the Convenio presents a significant challenge faced by the project partners. This is largely due to the unforeseen circumstances that have dominated the region, but also due to shortcomings in fostering a greater sense of ownership and goodwill in key institutions and external stakeholders.

With that said, the Convenio has already played an important and beneficial role that can be sustained through additional support. It has done so primarily through the transfer of knowledge and technical skills as well as further developing a regional cooperation network that will enable core aspects to continue to be strengthened (i.e. technical skills exchanges and support).

Also despite this major challenge, the institutional sustainability of the partner organisations is secure, with the exception of YBY in Syria struggling to secure the funds required to remain operational. The organisations started off this project well established, a position that was further improved as a result of this Convenio. The specialised role of the organisations, with specific reference to the adaptation workshops that are operational (excluding Syria), is further secured through the recognition of the partners' specialty capacities and knowledge.

(5) Impact Summary

The first and the second Convenio provided an opportunity for a long-term regional collaboration and sustained North-South-South partnership spanning, in all, over 8 years. This partnership had impact to varying degrees at several different levels: the partner's organizations, the PWD beneficiaries, and the stakeholders which included private, governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

The most notable impact was a result of the built capacities of the partners to become major actors in accessibility in their respective countries, especially for AHS in Jordan, CEOSS in Egypt and, to a significant degree, Yadan Bi Yad in Syria.

Both AHS and CEOSS modified their programmes to become main services providers for accessibility adaptations in Jordan and Egypt, respectively. In addition, it can be argued that Yadan Bi Yad grew as an organization because of the Convenio and was therefore well placed to provide emergency relief services during the Syrian Crisis.

The Convenio's timing also ensured that FPSC was well positioned to respond to the Syrian Crisis as it had partnerships and presence in Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan. FPSC launched its humanitarian assistance department from the staff originally working on the Convenio. According to the FPSC project coordinator, "Humanitarian assistance has become one of our major programmes. We established it through funds from the Convenio and now we are the only Spanish NGO with presence in the Zaatari Refugee Camp in Jordan."

As was the case with AEC in Lebanon prior to the Convenio, some of the other partner organizations became major players in setting policy in their countries. In Egypt, CEOSS and its PWD beneficiaries, were able to participate in the development of the articles on the rights of the disabled in the new Constitution of 2014. According to one beneficiary in Egypt, "participation in the development of the Constitution for me was very important. It helped us to understand our rights and learn how to ask for

them. It made us feel like we are active participants in our society.” In Syria, YBY’s standing and credibility earned it a place advising the Syrian government on its policies.

Increasing accessibility for the disabled was perceived as one of the biggest achievements of the Project. The therapist added that accessibility allowed disabled people to ask and aspire for more things. She said that their needs would change and gave the example of schools saying, “Now that disabled children are able to access schools, their aspirations became to excel in their academic studies.”

In terms of visibility, greater efforts could have been made to increase positive visibility of the Project through more effective dissemination measures, coordination with regional partners, and the Spanish awareness component. It was suggested by one of the partners that one of the components of the project should have included training for members of the media.

3.3 Factors that have aided or inhibited the project

Project Results	Evidence of Progress and Limitations
OBJECTIVE 1: Adapting public places of life to make them accessible to disabled people (companies, public administration and others).	
<p>R1.1: 3 service units have been created and equipped to study and perform at least 11 adjustments in public spaces, to improve access for the disabled (ramps, handrails for stairs and hallways, wheelchair lifts for access to buildings or public transport, elevators, emergency lighting systems for the deaf, emergency voice systems for the blind, disabled toilet adaptations) in Syria, Jordan and Egypt.</p>	<p>PROGRESS – The methodology developed by the project is now well established and has been rolled out in all the countries. The facilities were established and equipped, the necessary capacities built, and the management systems effectively transferred and received. It has led to the organisations’ positioning as credible service providers and partners not just for adaptation services, but as service providers and advocates for PWDs.</p> <p>LIMITATIONS – Based on the factors within the control of the project partners, there is evidence of some limitations in some of the project countries related to the discussions and partnerships with the relevant government institutions. The work was, in some cases, delayed as a result of bureaucratic red tape or neglected, explained by the evaluators as being due to low feelings of ownership by the government partners and their de-prioritising PWD rights.</p>
<p>R1.2: Reinforce the skills and capacities of the local staff on adaptations of public spaces in Syria, Jordan and Egypt.</p>	<p>PROGRESS – There is clear evidence that this result was effectively achieved at all levels and continues to be effective, helped largely by the accessibility of AEC and the channels of communication opened between them and the other project partners.</p> <p>LIMITATIONS – There was no evidence of any limitations regarding this component, a point verified by all the project partners.</p>
OBJECTIVE 2: Development of programs that ensure a better integration of disabled people through access to vocational training and employment.	
<p>R2.1: Ensure better integration opportunities and economic independence for PWD.</p>	<p>PROGRESS – In terms of achieving this result, the CEOSS approach was assessed to be the most effective. This result was achieved there through an active process of establishing an effective outreach programme with PWDs and by establishing and mobilising a strategic network of local partners. Furthermore, the responsiveness of the developed programme led the activities in Egypt to be designed</p>

	<p>according to market requirements, which also gave the training programmes there an advantage that directly led to the achievement of this result. Finally, CEOSS's active presence throughout the implementation of this objective's activities also contributed positively to its achievement.</p> <p>LIMITATIONS – The incongruity of the interpretation of this component led to a number of limitations for achieving this result, overall. The different priorities of some of the local partners resulted in reduced sense of ownership on the part of some of the local partners, which directly affected the possible achievements.</p>
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OBJECTIVE 3: Reinforce the national network in each country for a better referral system and the regional network for better coordination and sharing of experience.

R3.1: An internet portal has been created to share information and facilitate communication about the actions of the Convenio, national laws and regulations, procedures and experiences of the local partners during the implementation of the Convenio.

PROGRESS – The portal was created and information shared amongst project partners, including establishing a platform to share information regarding national laws and regulations as well as the experiences and activities of local partners. The methodology that was used was effective, when assessed against the technical difficulties that were experienced. The team established and the trainings offered were effective for the limited results of this component.

LIMITATIONS – Technical difficulties related to the selection of the websites software platform and its compatibility with the accessibility certification requirements resulted in delays and challenges. This meant that the update of the portal was very slow and resulted in a site that was more static than it should have been. In addition, the purpose of the portal was not clear to all project partners, which led to some challenges in generating local information and news consistently and in a timely manner.

R3.2: Ensure a joint and continuous management of the information platform internet within the 4 countries.

3.4 Lessons Learnt and Recommendations

Design, Management, and Cooperation

- Overall, the cooperation, management, and implementation processes met the requirements of the Convenio and partners, with recommendations for clearer definition of roles, operational guidelines, and more frequent regional communications.
- Staff turn-over presented some challenges that could be better mitigated through a more documented planning process in order to facilitate the continuity of supervision and management.
- The North-South-South model contributed significantly to the institutional sustainability of the project and provided the project with numerous advantages in the implementation and management of the project, although it requires the further development of clearer operational guidelines.
- The shift in roles within the cooperation framework led to challenges in the continuity of management and supervision and to some confusion in decision-making.

Recommendations:

- Balance higher visibility for FPSC and AECID and have the lead South partner maintain their primary role of field administration and management without compromising on the quality and efficiency of the management and administrative processes.
- Meetings for the purpose of aligning national plans with the regional programme would benefit the regional partners in reducing the sense of each country implementing its activities independently of the others and create opportunities for the utilisation and mobilisation of this network beyond this project.
- The project's information management should maintain a complete collection of relevant project documents and reports to assist in the continuity of the administrative support and management and to assist in the monitoring and evaluation of the project and, where possible and practical, in English (which is the most accessible project reporting language, with the other options being Arabic and Spanish).

Activity 1 – Accessibility adaptations:

While the overall implementation of this activity was carried out to high levels of excellence, some lessons learned include:

- The importance of active and constant engagement with local stakeholders has been demonstrated to engender stronger senses of ownership and commitment to the principle of disability access and the adaptations, once they have been completed.

Recommendations:

- Develop brief planning manual for adaptation of public sites for use by decision-makers responsible for the public sites that need to be adapted, outlining possibilities, processes, standards and guidelines information, and key decision points.
- Optimise the utilisation of model adaptation sites through programmed follow-up system that identifies for and encourages use of the sites.
- Develop and operate a systematic follow-up of all adaptation sites.

Activity 2 – Vocational training and employment:

Given the two different approaches used by the individual project partners in Egypt and Jordan, it is difficult to draw a comparison between the individual achievements of the two, however, the aggregated assessment of this activity, contained in the *Evaluation by Criteria* section below, provides an overall evaluation of the appropriateness of the activities.

After reflecting on the two approaches, the following lessons learned can be identified:

- Improved levels of cooperation on country-level planning is essential in aligning project partners' understanding of certain objectives and the design of activities in achieving the desired outcomes.
- Awareness raising activities on topics related to the employment of PWDs, including rights, type of employment, labour market requirements, and soft skills, are effective in changing the mind-frames of PWD beneficiaries and helped them in informing their decisions.
- Partnering with local and grassroots NGOs as well as linking beneficiaries with other funds and donors is essential in broadening the coverage of the vocational and employment component and generating strong senses of ownership and responsibilities.
- Cooperation and coordination with the relevant ministries, where permitted by local circumstances, has a positive impact on the impact of activities and in generating a greater sense of ownership from local and national authorities.

Recommendations:

- Evaluate the capacity of the partner organisations in establishing and maintaining an effective and impactful vocational training and employment service for PWDs and include capacity and systems building for the partner organisations as part of any future initiative.
- Emphasise the importance of strategic stakeholder partnerships as a necessary part any future initiatives approach.
- Establish strategic partnerships with other organisations active in the field who have successful cases of partnerships with governmental stakeholders.

Activity 3 – Internet Portal and Website:

- The utility factor of the website is potentially higher than it currently is, with the shortfalls resulting, in part, from lack of clarity amongst project partners as to the purpose and aims of the portal, which also resulted in decreased senses of ownership over the initiative amongst the partners.
- With the fast advances in information technologies, the potential for websites and portal platforms to become obsolete or dysfunctional is high and could be mitigated by more expert design and planning.

Recommendations:

- Re-examine the sustainability requirements of the website and portal and gauge what is required to build the membership numbers of users and develop a plan accordingly.
- Train the project partners on the requirements of the website’s accessibility certification.
- Decentralise the maintenance of the website, granting each country its own page and control of the information that gets uploaded, based on predetermined criteria and standards.
- Expand the links to the website on partner and NGO network websites.
- Activate the employment listings for PWDs in each country on the individual country pages of each site.

Humanitarian assistance activity

Recommendations:

- Reinforce the assistance being offered to the refugee communities currently in the partner countries.
- Broaden the coverage and reach of the organisations in order to facilitate the provision of disability aids and services to more PWDs, wherever they may reside. In Jordan’s case specifically, this requires expanding the coverage to Syrian refugees outside of Zaatari refugee camp, especially since the majority reside in the various urban populations concentrated in the north of Jordan, but extending to many areas throughout the country.
-
- Expand the network of partner organisations as part of the expansion of reach and coverage.

INTRODUCTION

While global awareness of disability-inclusive development is increasing through international treaties, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons, and regional efforts, including the Arab Decade for Persons with Disabilities, as well as laws, policies, and regulations that legislate to improve the situations of PWDs, the limited application of these treaties and laws indicate that there remain significant systemic and social challenges to the integration of persons with disabilities. What is also clear is that there is too little data and analysis for evidence-based, efficient, and effective policies and interventions in the region.

Undeniably, persons with disability do not have equal access to health care, education, and employment opportunities and experience exclusion from everyday life and activities as well as insufficient required services, especially in developing countries. The adverse socioeconomic outcomes that result from this inequality create and maintain barriers to the participation of people with disabilities in economic, civic, and social life and create even greater disadvantages. These disadvantages, in turn, require understanding disability as an essential development and human rights issue calling for appropriate responses to address the inequality and to reduce, and eventually eliminate, the barriers to the active participation of PWDs.

In response to this situation, the Fundación Promoción Social de la Cultura (FPSC) in Spain – with funding support from the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, and partnering with Arcenciel (AEC) in Lebanon, Yadan bi Yad (YBY) in Syria, Al Hussein Society (AHS) in Jordan, and the Coptic Evangelical Organisation for Social Services (CEOSS) in Egypt convened to design, formulate, and implement a project to address the issue of accessibility (to physical spaces, training/employment, and virtual services/information) in the four target countries by transferring the necessary skills and capacities to be able to provide technical solutions and systems for the accessibility adaptation of public spaces as well as access to information and services that would engage persons with disability and provide them with opportunities for capacity building and employment. The project also had a further advocacy role that included a public awareness component in Spain and the project countries.

The Convenio was amended during its implementation to adapt it to the social and political situations in the target countries, most important of which was an Emergency Relief component added to address the needs of Syrian refugees with disabilities.

The resulting Convenio, titled *Convenio for the Improvement of the Social Integration of Disabled Persons in the Middle East through accessibility – Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt*, was developed in 2010 as a follow-on from a previous Convenio and is the subject of this Final Project Evaluation.

This report, submitted to the FSPC by Parallel Perspective Management Consulting, presents an independent evaluation of the Convenio and is directed at the Convenio Partners' Group, development agencies, and beneficiary organisations.

AIMS AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The aims of the Evaluation Report are:

- To determine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact of the project.
- To strengthen future aid policy, programs and projects through recommendations and lessons learned.

- To ensure transparency and accountability.

The scope of the Evaluation covers the Convenio from its initiation until its completion with the aim to assess the quality and impact of the intervention. On the long term, this will assist FPSC and AECID in identifying whether it has achieved its vision to improve “the social integration of disabled persons in the Middle East through accessibility” in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt.

Evaluation results are measured and evaluated to provide a basis for accountability and informed decision-making in relation to the work undertaken. In particular, FPSC and AECID will be able to more effectively:

- Review progress with the intervention in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt
- Identify problems in planning and/or implementation as these arose
- Make adjustments so that the intervention is more likely to have an impact and “make a difference”
- Allow FPSC and AECID to be accountable to its funders and other stakeholders
- Provide valuable information to learn from the intervention

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the mature project’s success in reaching its stated goals in the long term. The summative evaluation will address many of the same questions used in the mid-term evaluation, but it will take place after the project has been established and the timeframe posited for change has occurred.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The remainder of this Evaluation Report is divided is as follows:

Section	Description
Convenio Background and Description	Overview of the Convenio, including a context brief, project objectives, duration, partners and cooperation model, and financing.
Evaluation Methodology	Presentation of the methods and limitations of the evaluation.
Findings	The findings section is broken down into three major areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Evaluation of Convenio Design and Formulation <i>Evaluation of the project design and formulation process, analysis by objectives, indicators, and an evaluation of the Convenio’s risks and assumptions.</i> 2) Analysis of Activities and Outcomes 3) Analysis by Evaluation Criteria (Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability, Impact Summary)
Conclusions	Evaluation conclusions.
Lessons Learnt	Lessons learnt from the project and the evaluation.
Recommendations	Recommendations for future Convenio’s and programmes, arranged by evaluation criteria.

CONVENIO BACKGROUND AND DESCRIPTION

PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

The Convenio partners designed, formulated, and implemented this project as a follow-on of the first Convenio (C1), also implemented in the four target countries. C1 aimed to enhance services to disabled persons through development of infrastructure, community services, and training programmes and focused mainly on the provision, maintenance, and repair of assistive devices and technical aids to PWDs.

The partners convened at the conclusion of the first Convenio to propose and agree upon the second Convenio, which aimed to build on C1's results and achievements with interventions in the adaptation of publicly-owned or public-interest sites to make them accessible to PWDs. These interventions included establishing and equipping Adaptation Workshops in Syria, Jordan, and Egypt that were staffed by personnel trained in the design, planning, and manufacture of accessibility facilities and equipment as well as the installation on the selected sites. C2 also included interventions that were intended to improve, facilitate, or encourage access to employment for PWDs through Vocational Training and Employment programmes.

The project also stressed the need for establishing an effective regional network for coordination and cooperation on PWD initiatives and issues and a website and internet portal component was included to provide a forum for sharing news, advocacy, and information as well as technical documentation and manuals.

A key criterion applied when selecting the activities was that the results and learnings should contribute to mainstreaming solutions to accessibility issues faced by PWDs by increasing the capacity and potential of PWDs to participate in public life and the labour market.

The Convenio was primarily funded by the AECID and was implemented using a North-South-South (NSS) cooperation model that positioned FPSC as the primary North partner providing overall project management, coordination, and administrative support; AEC as the lead South partner that provided the technical knowledge and field management and administration, built on its established technical experience in the proposed activities and the experience of having worked with FPSC since 1997; and three local partners, each located in a project country, which completed the NSS configuration. The three local partners received technical knowledge and skills from AEC and, in turn, were responsible for the activities in each of their home countries.

The target groups for each activity included: partner organisations, public institutions, PWDs, and Syrian refugees (in Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan) with physical disabilities.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

CONVENIO OBJECTIVES

- General Objective:** Ensure an accessible environment to disabled people to facilitate their social integration.
- Specific Objective 1:** Adapting public places of life to make them accessible to disabled people (public companies, public administrations, and others).
- Specific Objective 2:** Development of programs that ensure a better integration of disabled people through access to vocational training and employment.

Specific Objective 3: Reinforce the national network in each country for a better referral system and the regional network for better coordination and sharing of experiences.

CONVENIO ACTIVITIES

The following activities were undertaken during this Convenio by the four project partners, as per their designated roles and agreed focus and targets.

Specific Objective 1 Activities

- A.1.1.1. Build an adaptations unit (Syria, Jordan, Egypt)
- A.1.1.2. Equip the adaptations unit (Syria, Jordan, Egypt)
- A.1.1.3. Meetings and awareness raising (Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt)
- A.1.1.4. 50 Adaptation works (11 regular + at least 1 major in each country) (Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt)
- A.1.2.1. Recruitment of the staff (3 per country) (Syria, Jordan, Egypt)
- A.1.2.2. Elaboration of 4 training modules (Lebanon)
- A.1.2.3. Training of the staff (Syria, Jordan, Egypt)
- A.1.3.1. Technical aids for Syrian citizens with disabilities are distributed, adapted and/or repaired in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan
- A.1.3.2. Therapeutic services are provided to Syrian citizens with disabilities in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan

Specific Objective 2 Activities

- A.2.1.1. Identification of candidates (Egypt)
- A.2.1.2. Equip vocational training units (Syria, Jordan)
- A.2.1.3. Out- vocational training (Syria, Egypt)
- A.2.1.4. In- vocational training (Syria, Jordan)

Specific Objective 3 Activities

- A.3.1.1. Develop a portal (Lebanon)
- A.3.1.2. Buy the needed software and hardware (Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt)
- A.3.1.3. Link the portal to the partners (Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt)
- A.3.1.4. Promotion of the portal among governmental bodies, private sector, civil society, PwD and disability organizations (Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt)
- A.3.2.1. Development of the intranet platform (Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt)
- A.3.2.2. Develop the formats and contents to be included in the intranet (training modules, reports, SoV, etc.)
- A.3.2.3. Upload and update data and exchange info on the 3 main components of the project: accessibility to physical spaces, accessibility to employment and accessibility to virtual services.
- A.3.3.1. Selection and recruitment of the technical staff in charge of running the Internet portal in the 4 countries of the Convenio (8 people in total, 2 people per country)
- A.3.3.2. Train the staff to use the internet portal, insert and update all the information related to the implementation of the activities in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt.
- A.3.3.3. Elaborate and implement a business plan to ensure the sustainability of the portal.
- A.3.3.4. Set up communication strategy through social media to promote the rights of PwD.
- A.3.3.5. Produce printed material about the identified adaptations, national laws, technical aspects of the rules, personal stories of beneficiaries and services provided for PwD in the 4 countries.

DURATION

The planned duration of this project had to be amended due mainly to the unforeseen political and security developments that took place in the region during the Convenio's term.

Planned Duration:	4 years
Planned commencement date:	September 2010
Actual commencement date:	May 2011
Completion date:	September 2015

PARTNERS AND COOPERATION MODEL

CONVENIO PARTNERS' GROUP

The Convenio's Partner Group (CPG) consisted of four organisations in addition to the FPSC who worked to cooperate on and coordinate the implementation of the project's activities.

The project partners were:

Table 1 - Convenio Partners' Organisations

Partner Organisation	Description and role
Fundación Promoción Social de la Cultura (FSPC)	<p>Private non-profit organisation operating since 1987 and focused on human development and the promotion of culture.</p> <p>North Partner Grant manager and overall project coordination, relations, monitoring, and administration. Responsible for Spanish Awareness activity and responsible for some of the Humanitarian activities in Jordan, namely therapy sessions in the Za'atari refugee camp.</p>
Arcenciel (AEC)	<p>A non-profit organisation working in the field of sustainable development with twenty-five years' experience in the field of disability and rehabilitation catering to the needs of Lebanese disabled people.</p> <p>Lead South Partner Local implementer in Lebanon and main South partner largely responsible for the knowledge and skills transfer to the other partners (specifically for Activity 1 and 3), and in the fieldwork management and administration in coordination with all the other regional partners.</p>
Yadan bi Yad (YBY)	<p>A charity association established in 2007 in Aleppo, Syria to support PWDs by working on education and rehabilitation aiming at increasing their autonomy and integration into society.</p> <p>South Partner Regional partner and local implementer in Syria.</p>

Al Hussein Society (AHS)	<p>A non-profit volunteer organisation that provides educational, medical, and rehabilitation services to PWDs through four main specialisations: Education programmes; Medical Rehabilitation services; Occupational Centres; and Outreach Programmes (mobile health clinics).</p> <p>South Partner Regional partner and local implementer in Jordan.</p>
Coptic Evangelical Organisation for Social Services (CEOSS)	<p>A development organisation dedicated to social and cultural development, individual well-being, social justice and inter-cultural harmony. One of its many areas of intervention is community rehabilitation programmes for people with disabilities.</p> <p>South Partner Regional partner and local implementer in Egypt.</p>

[NORTH-SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION MODEL](#)

The Convenio used a North-South-South Cooperation model to facilitate the transfer and exchange of knowledge and skills as well as cooperate and coordinate to design and formulate, plan, resource, manage, and report on project objectives and activities.

In the case of this project, the model can be defined as an exchange of knowledge and resources in the economic, social, and technical domains amongst the organisations in the South (considered developing) – AEC, YBY, AHS, and CEOSS – and, collectively, with the FPSC in the North (considered developed).

BUDGET

The overall project budget ended up being 4.758 330 €, funded as follows:

AECID grant	3.023 482 €
OCHA	710 292 €
FPSC	56 836 €
Local NGOs	646 359 €
Public contributions	321 359 €
TOTAL	4.758 330 €

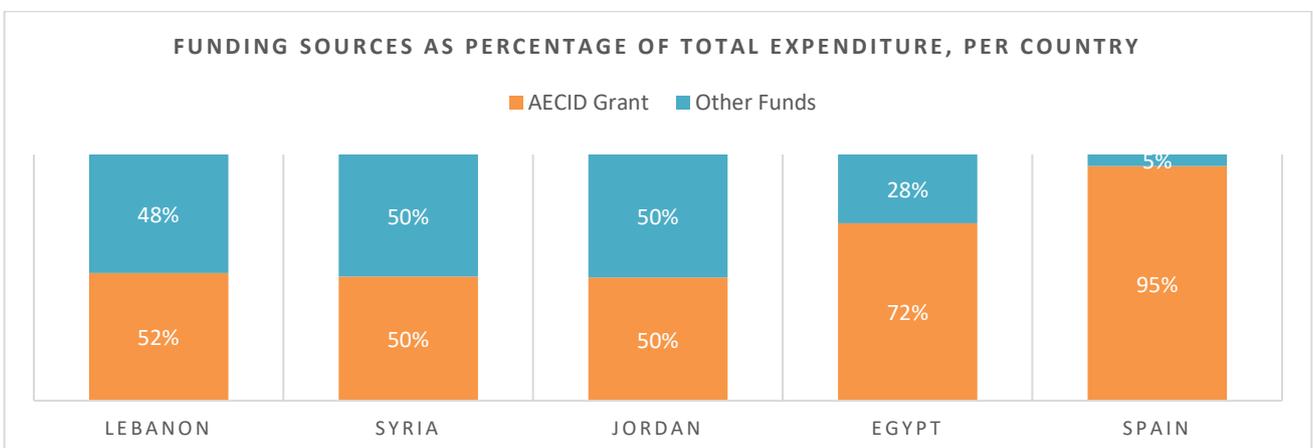


Figure 1 - Funding sources as percentage of total expenditure, per country

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

EVALUATION APPROACH AND FRAMEWORK

The main purpose of this evaluation is to strengthen future aid policy, programs and projects through recommendations and lessons learned; as well as provide a basis for accountability.

The Spanish Cooperation Evaluation Policy and the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria for evaluating development assistance were used as frameworks for this evaluation. This evaluation recognizes that development assistance is a cooperative partnership between donors and beneficiaries. The frameworks' principles highlight that developing countries have ultimate responsibility and ownership towards the aid support they receive from donors (OECD, 1991).

Both the Convenio TOR and the criteria for evaluating programs and projects were used to develop guidelines and questions for this evaluation. The criteria and questions can be found in Annex 4.

EVALUATION DESIGN

A qualitative approach was used for this evaluation in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of the Convenio beneficiaries and partners throughout the project timeframe. Qualitative research methods were best suited because the evaluation aimed to explore the perceptions of project beneficiaries, partners and key informants on the extent to which the project achieved its objectives. Furthermore, qualitative research allowed the evaluation team to better understand the perceptions and experiences of research participants within a specific context (Huberman et al., 1994). It also facilitated in bringing out the voices of beneficiaries who are most disadvantaged, which is an important target group to this project. Moreover, using qualitative research methods made it is easier for anticipated and unanticipated findings on the experiences of project beneficiaries to emerge.

A phased approach was applied in order to complete the activities of the evaluation in a timely and complete manner, resulting in the submission of high quality deliverables.

Phase 1 being the Cabinet Study; Phase 2 being the fieldwork and Phase 3, the completion of the final report.

The Cabinet Study took place over a period of 4 weeks following validation of the work in March 2016. This phase involved an analysis of available documents concerning the activities of the NGDO in each country. Documents regarding the context of each country for national, regional and local development strategies were identified and reviewed. Key informants at headquarters and on the field were identified and Skype interviews carried out with them. This phase also involved development of methodological tools for the collection of data, processing and analysis of information, to ensure the reliability of sources and the rigor of the processing and analysis in the field.

Phase 2 of the evaluation took place over a period of 6 weeks in April and May 2016. The fieldwork phase involved conducting interviews with key informants in Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt and requesting additional information from other organizations and institutional or international actors. The methodological tools designed for the collection of the available information was used. Individual interviews with key informants and project partners were carried out in addition to focus groups with project stakeholders. Additionally, site visits were carried out where visual inspections of the interventions were made. This phase also involved an

analysis of achieved results and impacts and drafting of a preliminary fieldwork report, including a report on activities carried out during the fieldwork mission.

Due to the circumstances in Syria, which have escalated significantly over the past year, visits to the organisation and project sites in Aleppo were not possible and access to information stored in the YBY offices was also difficult. However, information on the Syria-related components were collected during interviews with FPSC and AEC and a single interview was conducted with Yadan Bi Yad management during their visit to Lebanon. The interview focused on updating the findings of the mid-term evaluation conducted in March 2013, on gathering data on activities conducted since then, and on the current status and situation of YBY.

A final evaluation report was developed during the third phase of the evaluation. This took place between June and August 2016.

DATA COLLECTION APPROACH AND FRAMEWORK

A topic guide was devised for the interviews and focus groups. Questions were designed based on key themes identified from the review of project documents as well as the TOR. Questions were open-ended, as neutral as possible, clearly worded and followed logical flow where possible. Prompts were also provided, identified from the review of project documents (Barbour, 2013). Informed consents were required for any audio-recordings and transcriptions. These were used only upon approval of interviewees.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND TOOLS

The chosen data collection methods include a desktop review of existing project documents and relevant publications, qualitative semi-structured individual and focus group interviews with key informants and project partners as well as non-participant observation. Data collection took place over a period of 2 months. See Annex 4 for a breakdown of data collection methods and tools.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis took place in line with the data collection in order to systematically review, modify and improve the collection and analysis process. The transcripts were analysed thematically using a structured framework (Bryman, 2008) using the software program NVivo 11. An inductive approach was taken during the analysis of the transcripts allowing the emergence of categories, codes and themes from the data (Huberman et al., 1994). Data analysis involved an iterative process.

The regional, national, and local contexts were taken into consideration dealing with the specificity and uniqueness of each country and partner. In addition, themes, inter-relationships, and patterns were identified and explored addressing the inductive analysis requirements, and a holistic, non-linear approach was used to understand the Convenio as a complex system of multiple components, partners, and activities.

In sum, three levels of analysis were carried out:

Process perspective, which involved evaluating the design of the cooperation model, concentrating mainly on the areas of planning.

Context perspective, which involved assessing the political, social, and economic context in which the intervention is being carried out, and how it relates to the environment.

Objective perspective, which involved assessing the achieved results and objectives based on the analysis of the selected interventions in each country. The project cycle of each intervention was studied, assessing, among other elements, its impact on promoting gender equality, environmental sustainability and cultural diversity and its consistency with the national strategies on the sector and the national development goals. The evaluating team also assessed the quality and consistency of the Convenio's design, its alignment and compatibility with each country's context of development of and with the priorities of the Spanish Cooperation, its internal harmonization and the consistency of the tool used within each geographic area.

CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITATIONS

Given the current situation in Syria, access to the site visits and important data and feedback was either non-existent or difficult to obtain. The local partners, Yadan Bi Yad were only substantially interviewed once during a coincidental visit by the organisation's project managers from Aleppo to Lebanon. The adaptation sites are physically off-limits and due to the intermittent functioning of electricity and internet and phone services, data and information was inaccessible by project staff. This resulted in the exclusion of the Syria activities, as per the mutually agreed Terms of Reference, (save for the Emergency Relief component) from the evaluation, unless explicitly stated otherwise in the report.

The Syrian crisis was not restricted to within Syria, but also affected neighbouring countries that were also engaged in their own local crises. The unstable situations in Lebanon and Egypt and the drastic changes that took place in those countries over the course of the project's implementation was also factored into the evaluation, particularly when considering the Convenio's implementation and results. Jordan was also not spared from the unrest and changed governments 5 times over the course of the project's duration, not to mention the influx of Syrian refugees, both of which were also considered.

Furthermore, the transitory nature of the targeted beneficiaries made it difficult to identify individual beneficiaries for interview and the evaluators largely depended on beneficiary organisations for targeted feedback on the Convenio's activities, with the exception of the Emergency Relief component, whose targeted beneficiaries were Syrian refugees and were difficult to locate due to difficulties in tracking them.

In regards to the Emergency Relief component, this was largely excluded from the analysis by the evaluation criteria. This is due to the fact that this component is an exceptional humanitarian assistance service that cannot be evaluated according to the same criteria as a development project. In light of the exceptional circumstances of this component, it was largely excluded from this report except to report on achievements.

In addition, and due to the employee turnover and relocation rates in some of the organisations, including the AECID in Egypt, in particular, some of the key informants from the time were inaccessible, which led to some gaps in the evaluation data. The same held true for many of the external stakeholders (in Jordan in particular) where several local partners involved in the adaptation sites had relocated to other jobs, which made it difficult to obtain an accurate picture of project phases, in some cases.

Finally, project documents used for the evaluation had to be translated from Spanish to English in order for the evaluators to be able to review and assess them. This led to some delays during the relevant phases while documents were translated, which resulted in extending the evaluation deadlines. As a recommendation for the future, the evaluators suggest saving English versions (where available) of important project documents to spare FPSC the effort and cost of having to translate them.

FINDINGS

The evaluation findings presented here are a combination of synthesised results from all project partners and individual country results. This structure was selected by the evaluators as the most effective way of evaluating the Convenio's ability to bring about anticipated changes, to examine which factors have proved critical in helping or hindering change, and to draw lessons for future programming while taking into account the individual circumstances and tailored focus of each country on the objectives and activities set to meet the local target beneficiary communities' needs.

CONTEXT ANALYSIS

This brief context analysis builds on the findings presented in the Final Evaluation of the previous Convenio and focuses on points that reflect on the context factors that have affected the Convenio and may continue to affect the activities beyond the terms of the project.

In the last few decades, the rights and situations of persons with disabilities have become more mainstreamed and understood as a key development issue and have mobilised international attention. This attention has translated into initiatives, both local and international, that have been key factors in the advances achieved so far. Despite these advances, social exclusion remains the primary challenge faced by PWDs. With global estimates of the number of PWDs calculated to be around 15% of the total population, according to the 2011 World Report on Disability, social exclusion – particularly in developing countries – has resulted in a significant segment of the population living in chronic poverty.

Conditions associated with poverty such as poor education, nutrition, and lack of access to health and employment services or safe living and working conditions increase the risks for PWDs, often causing them to fall into poverty or preventing them from escaping it.

Countries in the region are not exceptional, in that regard, and according to the WHO (2012), the main challenges relating to disability in the MENA region are:

- Variation in the definition of disability from one country to another;
- Lack of reliable data and information on different aspects of disability;
- The domination of a medical model of disability rather than a rights-based approach;
- Discrepancy between political commitment and the absence or weakness of corresponding action plans;
- Fragmentation of existing efforts and ineffective coordination mechanisms within and between sectors;
- Weak primary and secondary mechanisms for prevention and early detection of disabilities;
- Significant gaps in essential care and service provision to persons with disabilities.

Furthermore, the significant gaps in essential care and services, which is understood to include challenges in physical accessibility, continues to be a distinct problem despite the legislation and policies that establish adapted sites as requirements.

POLITICAL, LEGISLATIVE, INSTITUTIONAL

The legislative framework in the four target countries remain unchanged over the past few years. A still-relevant summary of the legislations addressing PWD issues and circumstances can be found in the Final Survey Report conducted for this Convenio.

Regarding the political atmosphere, and despite the legal provisions and institutional arrangements that are in place, the attainment of the rights of persons with disabilities remains a concern across the MENA region.

At the international level, country governments are required to submit an initial report to the Committee on the CRPD two years after ratifying the convention, and every four years subsequently. So far, only six countries – Iran, Jordan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Morocco and Qatar – have submitted their initial reports to the Committee on the CRPD. While it can be argued that many of the other countries in the region are experiencing high levels of instability and upheaval, it also serves as a demonstration of the lack of political will to engage or enforce existing legislation and policies despite the existence of institutions established for the purpose.

For example, in Egypt, a National Council on Disability Affairs was established in 2012. It is responsible to ensure compliance with existing legislation, for example by lobbying public and private sector employers to abide by the employment quota for persons with disabilities. The council also has the duty to develop new policies and a national action plan to advance disability rights, as well as coordinating the roles of various ministries and agencies in service delivery. The board of the council includes representatives from the ministries of international cooperation, social affairs, education, higher education, finance, health, manpower and immigration, communications and local development, as well as DPOs, organisations working on disability issues and individual experts in the field. Plans include issuing smart cards to persons with disabilities to streamline service provision, training NGOs who work on disability issues, establishing new service centres for children to improve early detection of disabilities, treatment, and rehabilitation (Kheir 2012).

In Lebanon, the National Committee for the Affairs of the Disabled has been in existence since 1993. It falls under the mandate of the Ministry of Social Affairs and includes representation from persons with disabilities in their individual capacities, DPOs, service delivery organisations and relevant ministries. The National Social development Strategy of Lebanon includes, amongst other goals, expanding coverage of health services to persons with disabilities, developing a disability insurance fund, eliminating discrimination in social protection schemes and employment opportunities, providing assistance to families to look after children in need of special care in their homes (thereby minimising placement in institutionalised care facilities), promoting awareness of disability rights, improving coordination of services to persons with disabilities and early intervention programs (Republic of Lebanon 2011). While the National Committee for the Affairs of the Disabled is responsible to monitor the implementation of disability laws and policies, it is part of the executive and therefore not adequately independent to hold ministries to account. Informally, civil society organisations have made efforts to build monitoring capacity in order to track the progress of the CRPD as well as application of national legislations and regulations.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC

Due to the lack of unified definitions or classifications for PWDs in the region's social policies, the result has been incomplete or inconsistent aggregate data, both regionally and locally, as well as inconsistent application of legislation and inaccurate or incomplete strategic development plans. Existing data are based on projections on country census figures or sample surveys. According to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission of Western Asia (ESCWA), the disability prevalence rates reported by country in the MENA region are skewed by under-reporting.¹

¹ ESCWA, *Disability in the Arab Region*, 30 April 2014, available at: https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/page_attachments/disability_in_the_arab_region- an_overview - en_1.pdf

From the available estimates, however, the socioeconomic conditions and situation for PWDs demands that attention continue to be focused on their issues and more support given to initiatives that address the daily issues and concerns faced by PWDs as well as the long-term problems that still need to be resolved.

By way of example, it is estimated that 95% of children with disabilities in the MENA region are excluded from school at the primary level (Peters 2009). Adults with disabilities (and especially women with disabilities) have significantly less access to public spaces, services, and employment opportunities than their peers without disabilities (ESCWA 2014).

In Egypt, while official statistics identify around half a million persons with disabilities in the country, alternative projections have ranged between 3 million and 7 million people (Elshami 2012; Plan International). Persons with disabilities are frequently stigmatised, hidden away by their families, denied work opportunities and ignored by political leaders (Elshami 2012). Most do not have access to appropriate services (CBM International).

In Lebanon, the rights of persons with disabilities are broadly infringed upon (Anderson 2013). Based on reports from the Disability Monitor, persons with disabilities experience discrimination when trying to access health services, public buildings and public transport, and when applying for bank loans and jobs. As most mainstream schools do not accommodate children with disabilities, they are often forced to attend residential state institutions or forego their right to education.

UPHEAVAL AND INSTABILITY

It is impossible to disregard the past five years of instability and upheaval being experienced in the region, the most severe of which is the on-going war in Syria and the humanitarian crisis that has resulted and spilt over into neighbouring countries. In a survey undertaken in April 2014 by Handicap International, *Hidden victims of the Syrian crisis: disabled, injured and older refugees*, it was found that one in five refugees is affected by physical, sensory or intellectual impairment; one in seven is affected by chronic disease; and one in 20 suffers from injury, with nearly 80 per cent of these injuries resulting directly from the conflict.

Apart from the increase in the numbers of disabled people in the populations of three out of the four countries, and the pressures that resulted on the existing and already stretched social and health services of each of those countries, the situation is further being exacerbated by instability in all the Convenio's target countries.

Jordan, which has been the most stable of all, has just experienced its sixth change of government in as many years, as well as significant security situations on its borders with Syria as well as internally. Lebanon remains without a president and is constantly on the brink of greater instability resulting from internal and regional tensions, while Egypt continues to simmer with political and social discontent that has, in recent months, led to demonstrations, protests, and union strikes.

With the prospect of stability returning to the region being remote, and a long timeframe estimated for the reconstruction once the situation has stabilised, the nature, form, and approach of projects to be implemented in the future must operate on a higher level of coordination and cooperation, locally, regionally, and internationally, and with clearer strategic plans that take all of the above into account.

EVALUATION OF CONVENIO DESIGN AND FORMULATION AND MANAGEMENT

To evaluate how the Convenio was designed, formulated and managed, the evaluators relied on project documents as well as key informant interviews for clarification and verification of data and results. In addition to providing information about the process of design and formulation, key informants were also best positioned to fully represent the deliberations at the time and to gauge how relevant they were over the course of the project and after completion as well as provide essential feedback on the management and implementation of the Cooperation Agreement in each country.

The project was designed and formulated collectively with the participation of all the project partners, first at the macro-level and then, by respective project partners, at the local country-level.

DESIGN AND FORMULATION PROCESS

The evaluation of the design and formulation process is conducted with consideration for the final results of the project and builds on the comprehensive review conducted in the Mid-Term Evaluation, the results of which were verified and integrated into this evaluation.

The Convenio was designed and formulated through a participatory process that included a 3-day meeting in Lebanon between all the project partners to review the results of the first Convenio and to formulate the second Convenio, which had received preliminary approval. This meeting was followed by consultations between the project partners and the FPSC and the initial design was reformulated, based on requests for clarification of certain activities from AECID, and after a baseline study of the beneficiary stakeholders was conducted, also at the request of the AECID. The design and formulation were constructed in macro-terms with local elements and objectives left up to the local partners.

This approach was adopted based on recommendations from the Final Evaluation Report of the first Convenio and was largely successful, although individual concerns were expressed about the results of the approach and are noted in the *Formulation of Objectives* section, below. Each organisation then developed the design, formulation, and planning of the Convenio for their home countries, in dialogue and coordination with FPSC and AEC. However, there was a lack of consensus amongst project partners as to the efficacy of this process and it led one partner to feel that the process created some challenges in coordination and cooperation at the regional level resulting from the reduced regional alignment of objectives.

In general, local stakeholders (government, beneficiaries, etc.) were consulted, although to varying degrees, depending on the status of the partners (whether or not they were beneficiary organisations) as well as on the political circumstances of their country of operation. Egypt and Syria were stand-out examples of effective consultations with government stakeholders, in particular, which, most notably in the case of Egypt, contributed significantly to the sustainability of their project interventions.

Gender considerations were taken into account throughout the Project timeframe, including design and implementation phases (i.e. in the selection of locations for adaptations, as well as trainings of beneficiaries and trainers).

There were some concerns expressed by the partner organisations regarding the indicators being utilised to measure the success of achieving the stated goals of the Convenio. This was reported in the Convenio's Mid-Term Evaluation and verified through testimonials of some Key Informants. In general terms, the indicators for the achievements were not uniformly relevant in the four project countries, which led to some concerns

and disharmony amongst project partners, especially in terms of what they felt they were being held accountable for and its implications for coordination amongst project partners. These concerns were considered during the design of this evaluation and accommodated for in the final assessments.

Convenio Assumptions and Risks

The assumptions recorded in the Convenio's formulation documents were, generally, comprehensive and studied, although the risks and mitigating/management measures were not developed as extensively as they should have been and did not take into account obvious risks associated with the targeted countries (even prior to the current upheaval).

Most notable is the assumption that government authorities have granted "approval for the start of operations without delay and with full involvement in their implementation and monitoring." While the assumption was based on initial commitments from the government authorities consulted, there is also a clear risk associated with this assumption that should have been identified and recorded in the Convenio's formulation documents and mitigating measures planned and accounted for.

This risk was realised in Lebanon, for example, when AEC engaged the Lebanese Ministry of Education for a full year in order to adapt public schools, only to have to redirect their efforts to sites beyond the ministry's jurisdiction as a result of the Ministry's endless loop of bureaucracy and approvals required to commence the work.

It is important to note that the conclusion of this point is restricted to the formulation of the project as AEC's and the other partners' actions during project implementation demonstrated their ability to deal with this risk and the others that arose. Planning for the risks, however, may have resulted in less time being wasted dealing those risks and alternative solutions may have been chosen and implemented sooner than what occurred.

An additional risk that should have been planned for to ensure project sustainability relates to the high staff turnover amongst external stakeholders responsible for the adaptation sites. In Jordan for example, services offered through the VTCs were affected by staff turnover.

As for forecasting any risks resulting from local uprisings and wars in the region, this was unforeseeable and, despite the consequent challenges, there is clear and validated evidence that the partners also dealt with these risks in an effective and efficient manner.

CONVENIO COOPERATION, MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSES

The evaluation of the project management and implementation processes bears in mind that the project has faced difficulties resulting from the contextual events over its term, all of which were beyond the control of the implementing institutions. This has led to a number of challenges that partly explain some of the difficulties faced by the partners' network in terms of managing this Convenio.

Cooperation Model and Framework

The project partners' network was already a functioning regional network that had cooperated with each other on the first Convenio. The network engaged using a regional, theme-based North-South-South mode of cooperation that aimed to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and skills amongst South partners and between them and the North partners. The cooperation framework was used to define management duties according to regional and local roles and responsibilities.

There was collaboration between the project partners and clear demonstrations of participatory approaches to project design and formulation, which continued throughout the term of the project. The partners demonstrated a high degree of willingness to cooperate, which was essential for the success of the project.

The Framework’s final structure (see Figure 2) was operating according to set operational procedures that were already familiar to the partners, although changes to the roles and responsibilities, based on recommendations from the Final Evaluation of the first Convenio and the Mid-Term Evaluation of this Convenio, created some confusion in the management and administration of the project.

The recommendations called for FPSC to have more direct administrative and managerial contact with the local partners (for the stated purpose of raising the profile of the Spanish portions of the network), whereas previously they were all reporting to AEC, in its functional role as Lead South Partner; AEC would then synthesise the results and submit them to FPSC.

AEC continued in its designated role even after the FPSC new role came into effect, which resulted in some overlap (perceived and actual) in communications and reporting lines.

Based on the observable results of this process and feedback received from key informants, the reformulation of the framework had some ambiguity in terms of operational guidelines details and procedures. The mid-project role changes primarily affected administrative communications and, according to some key informants, added to the workload to try and compensate for the resulting confusion. It is important to note that the changes did result from a modification of AECID’s regulations between the first and second Convenios to demand a higher administrative workload for projects funded by them.

On another point, the partners’ capacities were clearly developed in network building, but were less developed in the area of using the network beyond the activities and administration of the Convenio, which may require further discussions and reformulation of the cooperation model to improve network utilisation.

However, and in spite of this main challenge, the North-South-South framework remains an essential and largely successful component of this and any future project, as was reaffirmed by project partners. The model facilitated a participatory approach that was boosted by advantages offered by common language, familiarity and experience in working with each other, and by results-based processes. By transferring and building on local capacities and knowledge, the Convenio’s design contributed to the institutional sustainability of the project and activities, all of which could be further enhanced by targeted changes to the processes and further development and documentation of cooperation and operational guidelines.

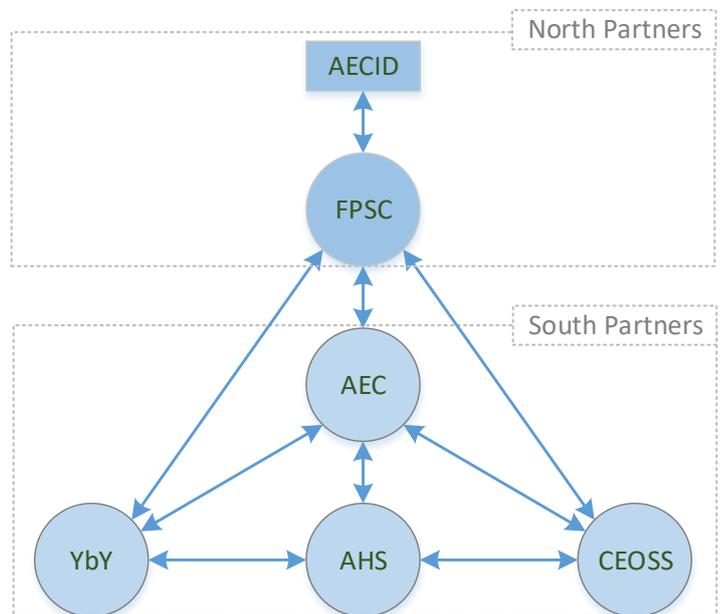


Figure 2 - North-South-South Partnership Model

Management and Implementation

On the overall project management and implementation processes, each of the organisations, including Yadan bi Yad, demonstrated strong operational capabilities. The partners, having already worked together for a while, were familiar with the management and administrative requirements, procedures, and formats of the FPSC and AECID.

Planning

The planning of the project was generally sufficient to achieve the desired results. The Convenio's initial macro-planning was conducted at an acceptable level of participation from all the project partners (in their dual roles as implementers and representatives of beneficiaries). This was essential since the project was to be implemented in multiple countries through the local partners who were responsible for the daily work.

The process of planning the country activities took some time after the project began due to the political and security situations of some of the countries, but this was taken into account and the work plan was reprogrammed to reflect this. Despite being approved by all partners at the beginning of the Convenio, one of the partners expressed concerns with the different focuses of each country's plans, with each country developing its planned activities based on established capacities, facilities, and services. This mainly affected Activity 2 – Vocational Training and Employment, with differing approaches resulting in different (and in some cases, unrelated) outcomes. It can also be argued, however, that this flexibility left enough room for each country to manoeuvre with enough freedom to design the activities according to the local requirements and circumstances.

Within the project, the key staff in each organisation were involved in planning on a regular basis, which gave them insight into the vision for the project and the rationale behind discussions. This was very significant in empowering them in their work, even in the absence of daily supervision from FPSC and AEC. This is an important strength that should be maintained for future projects and one that should be programmed into project planning activities.

The annual work plans were constructed around results and gave a sufficient overview of the work to be done. However, project staff reported that they were not able to utilise them as operational plans and that time had to be taken to periodically make detailed plans for their work. The countries' individual operational plans were not reviewed as part of this evaluation and were therefore excluded from this assessment. Future evaluations may want to request at least a sample of these plans with the project documents in order to evaluate their effectiveness and efficiency.

Supervision

The overall supervision of the project was adequate and supportive. Project managers were available for advice and support, when required, and to discuss plans, challenges, and coordination. Meetings were conducted every six months throughout the project, although this was deemed as too infrequent by some of the project partners, and led to perceived gaps in regional coordination.

For the most part, local supervision of the project was adequate and the partners demonstrated operational competence in their work and in achieving the relevant results. Follow-up, in some of the project countries, was an issue, examples of which are highlighted in the Evaluation by Activities section, below.

The challenges brought about by the change in the supervisory roles (discussed in previous section) were further exacerbated by relatively high rates of staff turnover in almost all the partner organisations, which in turn disrupted the continuity of supervision.

Financial Management

The financial management of the project, overall, was appropriate for the requirements of the project. The financial management system in place was adequate and the reporting met all the standards and requirements of the Convenio.

On the most general level, the Convenio can be viewed to have been composed 3 major direct cost categories, namely: (1) Staff; (2) Technical Services; and (3) Equipment, Material, and Supplies. These three categories represent 82% of the direct expenditures, with the bulk of the remainder going towards construction and rehabilitation of land and facilities, travel, accommodations, and per diems, while the rest were distributed between administrative expenditures (see Figure 5, below).

It was noted by the evaluators, and based on document reviews and data gathered from key informants, that all the necessary financial data and information were well documented, including amendments of the budgets, all of which were in line with AECID approved budgets.

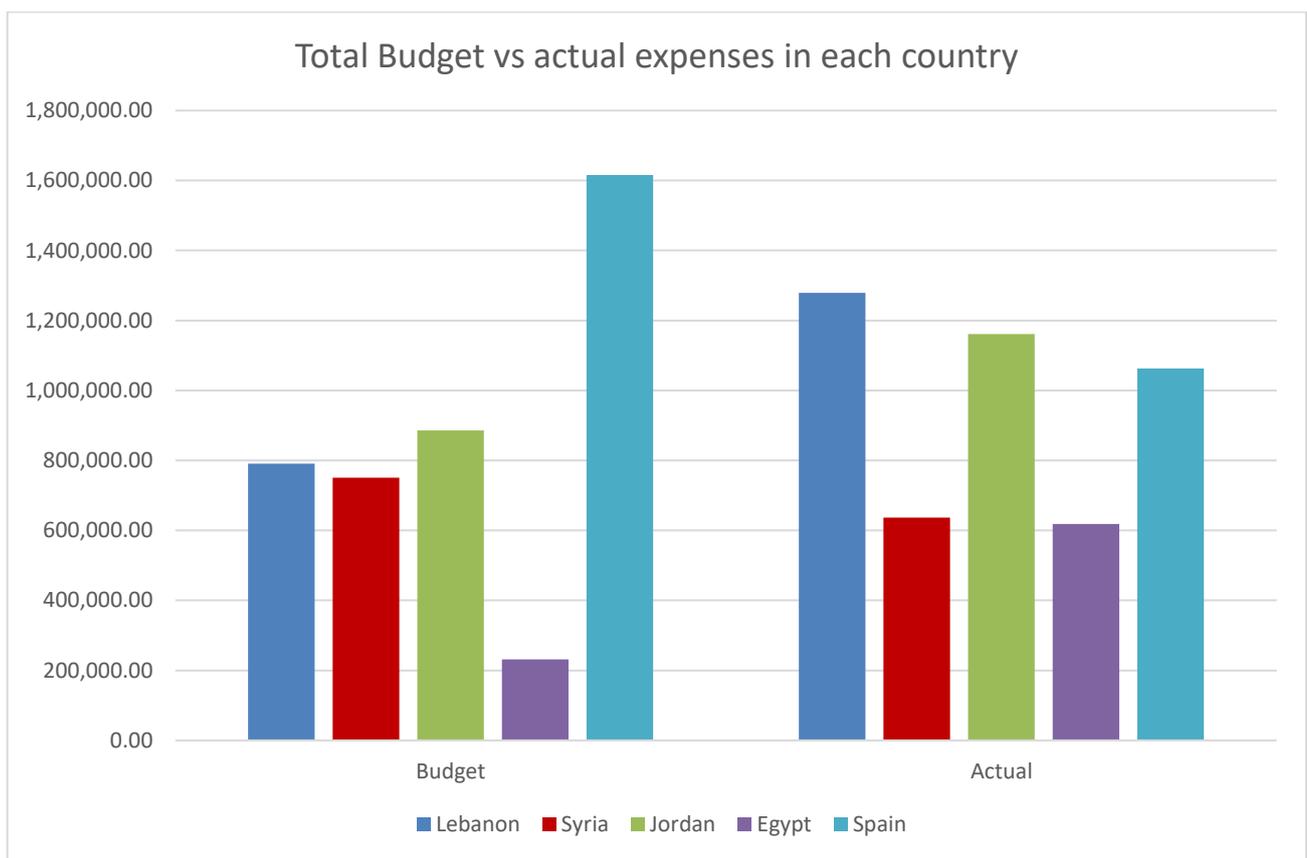


Figure 3 - Total budget vs actual expenses in each country

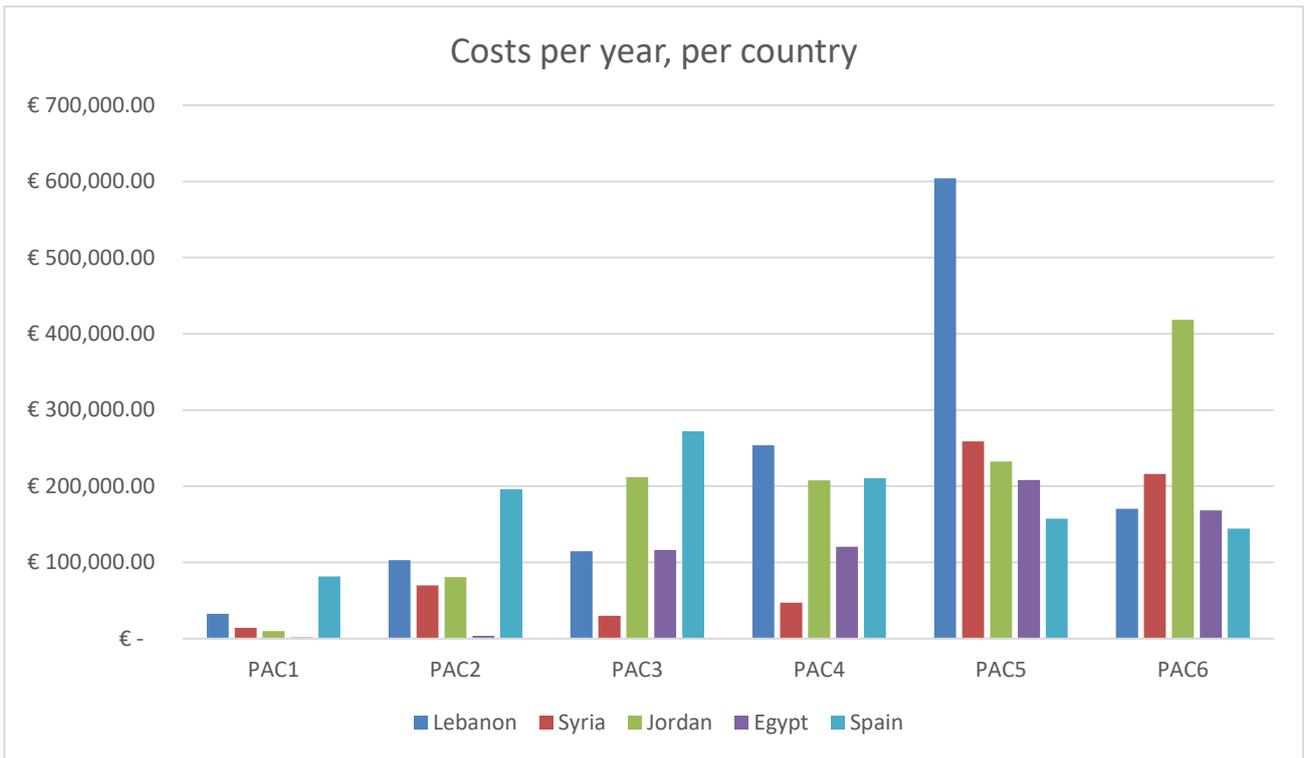


Figure 4 - Costs per year, per country

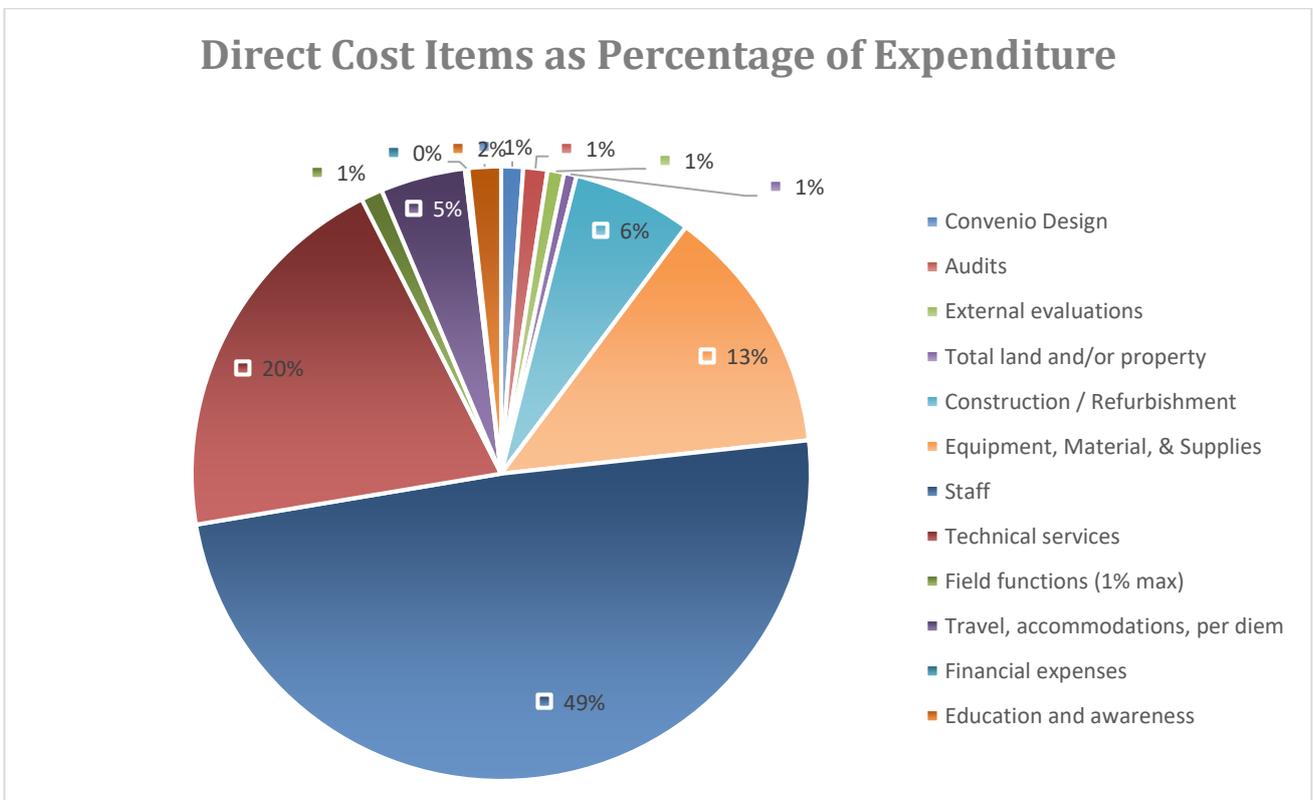


Figure 5 - Direct Cost Items as Percentage of Expenditure

Information Management and Reporting

The project collected their own data to monitor project processes and intermediate results. Project staff used information and reporting templates that met the required standards of FPSC and AECID, although the retention and storage of information and reports were clearly affected by factors such as staff turnover, mid-Convenio change in roles, and the need to report in multiple language (English and Spanish). The reporting language was an issue and led to delays in the reports of some of the partner countries, which was a problem that remained unresolved by the end of the Convenio.

The need for information management was considered during the design of the Convenio and an internet portal including a component to facilitate the regional sharing of information and data was included, although its functionality was not always adequate and, as of the publication of this report, the intranet component is offline and inaccessible.

Technical and Administrative Support

The project received good administrative support from the AEC and the FPSC, although this was disadvantaged by the change in staff and role at the FPSC during the project's term. The task was made easier with the familiarity of the organisations of reporting standards and requirements. Each organisation managed its own technical and administrative work well.

Technical support offered by AEC was notably significant for achieving the desired results, a point verified in all the interviews conducted with key informants.

ANALYSIS OF OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES, AND OUTCOMES

ACHIEVEMENTS AT OBJECTIVES LEVEL

The main strength of the objectives is their relevance to the situation of PWDs in the region and the challenges and obstacles they face. The evaluators focused the assessment of achievements on this relevance and to determine whether or not the achievements made at the level of objectives is significant and what it means for continuation of current operations and future interventions.

The first objective of adapting public spaces was implemented in all project countries, and was preceded by the establishment of adaptation services facilities, the knowledge, skill, and technology transfer, which was led by AEC in Lebanon. The objective was met and the activities were conducted efficiently and effectively, for the most part. The site adaptations could benefit from a more effective system of follow-up, which could build a greater sense of ownership in site managers and owners and generate new opportunities for expanding the work and coverage of the organisations.

As for the employment and vocational training component, the project does not formally define in detail the nature or type of employment or training offered, which, according to those interviewed, was intentional and agreed with the partners in order to give them the flexibility required to adapt the objectives to their country requirements. This did lead to the differential implementation and interpretation of this component, which had a direct effect on the effectiveness and impact of the component in the two countries assessed out of the three that undertook its implementation, points that will be further explored in the Analysis by Evaluation Criteria section, below.

The third objective of reinforcing national networks was implemented to differing degrees, or already established and either reinforced or activated. Lebanon had an already established network, which, according to the key informant interviews conducted with some of the network members, functioned effectively and coordinated at various levels, including at the policy level and information sharing. In Egypt, a network was established for the purposes of this project and, based on interviews conducted with members of this network, functioned effectively and regularly, with high-levels of coordination, particularly at the grass-roots level. All the partners mentioned the usefulness of the portal, although were only able to cite limited examples of use and usefulness and gave no indication of continued use either as a resource or as a coordination tool. Particularly in the case of Egypt, CEOSS demonstrated that the face-to-face interaction with network partners remains the most effective approach, at the national level. No examples of regional coordination, beyond the scope of this Convenio, were presented. It is recommended that a plan be developed for the coordination of and cooperation on further activities be conducted in order to facilitate the activation of this network and to realise the purpose behind the objective.

The achievements of the project objectives are presented in the following table:

Table 2 - Summary of achievements of project objectives

Objective	Indicators	Achievement evaluation summary
General Objective Ensure an accessible environment to disabled people to facilitate their social integration.	--	
Specific Objective 1 Adapting public places of life to make them accessible to disabled people (public companies, public administrations, and others).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) 100% of the partners have workshops of an average of 50sqm, adapted and equipped. (2) At least 10 adaptations in public and private spaces are done in each country. (3) At least 100 PWDs per year will be able to access each public / private place that has been adapted. 	<p>This objective has been achieved, although the third indicator depended largely upon feedback from public site key informants and could not be independently verified.</p> <p>In the case of the second indicator, the number of adaptations implemented in each country (with the exception of Syria, for the reasons stated above) were exceeded.</p>
Specific Objective 2 Development of programs to ensure a better integration of disabled people through access to vocational training and employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) An adapted process for each country for the integration of disabled people has been created by AEC and implemented by all the partners. (2) The potential employment structures have been made aware about the possibilities of recruiting PWD in each country and the importance of their integration into the labour market. 	<p>This objective was differentially implemented, depending on each country's (Jordan and Egypt, namely) particular focus.</p> <p>As per the indicators in the project's log frame, this objective was largely achieved in Egypt, as understood by the evaluators. In Jordan, this objectives achievements are much more limited, largely as a result of how this component was interpreted and implemented, which is further explored in the next section, <i>Achievements at Activities and Outcomes Levels</i>.</p>

<p>Specific Objective 3 Reinforce the national network in each country for a better referral system and the regional network for better coordination and sharing of experiences.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) At least 10 Local NGOs per country belong to the network and share a referral system. (2) 100% of beneficiaries that request services will benefit from portal. (3) 100% of beneficiaries and public and private institutions involved in Convenio actions will benefit from information and experience of different activities through the portal. (4) 100% of staff working in the Convenio will benefit from the implementation of activities in the other countries through sharing experiences through the intranet. 	<p>The success indicators of this objective were not met, as originally formulated. Based on interviews and review of portal statistics, the objective was at best partially met. This can largely be attributed to the design of this objective's activities as well as the lack of follow-through on the part of some of the local partners. However, local networks of NGOs were established and activated (Egypt is a stand-out example of this particular objective).</p> <p>Technical challenges (namely the accessibility requirement of the website) with the internet portal caused significant delays. While the website is established, the back-end portal, as of publication of this report, is offline and has been so for a number of months.</p>
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ACHIEVEMENTS AT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES LEVELS

Activity 1: Accessibility Adaptations

This activity and the outcomes were achieved by facilitating the necessary knowledge and technology transfer from AEC in Lebanon to the three target countries' partners, who would then be responsible for the executive of the adaptation works, with post-transfer technical support offered remotely by AEC.

Lebanon

In Lebanon, two tracks of this activity were implemented: (1) knowledge and technology transfer to Convenio partners; and (2) execution of adaptation of public spaces in Lebanon.

To achieve the first track, AEC developed four training modules for the theoretical and practical training of partner staff for the accessibility adaptation of public spaces. Trainings were then implemented for all project partners, including:

- 1) Accessibility norms and standards;
- 2) Design of adaptations using design and modelling software (Revit);
- 3) Technical training on adaptation of locations.

The trainings were developed and conducted by AEC staff, after being tested in AEC's workshop facilities first. It was unanimously confirmed by all recipients of the trainings in all four countries that the quality of the training was high and that they had gained both technical abilities and problem solving techniques that would enable them to provide high quality services and in making sites accessible. They also mentioned that the training of the second Convenio complemented the training of the first Convenio, enabling technicians to produce material for both mobility and accessibility.

The trainers from Lebanon all reported generally positive results consistently across the three recipient partners. They considered themselves capable of providing the trainings and felt that they were appropriately and adequately resourced to offer the trainings. The main benefit from them, apart from developing their own training skills and knowledge, was the opportunity to meet and share experiences with people across the region, united by the project and the cause.

The value of the trainings in providing the appropriate skills and tools was confirmed by one of the Revit training recipients in Jordan who explained that the trainers “gave [us] the tools to work with, rather than theories, books, and measurements... In the workshop they would teach us to study the reality [of the site] and to come up with the solutions in response to these realities. That was the best thing.”

The Project coordinator in Jordan also believed that one of the main advantages offered by trainings based on the Lebanese guidelines for adaptation was the relevancy and relatability of the training: “[The guidelines] better suited the environment and infrastructure and city designs that we have [in Jordan].

Recommendations offered by the recipients included a greater focus on the practical trainings as well as follow-up trainings to further develop their skills, particularly in reference to the Revit software trainings.

As for the adaptations executed by AEC in Lebanon, the technical execution of the projects demonstrated a high-level of skills and capabilities, although there were mixed results in terms of their usage rates. While some sites were actively being used by PWDs, some sites were under-utilised, a factor that is largely outside the control of AEC but could still benefit from a follow-up plan that involves plans for activating some of the sites for alternative uses. The sites selected for adaptation were chosen with the main intention of demonstrating adaptations and providing case studies with feasibility studies that can serve as an example to any institution that is considering adapting sites they are responsible for.

While the technical execution of the adaptations was to a very high level, including the maintenance of the equipment and facilities, AEC did face some challenges in securing public sites. This was largely due to the red tape of some of the Lebanese ministries approached, something that is beyond the immediate control of AEC. As mentioned earlier, upon reflection on the usage rates of some of the adaptations inspected, AEC had mixed results. One example is the Saida Vocational Centre, which had substantial adaptations executed on-site but did not have a single PWD student enrolled at the school and only one PWD employee who benefited from some of the adaptations implemented.

However, and in comparison, with the number of successful and utilised adaptations, this was not a major concern but serves as an opportunity to review the criteria for selection of sites and to develop further the follow-up activities that can be conducted with the site managers for activating, publicising, and utilising the adapted spaces in order to increase their profile and, by default, the profile of the issues of PWDs.

Jordan

The general feedback on the training provided to the project team was positive in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact. Nevertheless, several recommendations were proposed to the evaluating team to improve the training. For example, although the IT coordinator found the trainings useful, she suggested providing more advanced levels in order to learn more about the Revit program and make better use of it. She believed that this would have given her “new ideas or easier ways in design.”

Adaptation service centres were established in Zarqa and in Amman and both were active in adapting public sites in both regions. In total, seventeen adaptations were implemented, of which nine were visited by the evaluators. While, overall, the adaptations were implemented to an acceptable level, there were issues that resulted from the early inexperience of the adaptation technicians, who also displayed the necessary acumen to resolve these issues as they arose and learn from them.

A standout and successful example of an adaptation conducted in the Al Khadija bint Khuwaylid School where it was reported by the principal that the value of the adaptations was recognized because they facilitated access for 2 disabled students who were present at the school during period. She said that the girls used wheelchairs, so the ramps and bathrooms were very useful for them. The interviewee reported that the adaptations had positive outcomes on the daily lives of the students. She gave the example of the disabled students being able to access the bathroom on their own. This, however, was not possible before the adaptations were made where, it was claimed, that school's administration would have to get in touch with the students' parents to help them access the bathroom facilities.

While the usage rates by students was not significant, and the school does not currently have disabled students, several groups that benefited from the adaptations were mentioned during discussions with the principal. She claimed that the school was a popular candidate for activities such as elections and Tawjihi exams (the final year national exams for graduation). This was also highlighted during an interview with AHS's key informant. She said that by setting up the adaptations in schools, "you are thus providing the opportunity for people with disabilities to vote." The project partner continued, "not just for them, you are [also] providing an opportunity for all the elderly to vote."

One of the main issues that came up from the evaluation had to do with maintenance of adaptations following their handover and the project's completion. This was a problem that came up during most of the site visits, particularly as several of the adaptations had taken place up to 3 years prior to the evaluation. It should be noted that maintenance is not the responsibility of the implementing partner, but still reflects the challenges faced by AHS in Jordan, specifically in terms of generating a strong sense of ownership of the adaptations by the institutions and managers of the adapted sites affecting the sustainability and continuity of the initiative.

In order to address this challenge, the project partner key informant recommended that maintenance be carried out more frequently and regularly. She said, "if you have many people using [the adaptations] ... There has to be maintenance on a monthly basis. Not every 4 years."

Egypt

CEOSS received the trainings offered by AEC and established a service unit for the execution of adaptation projects in Egypt.

The trainings received were considered successful and relevant, a fact confirmed by one of the technicians that attended the trainings who said, "The training we have received over the past six years has allowed us to be experts in our field. The trainers from Lebanon had a lot of technical knowledge and experience, which benefited us beyond the material available in the manuals. Because the time for training was short, we tried to use our time together as much as possible to get as much information as we could. The training was excellent because it had both a theoretical and a practical aspect: we could apply everything we learned. The best training was the one done on-site in Egypt, because we could problem solve and build directly and then

see the final product in use. We still have a friendly and working relationship with the trainers and can ask them for advice whenever we need it.”

Facilities for a service unit were rented and equipped in 2013. In order to choose the locations of the adaptations, CEOSS held extensive meetings and consultations with ministries, governmental agencies and local nongovernmental organizations. This had the added effect of clarifying objectives and raising awareness among the stakeholders regarding the need to ensure that public spaces were accessible. Ministries consulted included the Ministries of Health and Population, Youth and Sports, Education, Social Solidarity, Culture, Local Development and Commerce and Industry. Over 90 locations were reviewed, and based on the consultations, feasibility and in accordance with the criteria set by the Convenio, 21 locations were chosen to implement the adaptations. All sites have clear signage of the funders (AECID), and the lead partners (FPSC and AEC). CEOSS views each adaptation implementation as a partnership between the relevant government body responsible for the site, a local nongovernmental organization and CEOSS, and this partnership was established through a protocol signed by all three parties, which clarified roles and assigned responsibilities.

According to the project manager, “At the beginning there was some resistance among those in the public sector. We had to have several conversations, pointing out the problems and providing them with solutions. We didn’t want to work on our own, we wanted to build partnerships. The protocols we all signed were actually a translation of these meetings and working sessions, clarifying everyone’s role and distributing responsibilities. Through this process we were able to establish partnerships with a large number of public institutions. In addition, through the process of convincing them, we were able to transfer a significant amount of knowledge to them.”

Three of the adaptation sites were visited during the evaluation fieldwork, all of which were guided visits. Adaptations were still in good condition, and being used regularly by beneficiaries according to managers and employees at the sites.

The largest accessibility adaptation was implemented in the Al Khalifa Public Hospital Clinics, which included major renovations and where it attempted to provide an exemplary model of accessibility for several different forms of disability, including visual and hearing impairment. The local governing administration provided support with the construction labour for the adaptation of the street entrance and some of the interior. CEOSS applied a comprehensive approach to ensuring that Clinics were accessible and that PWDs were able to benefit from the services provided.

“This has increased Al Khalifa’s service provision to PWDs. For example, they have improved their physiotherapy services because they are getting more patients. We have also trained nurses in sign language so that they can communicate with the hearing impaired,” said one CEOSS staff member.

According to the director of Al Khalifa Hospital, “This has reflected well on us and has improved our services to persons with disabilities. They feel they are cared for and that we are responding to their needs. The adaptations have also been helpful for the elderly and made the clinics more accessible for them.”

At Al Khalifa clinics, the elevator and disabled bathrooms were still in excellent conditions, and both had monitors (i.e. a bathroom monitor and an elevator monitor) to deter misuse.

According to CEOSS staff, the element that ensured that all the adaptation remained in good condition and used appropriately was the partnership with the local NGOs that were regularly monitoring their use.

Syria

Given the inability of evaluators to visit the project area in Aleppo, the evaluation team depended on the testimonials of YBY staff and validated them through interviews with the AEC coordinator. The YBY managers interviewed confirmed the usefulness of the trainings received and expressed enthusiasm for re-engaging in future adaptation activities, once the situation has settled in Syria (particularly Aleppo). They also expressed how essential this service will be once stability has returned to Syria, given the increase in PWDs as a result of the conflict.

Activity 2: Vocational Training and Employment

This activity was conducted in Syria, Egypt, and Jordan, although Syria is largely excluded due to lack of accessible data. AEC in Lebanon already have an active employment service, but it did not receive any funds from this Convenio and was therefore also excluded.

Different approaches were used by CEOSS and AHS, which may be a reflection of their different understandings of the component, which could be a result of the planning challenges mentioned in the Planning section above, or possibly a result of the differences in beneficiary priorities and organisational capacities in each country. Both approaches are described in this section and their overall assessment according to the criteria is contained in the *Analysis by Evaluation Criteria* section, below.

Egypt

Based on a review of labour market needs, vocational training in a variety of skills, in trades such as sewing, electronic maintenance, computer skills, printing, carpentry, hairdressing and handicrafts, such as leather work, was provided to 420 PWDs, almost 50 percent of which were females. These were provided through the local nongovernmental organizations partnering with CEOSS or through apprenticeships with local businesses. Training was also provided to families of PWDs, especially when the disabilities were particularly severe. This was justified as relating directly to the livelihood of the PWDs and only amounted to 5 percent of the overall beneficiaries.

Upon completion of the training programmes, beneficiaries were provided with income generation support, mainly through linking them with other donors (for vocational kits), microcredit lenders, employers or marketing venues. As an example, CEOSS negotiated contracts at handicraft fairs for PWDs producing products in their home. Through this intervention, and as reported by CEOSS, a large number of beneficiaries were able to find means towards self-employment.

According to a member of CEOSS staff, "Self-employment was a good option for those who had limited mobility and were unable to access transportation to go work at a factory on a daily basis, for example. However, marketing was one of the major problems for those who were trained and opted for self-employment. For those trained in handicrafts, we secured an annual contract with one organizations that exhibits handicrafts, and they have been selling the products produced by the beneficiaries."

Another beneficiary who is a mother of a child with severe disability mentioned that her handicraft work had netted her much needed income. "I work [on the leather purses] late at night and very early in the morning. I really enjoy this work and try to be as creative as I can. I wish that there would be further training so I can learn to make different types of products."

For the employment component, CEOSS outfitted a mobile unit providing employment support and guidance in order to increase access to PWDs in remote areas. “This was especially important for those who did not know where or how to look for employment. The mobile unit was accessible and was able to reach them in the neighbourhoods where they lived,” said a member of the CEOSS staff.

With the cooperation of the Ministry of Labour, 41 employment campaigns were held and 791 PWD filled out applications for employment and/or vocational training. A database of over 500 companies were compiled and meetings were held with 187 employers. The Egyptian law governing the rights of persons with disabilities (Law no. 39 of 1975) stipulates a PWD employment quota of a minimum of 5 percent in organizations with over 50 employees, and is enforced by a fine. In practice, employers often circumvent this law by employing PWDs “on paper” only, paying them a fraction of a wage and asking them to stay at home. The CEOSS team worked extensively with employers to ensure that they find the right position for PWD applicants and that they are given productive employment beneficial to both employer and employee.

“We met with employers to see what their needs were and to see what the applicants can do. We also had to work with the beneficiary PWDs who had capabilities, but didn’t know how to turn these capacities into employment. One successful example was with a particularly noisy factory- suffering from a high turnover rate because of the noisiness. A large number of the applicants who were hearing impaired were able to find and maintain employment at that factory,” reported a member of the CEOSS staff.

As a result of their negotiations with line ministries, and mainly the Ministry of Youth and Sports, CEOSS participated in three government organized job fairs in 2014, two of which were specifically targeting PWD’s. The largest job fair was held in December 2014, with 100 private companies participating, attended by 4000 PWDS.

Over 450 PWDs were able to secure interviews with prospective employers, and 442 found employment in companies, shops and factories, where most secured on the job training. One of the main obstacles to employment was mobility. Public transportation is not accessible and most of the factories are located at the outskirts of Cairo.

“We were able to employ several people through this programme- we found them through the job fairs. I always need people to work, but I need them to work up to a very high standard. Some of them worked out- other didn’t. Unfortunately, some of the other workers in the factory didn’t make it easy for the workers with disability, especially those with mental disability. We want to implement the 5 percent [minimum employment] law, and we want to implement it properly. As employers, we want to be able to put people’s ability to good use and we also want them to become productive members of the society,” said one employer, who is co-owner of a tubing factory.

Jordan

AHS focused on the vocational training aspect of this component without the employment activity output requirements or objectives, as per the design of the Convenio, and implemented it in partnership with the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC), a Government of Jordan corporation.

AHS understood and approached the vocational training component with the intention of establishing two training facilities: (1) in the VTC centre for females, which constituted an assistive technology-enabled classroom within VTC facilities and focused on IT skills, primarily, and production of handicrafts; and (2) in the VTC centre for males, which was equipped to double as a maintenance and service workshop for mobility aids

and a training centre for PWDs on the maintenance of mobility equipment. The facilities would then be handed over to the VTCs for their on-going use and management.

This was achieved by refurbishing existing VTC centres and facilities in the Zarqa area to make them accessible for PWDs and to develop the appropriate training curriculums and tools that took into account disabilities of the beneficiaries. As an example, one of the AHS staff explained, "Some of [the beneficiaries] had physical disabilities, and some had mental disabilities. For those with mental disabilities, we used to work on the software to make it more simple and easy for them to use the computer. As for those with physical disabilities, we had assistive technology, like the track ball... That could make it easier for them to use the computer."

At first, training of trainers was implemented by AHS trainers for VTC staff in the centres on how to train PWDs, including typical challenges, which, according to the male VTC Centre staff interviewed, were not very relevant either due to the lack of PWDs attending the VTC in question or from the female VTC Centre staff who felt that they already had the necessary experience in offering vocational trainings for PWDs.

The key informant and coordinator at AHS both emphasized that one of the main problems encountered at the male VTC was that only 2 persons were trained. Initially, AHS had recommended training up to 10 individuals to ensure sustainability of activities. However, this idea was rejected, and instead only 2 VTC employees were nominated for training. This was highlighted when one coordinator explained, "We asked the Directorate to train 10 [trainers] for the sustainability, but they said they could only provide two persons. The following year we asked them to provide more people to get the training, but they didn't want to."

In general, Convenio team members believed that achievements at the female VTC were greater than those of the male centre. This was mainly because activities at the female VTC were more easily incorporated into the Centre's curriculum, as they involved IT training, which was already provided to beneficiaries at the Centre. Meanwhile, a new training curriculum had to be developed and deployed at the male VTC for the maintenance and service of mobility equipment, which caused major challenges in incorporating it into the Centre's existing activities and caused delays in activating the workshop. This challenge primarily resulted from bureaucratic requirements of the relevant ministry to certify and adopt the nominated curriculum.

When discussing this with the key informant at AHS, the evaluating team was informed that the Vocational Training Corporation had requested AHS develop a curriculum for the workshop, which required undergoing several procedures and approvals. This was an unanticipated delay that could have been mitigated with better planning, as mentioned during an interview with the key informant at AHS. She believed that, "the curriculum should have been designed earlier, before the training... Arcenciel... should have done the curriculum for VTCs from the start... We could have put the curriculum together with them at the beginning, then we start with the training."

On the back of these trainings, a total of four vocational training workshops for PWDs were carried out during the period of 2012-2014. Two of the training courses were on computer skills and the other 2 were about the accessories industry (design and production). During the latter training, participants were able to produce accessories and sell them at an event that was attended by Prince Ra'ad Bin Zaid. Following on from those trainings, the VTC managers reported that they were planning on conducting at least one training session for disabled persons each year.

Recruitment of PWDs to the programme was a challenge that was met by some of the VTC's, but not all. According to the AHS coordinator, the female VTC "created a fund for recruitment. They used to give disabled

participants 50 Dinars.” For the male VTC, one of the trainers interviewed believed that there was inadequate follow up with AHS after the training was completed. The trainer explained that he did not know how to proceed with the work and complained about the handover process of the workshop, saying that AHS simply informed them that “the training is theirs now, and that they are responsible for the workshop.” While AHS did, indeed, make clear how to proceed with the work, the evaluators understood this statement as an indicator to measure how successful the knowledge transfer was, in light of the results.

As a result, the workshop has been closed since it was set up and no activities were carried out. During discussions with the VTC management team, they informed the evaluating team that the delay in activating the workshop was a result of problems between AHS and the Vocational Training Corporation in officially recognising the curriculum developed for the purpose.

Meanwhile, discussions with the VTC management team indicated that the purpose of the workshop was not clear to them. The VTC trainer believed that the purpose of the Workshop was to repair equipment and not for training purposes. He explained that while other workshops at the VTC have clear systems to follow, the Workshop set up through the Project did not. The trainer said that issues such as how to price services and what to do with the money generated from the workshop were not clear to them.

These issues and concerns are considered indicators to the VTC’s level of institutional buy-in and are not reflective of the level of AHS’s efforts to transmit the purpose of the workshop prior to implementation and throughout. Moreover, the key informant at AHS emphasized that the purpose of the workshop was clearly delivered to the VTC trainers and management team. She said, ‘We explained to them. We want productivity and training.’ The key informant believed that the VTC trainer was aware of the function of the workshop, and only claimed otherwise because “they did not want to take responsibility or make any [additional] effort.” However, the lack of institutional buy-in and the turnover of VTC management and staff resulted in all the efforts of AHS to transmit the purpose being lost over time.

This component, specifically, could have benefited greatly from stakeholder management and risk mitigation planning to have developed alternative mechanisms, approaches, and networks to ensure the continual buy-in from local stakeholders.

Both the VTC trainer and manager expressed scepticism on the need for the services of the workshop established through the Project, although the evaluators found clear evidence for the need. The evidence was further reinforced by data provided by the AHS project coordinator, who explained when discussing the purpose of the workshop in Zarqa, “All the cases that were in Zarqa and in nearby towns came to AHS to maintain and fix their wheelchairs. But why would they come all the way to here? We created a workshop there, so that instead of them coming all the way here, they would go to that workshop over there. We gave them all the raw material for free.... We gave them everything related to maintenance for free, in order for them to provide maintenance for free.”

The conclusion reached by the evaluators is that while efforts were exerted by AHS towards ensuring institutional buy-in, the results were not as expected or desired. While AHS’s efforts, including establishing a steering committee at the Zarqa Governorate level to coordinate the training component and to integrate it within their systems, in addition to approaching the Ministry of Labour to escalate the issue of vocational training for PWDs, extended beyond the project period and worked to ensure the proper governmental umbrella to form a positive environment that would give the project its best chance to succeed and be sustainable, it is clear that there were shortcomings in reciprocal commitment and effort from the

governmental stakeholders. AHS has stated that they have approached the Ministry of Labour, though no progress was reported on these discussions

Based on the evaluation of the results almost one year after the completion of the Convenio, the evaluators concluded that these efforts did not produce the desired result, in terms of institutional commitment, and it is recommended that future identification and selection of governmental partners be reviewed to specifically measure and monitor their sustainability and continuity capacities. It is further recommended to examine other local organisations to partner with that have established networks, coverage, and influence needed to ensure the project's success and continuity, particularly in the situation where the local governmental partner has stalled in their commitment to the initiative. Finally, a review of the local Convenio partner's capacities to manage governmental stakeholders could identify gaps that could be developed for any future projects.

Activity 3: Internet Portal and Partners' Network

As of publication of this report, the website (<http://www.accessibilityforpwd.org/>) is active, although the intranet portal, which is meant to facilitate the sharing of technical documents and information, is offline as the license for the proprietary software has not been renewed. During the course of this evaluation, the website received accessibility certification, with the following exceptions:

- Certain form fields are not correctly labelled and do not have a correct tab order that marks the sequence of content. This could result in a poor user experience for some screen reader users, so these problems need to be fixed as soon as possible for the form elements to be completely accessible.
- There are decorative images inserted within anchor tags that are not coded appropriately, causing certain screen readers to read the source value for the image. This is not a blocking barrier since functional content can be navigated using a screen reader, but needs to be fixed for a better compatibility with standards.
- The external widgets for social networks such as Facebook, Twitter or Google+ are not accessible. The website should incorporate a proprietary widget for each of the social networks in use that is accessible to all users.

The website faced a series of challenges that delayed its implementation. The first technical group that was contracted to design and implement this component failed in meeting the requirements of the project and had to be replaced. The second attempt at launching the site was more successful, although they were met with technical difficulties of the chosen platform (Blogger) and its compatibility with the accessibility requirements. Operating the website also had challenges related to uploading and displaying news and updates while still maintaining the accessibility of the content. This led to significant delays in updating the site, thereby significantly reducing its relevance and effectiveness.

Even with the accessibility certification issued, the website has not been updated since May 8, 2015 and, based on interviews with the person responsible for its maintenance, there are no plans for updating it.

As for the usefulness of the website in coordinating with the NGO network, all the external partners interviewed found the website to be a useful resource for gathering information about what work was being conducted by the Convenio partners, although this is significantly restricted by the lack of up to date information currently being displayed on the site. No other uses were mentioned during these interviews.

The sustainability factor of the portal is considered to be low to non-existent given the technical difficulties faced in generating the income needed to fund its continued operation and maintenance. The sustainability

plan revolved around selling targeted advertising space to companies and public institutions relevant to PWDs and, on that basis, generate the needed income. In addition, it is possible that the number of visitors to the site is not large enough to attract advertisers.

As for the activation and mobilisation of the regional partners' network and the local NGO networks, this was found to be lacking beyond the immediate scope of the Convenio. Whereas AEC was already part of a well-established and active local network, CEOSS established one for the purpose of this Convenio and, based on feedback from key informants from amongst the members of this network, continued to be active and played an important role in the coordination of local initiatives and activities. As for the regional network, it was reported by some key informants that its purpose did not extend beyond the activities of this Convenio, but they saw the benefit for the coordination and cooperation purposes that originally drove its establishment.

Lebanon

AEC led the development and management of the portal and website component, equipping and employing the necessary technical personnel required to implement. The operation of the portal was managed by an in-house team that had the specific duties and responsibilities of populating the website with news stories and updates gathered from all the project partners and based on the technical requirements of the website and the disabled accessibility certificate.

Most of the technical challenges and issues were tackled by the AEC team formed for the purpose and, given the design and planning shortcomings of this component, did the best they could in the circumstances. The team was assessed to have the necessary technical skills required to offer the trainings required by the Convenio partners and to maintain the website.

The on-going role, beyond the technical operation of the website, remains one of the responsibilities of AEC including the editorial content of the site, written and submitted by each country partner. According to the key informant responsible for managing the content of the site, they had to remind the Convenio partners to send updates and external news and to update the information on the site, when relevant.

As for the local network, AEC was already part of an established network that regularly coordinated and shared information on various activities, initiatives, and events, which continued (and continues) to function effectively. This was verified by key informants from local organisations (such as the Lebanese Physically Handicapped Union and INCLUDE) who described their relationship with AEC as functional and important for the work of their organisation.

Jordan

While the general impression received from project team members on the website was positive, the majority of project team members interviewed believed that the expectations of the intranet were not met.

According to a key informant at AHS, expectations of the internet portal were "not realistic." The informant explained that when the previous evaluators came to assess the Project during the mid-term evaluation, she advised them "to go back to the design, and check the expectations, timeframe, and what networking we are supposed to do if each one is working on a different thing. On what basis should we present ideas if they are not implementable? The objectives have to be SMART."

When discussing the internet portal with AHS team members, they claimed that Project's website was valuable because it raised awareness on the Project's activities and the topic of disability. However, team members believed that the outreach did not extend beyond those interested in the topic of disability, nor did it reach a level of interest that would attract NGOs to approach AHS. It was recommended that the website be developed in both Arabic and English, in order to attract and benefit more local beneficiaries. According to one team member, "We asked to have [the website] in Arabic, especially for people in Egypt and other countries that complaint that they are not strong in English. They wanted Arabic, especially in recruitment. So of course the majority of people in our society want to have Arabic. So we want them to have the website in Arabic and English."

Hence, the added benefit of having a bilingual website for the Project extended the project's value to more beneficiaries and not just project partners. In terms of sustainability of the website, the Project coordinator did not see any issue with this, and saying that 'it doesn't cost us anything.'

As for the Intranet, the views of different relevant parties interviewed – be they local implementing partners or key informants – were in agreement that this component of the project had flaws. Both partners and donors reported that the intranet was not activated. During a focus group with AHS's Project team, one person said that 'it is working, but people don't communicate on it.' The project coordinator believed that the Intranet was not used to share experiences, lessons learned and activities of Project partners because of the following reasons, "There is no Internet in Syria. And Egypt was working on another topic. We are the only ones that worked on environmental adaptations and alterations. We were connected with Lebanon as they worked on the same topic. In Egypt, they were working on recruitment." The coordinator went on to say "I never accessed the portal to see what Egypt office has uploaded. That's because I don't care much about recruitment and employment that they focused on."

The conclusion here is that the coordinator believed that Project partners did not share experiences and lessons learned because they did not work on common topics, although this was not verified by the data collected by the evaluators on the activities conducted in the other countries. The evaluators considered that this conclusion serves as an indicator to the level of information shared.

Egypt

CEOSS purchased the equipment required and two employees were trained on the use and update of information for the internet portal and the website in 4 training sessions. In order to update information, CEOSS would send the information to staff at AEC. According to the CEOSS project manager and designated person responsible for this component, "We did not always update things in the intranet. We would usually wait for a few events to happen before we would send several items for update at once. I did not always have time to update, and had another staff member help me."

Unlike the other components of the Convenio, there was a general vagueness regarding the ultimate utility of the platform, and to their roles in maintaining it. According to the project manager, "It would have worked better had each country had a clear designated role to play and this role was clarified. In terms of the website, there should also be well-populated national pages, so that there are regular visitors to the site that have information relevant to them. If each partners manages their country's site and we could learn how to make it accessible."

The organizations partnering with CEOSS in the programme in Egypt, 8 in all, benefit from the internet portal. They were trained in its use, and use it mainly for information purpose, to see what others are doing. However, it was unclear how much this information was beneficial to the beneficiaries, and there was limited input from the stakeholders as to what information to add to the portal.

In addition, 15 local community representatives were provided with training sessions in 2014 on the website and on how to use social networking sites. As an addition to this activity, CEOSS established 4 computer centres with their local partner NGOs, in order to make computers more accessible to PWDs. Beneficiaries were also trained in computer use, and basic Internet skills.

Activity 4: Spanish Awareness Components

This component was evaluated from the perspective of the Convenio partners in the region and the testimonials of the FPSC project staff. According to FPSC key informants, “awareness in Spain, and Madrid in particular, was raised through presentations of the work being conducted in the region. As a result of our activities in the region, FPSC has been elected as the Spanish representative to the European network on awareness raising on issues related to PWDs.” The key informants went on to report that the events organised around this component targeted people from “Madrid, [including] NGOs, CSOs, and public administration and the international community... We were able to reach all these people and as a result they know who we are and who our partners are.” This has resulted in a long-term strategy for the FPSC and its partners, although the impact of it has been limited. In addition, it also resulted in increasing the awareness and interest of the Spanish public in what is occurring in the region, particularly in terms of the refugee crisis.

According to the local partners, the visits to Spain were all positive experiences that helped in broadening their understanding of PWD issues and increased their exposure about what can be done to tackle these issues. It was also reported by one key informant that this component was an important accountability mechanism because it demonstrated to the Spanish public where some of their aid funds were being spent.

Activity 5: Emergency Relief for Syrian Refugees

This humanitarian assistance component was added to the Convenio as an amendment to the original proposal and plan. This was done in response to the influx of refugees resulting from the Syrian crisis and was financed by allocating the funding intended for the Syrian components of the original proposal, largely due to the inability of YBY to continue on the original plan as a result of the deteriorating situation in Aleppo.

The humanitarian assistance comprised of mobility aids and therapeutic services for PWDs from the Syrian refugee population in Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan. The importance of this component cannot be understated, particularly in terms of the opportunities it opened up for the partner organisations as well as the targeted assistance offered to PWDs in the relevant countries.

Lebanon

This component was the first activity in Lebanon that specifically served the needs of PWDs and preceded a number of other initiatives that were established by other organisations.

AEC selected the beneficiaries of this component from the general population of Syrian refugees who, as a result of Lebanese restrictions on refugee camps, were settled in urban and peri-urban areas where AEC had centres and operations. AEC community workers actively identified and assessed the potential beneficiaries

and already existing resources of the organisation. This component was made easier by the already established AEC facilities and centres, which had a direct effect on the efficiency and effectiveness of this component.

A total of 515 technical aids were distributed to 458 beneficiaries along with 690 physical therapy sessions offered to 69 beneficiaries. This humanitarian assistance has continued through the support of funds from another Spanish NGO, acquired after the finalisation of this Convenio.

Jordan

The relief component of the Convenio was described as ‘an add-on following the Syrian Crisis in 2011.’ This was highlighted during an interview with the key informant at AHS who said ‘When the crisis [began], they [FPSC] reallocated the funds to us to direct to providing aid in the camps.’ Although unplanned, the interviewee reported that “the value added was great, [as] it made us enter the [Syrian refugee] market.” It allowed the Project partner to gain more credibility in Jordan and positioned them and to receive funding for additional projects. Working on the humanitarian relief component opened the doors for AHS to work with other organizations involved in the humanitarian sector in Jordan. This was an unanticipated added value in the opinion of the interviewee.

A total of 58 children were offered services through the component, and 110 aid equipment distributed as well as 600 therapeutic services offered. The coordinator at AHS reported that they focused on children because UNHCR identified a gap in the provision of services to this group. When asked about the way in which activities were carried out, the interviewee said, “We were tied by the budget allocated. We don’t care about the numbers as long as the budget covers this number, be it big or small.”

During discussions with the coordinator at AHS, he mentioned that the team would regularly go to Zaatari camp and evaluate the status of camp residents, “Especially children with disabilities, regardless of their disability, and think about their needs in terms of movement aids... We would return after a week to distribute the aids and equipment. We wouldn’t only give them a wheelchair. But we would have to adapt the wheelchair to meet their needs.”

The evaluation that AHS carried out in Zaatari camp was through a case list provided to them by the UNHCR’s Protection Cluster in the camp, through FPSC. The job of AHS was to “give consultation on what each case needs.” The focus was on children because, as the coordinator mentioned, “All the adults were already being treated; we thought children needed the services more than anyone else.” This conclusion was reached through discussions and coordination with the UNHCR and all other active organisations in Zaatari, namely Handicap International, IMC, Noor Hussein Society, etc.

Syria

YBY worked in Aleppo and focused on the schools and other facilities that were housing internally displaced people and selected the appropriate beneficiaries from those targeted populations. As a result of the activities of the first Convenio, YBY was positioned and had the technical capabilities to provide emergency relief assistance in the form of technical aids.

A total of 2,643 technical aids were distributed to 1,929 beneficiaries along with 15,492 therapeutic sessions were offered to 2,552 beneficiaries. According to the key informants in YBY, this had a significant impact on the beneficiaries they were able to reach and formed an important service offered by the organisation. The key informants were quick to stress that this activity should be funded some more and expanded to reach additional beneficiaries, given the clearly established need.

ANALYSIS BY EVALUATION CRITERIA

RELEVANCE

The project's initial assessment of the baseline situation of PWDs in the target countries was mainly informed by a baseline study published in May 2011 and on country reports written by FPSC with regards to PWDs and the accessibility and employment issues they face. The assessment concluded that:

- (a) Persons with disabilities face major barriers to their integration in society resulting from discrimination in a variety of forms, including physical barriers to access to buildings and transport, lack of access to health services, education, and employment, and social stigma;
- (b) Policies and programs to promote an inclusive environment for persons with disabilities are limited in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt;
- (c) The integration and inclusion of persons with disabilities into the labour market are important ways to ensure the participation of disabled persons in productive work and to reduce costs supported by families;
- (d) The majority of questioned PWDs highlighted negative attitudes and barriers towards them, including cultural factors in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt, which constitutes a major factor of exclusion.
- (e) It was necessary to urge the governments to accept the necessity to address the existing issues, which excluded an unignorable number of people with disabilities from equal participation in the political and social life of their countries.

Building on previous efforts for creating the capacity to build and provide mobility aids to PWDs in the target countries, and in order to contribute constructively to improved conditions for PWDs, this Convenio focused on (1) creating the capacities and implementing adaptations for improving the environmental accessibility of public spaces for PWDs, (2) providing vocational training, and (3) reinforcing the national network, both nationally and regionally, for improved coordination and sharing of experience. Accordingly, the evaluators verify that the project design is relevant and the activities address the baseline findings and recommendations and involved a variety of stakeholders.

As the context analysis in this report illustrated, and verified in the Final Survey results, the Convenio's activities are overwhelmingly relevant to the needs of PWDs and fit within their priorities. This is almost inevitable, as the challenges faced by PWDs are as broad as they are deep, while the Convenio's design and formulation process obliged the partners to reflect the proposed projects against agreed regional strategies and align them with national needs and priorities.

Individual project relevance was tracked and found to be applicable for each country. More importantly, the strategic relevance of the Convenio, which is articulated at the aggregated regional level, directly addresses the fundamental challenges facing PWDs and the organisations that service or represent them. This was also confirmed through discussions with various stakeholders. According to one official from Egypt's Ministry of Youth and Sports, "it is important that persons with disability in Egypt are able to claim their rights as well as their responsibilities as members of society. Ensuring that places they need to go to area accessible, and that there are real work opportunities for them in society are important steps towards this. Unfortunately, there is still some resistance among the Egyptian people as to the importance of this, but when people see these [activities] and see that they are working and changing people's lives, this mentality is changing."

Discussions with key informants in the partner organisations suggest that the main value added by the project was the capacities and facilities built, which provided them with the direct means to adapt public sites for the

sake of providing accessibility to PWDs and promoting the issue as a basic right (currently, and largely, denied or overlooked). This was confirmed with the various stakeholders interviewed in the countries that the evaluators were able to visit.

In assessing the consistency of programme activities and outputs with the overall goal and the attainment of the objectives, the evaluators found that the activities and outputs did contribute to ensuring an accessible environment for disabled people to facilitate their social integration.

The service units established and equipped are confirmed as essential components required in each country for the provision of adaptation services as they formed a dependable and credible service that can provide affordable and local solutions for the adaptation of public sites, which held true for all the regional partners. This necessary development continues to be relevant, as is confirmed in the final survey of this Convenio where PWD respondents to the survey verified that lack of physical accessibility (and overall access) to services remained a major priority.

The relevancy of vocational training and employment programmes was difficult to aggregate due to the different interpretations of this activity in Jordan (which was not expected to implement the employment component) and Egypt. While the component was deemed to be relevant in all the target countries, the different interpretations resulted in two different approaches. Upon reflecting on the Convenio's objectives and the results of the two versions of the activity, the evaluators consider CEOSS's approach to be a successful model for any vocational training and employment initiatives in the future. It is a good example of participatory activity design and implementation and the approach used can be developed into a framework that is ready for transfer and adaptation in any of the other project countries.

The internet portal and partner's network component had mixed results when assessing its relevancy in relation to its specific objective and beneficiaries needs. The stated objective of reinforcing the national network in each country for a better referral system and the regional network for better coordination and sharing of experiences is considered relevant, at least in terms of the beneficiaries needs, who are in this case considered to be the partner organisations, however the activities that were formulated measured low in terms of their appropriateness. The technical difficulties and challenges faced in designing and operating the portal and the lack of clarity around its purpose were key issues mentioned during interviews with project partners.

Overall, the Convenio is confirmed as relevant to the objectives, context, and needs of the beneficiaries and is further verified by reflecting on the findings and recommendations of the final survey conducted at the conclusion of the project. The activities, across all the project countries, were considered appropriate, with the exception of the vocational training activities in Jordan, particularly when reflecting on the feedback of those responsible for implementing the subjects and the achievements of the component.

EFFECTIVENESS

The Convenio's project approach has been built on clear set of principles that contributed to the effectiveness of implementation, as observed by the evaluators, including:

- Participation of PWDs and PWD representative organisations in all the different project elements, which ensured the reflection and integration of PWD needs into the design, planning, and implementation of this Convenio.

- Collaboration with multiple actors to ensure linkages with strategic actors who are active in the area of PWD rights, policies, and initiatives for improving their situations.
- Sustainability by developing the capacities of local partners to be able to offer the technical expertise to be able to offer solutions for some of the immediate and daily concerns of PWDs and to increase the profile of their issues both at a local/national level as well as regionally.
- South-South exchange of knowledge, skills, and experience with the direct support of an effective North partner that created or reinforced new connections and bonds that contribute to the effectiveness of this Convenio and any future endeavours.

Overall, the project activities have been implemented (with the exception of Syria), albeit with different interpretations in some cases, as has been mentioned before regarding the vocational training and employment component. The adaptation service centres were all established, equipped, and the necessary capacities were built, all of which helped to achieve (and exceed, in some cases) the targeted number of adaptations. The vocational training and employment activities, which were only relevant for Egypt and Jordan, were interpreted and implemented differently in each country and the conclusion reached by the evaluators is that, in terms of effectiveness, the component in Egypt was considered to be more effective in achieving the desired outcomes. The third outcome of establishing an internet portal to share information and facilitate communication about the actions of the Convenio, national laws and regulations, procedures and experiences of the local partners was only partially achieved, as a result of the technical challenges faced during the implementation of the related activities.

In conclusion, and as far as achieving the expected results, there is considerable evidence that an effective approach has been largely established, with the exceptions mentioned previously. While the most progress has been made in achieving the first outcome (accessibility adaptations), it is recommended that the vocational training and employment component implemented by CEOSS be reviewed and analysed in closer detail with the purpose of replicating, at least, their advocacy, networking, and partnership efforts. The third outcome was the weakest performing, due largely to the technical difficulties and the lack of clarity amongst the project partners. The fourth outcome, related to the humanitarian assistance, was concluded to be consistently effective in its approach in all the relevant countries.

The factors assisting or limiting the effective progress of the Convenio are presented in the table below.

Table 3 - Summary of progress and limitation factors

Project Results	Evidence of Progress and Limitations
<p>OBJECTIVE 1: Adapting public places of life to make them accessible to disabled people (companies, public administration and others).</p> <p>R1.1: 3 service units have been created and equipped to study and perform at least 11 adjustments in public spaces, to improve access for the disabled (ramps, handrails for stairs and hallways, wheelchair lifts for access to buildings or public transport, elevators, emergency lighting systems for the deaf, emergency voice</p>	<p>PROGRESS – The methodology developed by the project is now well established and has been rolled out in all the countries. The facilities were established and equipped, the necessary capacities built, and the management systems effectively transferred and received. It has led to the organisations’ positioning as credible service providers and partners not just for adaptation services, but also as service providers and advocates for PWDs.</p> <p>LIMITATIONS – Based on the factors within the control of the project partners, there is evidence of some limitations in some of the project countries related to the discussions and partnerships with the relevant</p>

<p>systems for the blind, disabled toilet adaptations) in Syria, Jordan and Egypt.</p>	<p>government institutions. The work was, in some cases, delayed as a result of bureaucratic red tape or neglected, explained by the evaluators as being due to low feelings of ownership by the government partners and their de-prioritising PWD rights.</p>
<p>R1.2: Reinforce the skills and capacities of the local staff on adaptations of public spaces in Syria, Jordan and Egypt.</p>	<p>PROGRESS – There is clear evidence that this result was effectively achieved at all levels and continues to be effective, helped largely by the accessibility of AEC and the channels of communication opened between them and the other project partners.</p> <p>LIMITATIONS – There was no evidence of any limitations regarding this component, a point verified by all the project partners.</p>
<p>OBJECTIVE 2: Development of programs that ensure a better integration of disabled people through access to vocational training and employment.</p>	
<p>R2.1: Ensure better integration opportunities and economic independence for PWD.</p>	<p>PROGRESS – In terms of achieving this result, the CEOSS approach was assessed to be the most effective. This result was achieved there through an active process of establishing an effective outreach programme with PWDs and by establishing and mobilising a strategic network of local partners. Furthermore, the responsiveness of the developed programme led the activities in Egypt to be designed according to market requirements, which also gave the training programmes there an advantage that directly led to the achievement of this result. Finally, CEOSS’s active presence throughout the implementation of this objective’s activities also contributed positively to its achievement.</p> <p>LIMITATIONS – The incongruity of the interpretation of this component led to a number of limitations for achieving this result, overall. The different priorities of some of the local partners resulted in reduced sense of ownership on the part of some of the local partners, which directly affected the possible achievements.</p>
<p>OBJECTIVE 3: Reinforce the national network in each country for a better referral system and the regional network for better coordination and sharing of experience.</p>	
<p>R3.1: An internet portal has been created to share information and facilitate communication about the actions of the Convenio, national laws and regulations, procedures and experiences of the local partners during the implementation of the Convenio.</p>	<p>PROGRESS – The portal was created and information shared amongst project partners, including establishing a platform to share information regarding national laws and regulations as well as the experiences and activities of local partners. The methodology that was used was effective, when assessed against the technical difficulties that were experienced. The team established and the trainings offered were effective for the limited results of this component.</p> <p>LIMITATIONS – Technical difficulties related to the selection of the websites software platform and its compatibility with the accessibility certification requirements resulted in delays and challenges. This meant that the update of the portal was very slow and resulted in a site that was more static than it should have been. In addition, the purpose of the portal was not clear to all project partners, which led to some challenges in generating local information and news consistently and in a timely manner.</p>
<p>R3.2: Ensure a joint and continuous management of the information platform within the 4 countries.</p>	<p>LIMITATIONS – Technical difficulties related to the selection of the websites software platform and its compatibility with the accessibility certification requirements resulted in delays and challenges. This meant that the update of the portal was very slow and resulted in a site that was more static than it should have been. In addition, the purpose of the portal was not clear to all project partners, which led to some challenges in generating local information and news consistently and in a timely manner.</p>

EFFICIENCY

The efficiency of this Convenio was affected by the political and security circumstances in the project countries, which was considered when evaluating the Convenio as per this criterion. It should be noted that the Convenio team at all levels demonstrated high levels of competency and judgement in dealing with the resulting delays and managed to conduct this project in challenging circumstances.

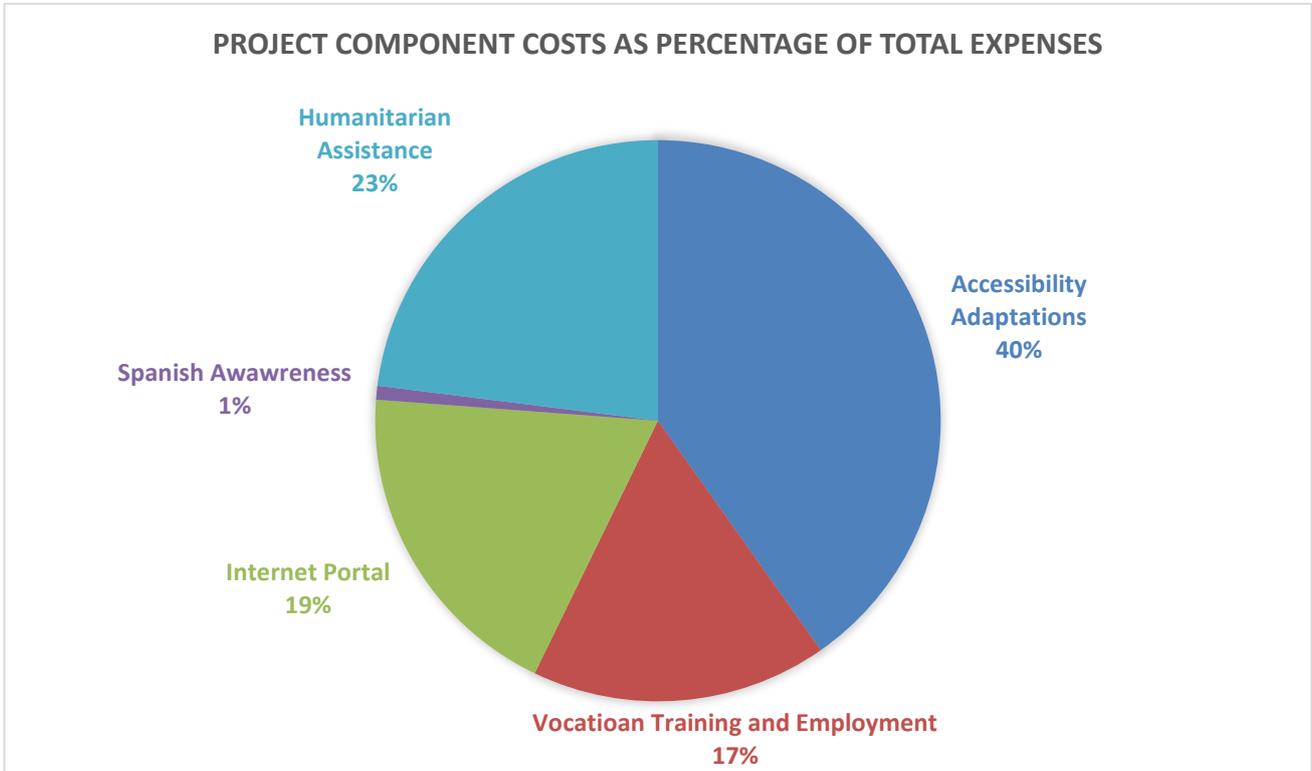


Figure 6 - Project Component Costs as Percentage of Total Expenses

The distribution of resources between the different components, as illustrated in the chart above, was assessed to be appropriate based on the different Convenio’s requirements, a point highlighted during interviews with all the project partners in the four countries as well as the AECID in Jordan. In addition, the local partners were able to mobilise additional resources from different stakeholders, including governments, donors, and local organisations, to ensure the success of the projects, as confirmed through interviews with the key informants. According to the project manager at CEOSS in Egypt, “We were able to complete 21 adaptations, almost all of which were under budget, so we were able to do more. The only one which cost the whole specified amount (20,000 Euros) for each adaptation was the Al Khalifa Hospital. Even there, it actually costs almost double that amount, but we were able to convince the local government to invest in labour to clear the outside street to make it more accessible, because through our discussions they were convinced and became another partner for us. They not only allow us to work, but they give us resources as well. I explained that I couldn’t spend the money on fixing the street- there were trees blocking the road. They gave use labourers and trucks to carry out the debris. We were able to provide 420 beneficiaries with vocational training, many of whom were able to start their own income generating projects because we were able to mobilize donations from several individual donors to provide sewing machines and other vocational kits for the beneficiaries of the vocational training. The government also provided up with a lot of support, organizing and funding the job fairs.”

On closer examination of the allocation of resources for the different aspects of the Convenio (including organisational support, awareness raising, capacity building, etc.), the evaluators concluded that they were appropriate to achieve, and in some cases exceed, the desired results, with the exception of the Internet Portal component. The exception was made upon reflecting on the effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of the outputs (website and portal), as well as the usage rates of the site, all of which never reached the intended levels. This was the only exception, however, with the accessibility adaptations results in all the countries considered to be commensurate to the budget allocation and money and effort spent on realising them, a point reinforced by project partners. When discussing the achieved results of the Project, the AHS Project Coordinator said, ‘We were requested to adapt 14 centres. But we actually adapted 19 centres. We were requested to establish 2 workshops, and we did. We were requested to provide training for 20 people in VTC. We trained 28 people. So we exceeded the target.’

The flexibility and adaptability of the Convenio during the timeframe of the intervention also contributed significantly to its efficiency. This was reinforced in discussions with AECID Jordan, where the interviewee gave the example of funds being relocated to the Zaatari refugee camp for Syrians and considered it a strength in the Convenio because it allowed changes in budgeting to be made in order to adapt “according to the reality and needs [of beneficiaries].”

In terms of the efficiency of the North-South-South cooperation, key informants from the partner organisations expressed on several occasions that the cooperation was well managed and that they had learned a great deal from the lead south organization AEC.

“I consider it to be one of the main achievements of this Convenio- our strong relationship with AEC. This programme was one of a kind, and in our field, it is the only one that offered this level of regional cooperation. For us to consider this programme successful in the long run, our cooperation with AEC and the other partners should continue. It would be a great loss otherwise,” said the CEOSS programme manager.

The importance of the exchanges of experiences and coordination between the partner countries was also reinforced by a Convenio team member in Jordan who said, “It was good to find out the obstacles that they face in Egypt. They used to say how the official procedures take time. We discussed with them the effect of changes in governments and rulers. So we benefited from each other in this, and supported each other.”

Due to the mid-Convenio shift in the procedures of monitoring and reporting, there was some confusion regarding which organization to refer to, especially because of the multi-tiered decision-making. However, this issue was ironed out during the Convenio’s implementation, and direct contact with FPSC facilitated the cooperation, as confirmed by one of the programme managers, who said, “FPSC was much more present after the second year, and problems would get resolved quickly when we had direct discussions with them. It was quite helpful to exchange experiences with organizations that are similar to us, but I think it would have also been important if the Spanish provided us with their extensive experience as well.”

The anticipated coverage of the interventions in relation to the planned beneficiaries was met. Targeted beneficiaries were served through the various interventions of the Convenio, including adaptations, trainings, awareness raising activities, and the humanitarian assistance services.

SUSTAINABILITY

The sustainability evaluation focused on two aspects of this criterion:

- Institutional sustainability, the capacity of partners, and the extent to which there is ownership of the approach, and
- Financial sustainability, or the likelihood of the partner organisations being able to continue to financially sustain the outputs of the Convenio.

While considerable progress was made during this Convenio, the sustainability of the achievements is mixed, with the accessibility adaptation component considered the most sustainable, the internet portal the least sustainable, and the vocational training and employment component falling in between the two.

Accessibility Adaptations component

Apart from the fact that AEC has demonstrated the sustainability of adaptation workshops and activities – technically, institutionally, and financially – the knowledge and skills transfer that was conducted was of high technical quality and the continued accessibility of the trainers, as well as the exchange of information and skills between the technical teams, generated a strong sense of ownership over the initiative amongst the Convenio partners and gave it an added advantage in ensuring its continuity and sustainability.

Furthermore, the advantage offered by advocating and actively and continuously engaging strategic partners, with the aim of establishing disability access to public spaces as a priority, was clearly demonstrated. This active engagement can be directly linked to the results achieved in increasing the demand from both the public and private sector for the adaptation services in particular.

For example, this component contributed significantly to positioning the AHS in Jordan as a credible and essential organisation providing these services and more for the benefit of PWDs. This enabled AHS to increase its profile and establish greater partnerships, all of which positively reinforce this component within the organisation and increases its sense of ownership over it. However, AHS struggled to engender this sense of ownership in the local stakeholders, despite their efforts to coordinate and involve the stakeholders in the design, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the implemented adaptations. This was evident in the lack of awareness in some of the stakeholders interviewed as well as the issue of maintenance, post-handover. The issue of maintenance is considered an indicator that highlights that expecting local stakeholders to assume the responsibility of the adaptations is not viable. It is clear that a different approach or more advocacy and awareness raising efforts may be required in Jordan, in particular, in order to address this concern and to improve the chances for sustaining this service in the long-term. It is important to note that this is not universally applicable to all the adaptations in Jordan, and that there are successful examples of adaptations in sites that have become increasingly accessible and multi-use, as a result of the adaptations.

In Egypt, during the period of the Convenio, and reportedly because of it, CEOSS established *Erada*, a programme dedicated to disability interventions and specializing in accessibility adaptations and employment. They have also purchased a three-storey factory, a considerable investment, for adaptations and mobility aids.

“Adaptations and employment has become our area of expertise. We have become established in this field and are receiving requests from the private sector to implement adaptations, we have already implemented adaptations in seven sites. The market is viable, because we don’t have much competition. This has great potential as a source of income to ensure this programme’s sustainability. We want to diversify our income

sources- we also want to try to work with the government to access funds in order to work with public housing,” according to the programme coordinator.

The stakeholders’ involvement and ownership at the governmental level, the private sector and the local community level, has encouraged demand for the adaptations. In addition, the local nongovernmental organizations partnering with CEOSS regularly inspect the completed accessibility adaptations and make sure that they are still in good condition and are being used properly.

While this was not the case in all the countries, where this approach did succeed, particularly in Lebanon and Egypt, the resulting commitment of the stakeholders managing public sites was tangible

Vocational Training and Employment

As was extensively discussed earlier, this component was approached in two different ways in the two countries where it was implemented. This resulted in different results for Jordan and Egypt. In terms of potential for sustainability, the approach utilised in Egypt was considered to be the more viable of the two, at the level of the organisation and due largely to the advocacy and awareness raising conducted by CEOSS that resulted in a strategic network of CSOs, local and national government institutions (Ministry of Industry), and the private sector.

This approach clearly demonstrated that for the sustainability and continuity of this activity, functioning as a facilitator of a committed network assisted in increasing the sense of ownership in external stakeholders, engaging the network by using a participatory approach that was reinforced through awareness raising workshops and constant advocacy, and empowered the beneficiaries by actively responding to their needs and serving as a positive influence in their efforts.

On the matter of the importance of awareness in ensuring sustainability, the AECID key informant interviewed clearly stated, “When we make good awareness campaigns, [the Project] remains with the people. So it becomes sustainable by itself.”

The institutional structures, resources, and capacities required to sustain this component have been established and integrated into CEOSS’s operations, which is a clear indicator that CEOSS has owned the initiative and has assumed full responsibility of it.

In the case of Jordan, this component was not understood as part of the project expectations and, therefore, its sustainability is unlikely for the reasons described in the previous section, *Achievements at Activities and Outcome Levels*. Furthermore, progress was further challenged because of the complex bureaucratic procedures of the VTC, which AHS was required to follow.

Internet Portal

The least sustainable element of the Convenio would appear to be the internet portal component. Based on a feasibility study undertaken by AEC regarding the portal, a sustainability plan was developed for the portal that identified, amongst other things, the average number of unique visitors to the site required to be able to sell advertising space on the site in order to generate the income required to fund its on-going operation and maintenance. Apart from the fact that this number was never met or sustained, the technical challenges associated with getting and maintaining the accessibility certification resulted in a relatively static and limited site that was not utilised by beneficiaries to any significant degree. This was a point verified by key informants in all the project countries.

In addition, there is no plan for maintaining and operating the site, post-Convenio, although the intention is there to do so, according to the programme manager in Lebanon.

According to one of the programme managers, “The website was a good idea, it can help maintain and highlight this partnership and it is important that people see what it going on at a regional level. But I think we fell short in thinking about its post-Convenio plan. We were trying to think of a way to monetize it and add advertisement to ensure its sustainability. But in Egypt, the language was an issue. Most people don’t understand English and it is difficult to monetize the site if it is in English. When part of the site was translated, it changed things and got more visitors. This was an important issue if we are thinking about the end users.”

As a core recommendation regarding this component in particular, it is recommended that the local project partners collectively review the portal, clarify and unify its purpose and aims, and then develop a plan for its on-going operation and, eventually, sustainability.

IMPACT (SUMMARY)

The first and the second Convenio provided an opportunity for a long-term regional collaboration and sustained North-South-South partnership spanning, in all, over 8 years. This partnership had impact to varying degrees at several different levels: the partner’s organizations, the PWD beneficiaries, and the stakeholders which included private, governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

The most notable impact was a result of the built capacities of the partners to become major actors in accessibility in their respective countries, especially for AHS in Jordan, CEOSS in Egypt and, to a significant degree, Yadan Bi Yad in Syria.

Both AHS and CEOSS modified their programmes to become main services providers for accessibility adaptations in Jordan and Egypt, respectively. In addition, it can be argued that Yadan Bi Yad grew as an organization because of the Convenio and was therefore well placed to provide emergency relief services during the Syrian Crisis.

In the case of AHS, the key informant highlighted that the work carried out in Zaatari camp strengthened the organization’s credibility within the humanitarian sector and allowed it to create greater partnerships. At another level, the credibility and professional capacities of AHS team members was also strengthened, and they became perceived as experts in their respective fields.

The Convenio’s timing also ensured that FPSC was well positioned to respond to the Syrian Crisis as it had partnerships and presence in Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan. FPSC launched its humanitarian assistance department from the staff originally working on the Convenio. According to the FPSC project coordinator, “Humanitarian assistance has become one of our major programmes. We established it through funds from the Convenio and now we are the only Spanish NGO with presence in the Zaatari Refugee Camp in Jordan.”

As was the case with AEC in Lebanon prior to the Convenio, some of the other partner organizations became major players in setting policy in their countries. In Egypt, CEOSS and its PWD beneficiaries, were able to participate in the development of the articles on the rights of the disabled in the new Constitution of 2014. According to one beneficiary in Egypt, “participation in the development of the Constitution for me was very important. It helped us to understand our rights and learn how to ask for them. It made us feel like we are active participants in our society.” In Syria, YBY’s standing and credibility earned it a place advising the Syrian government on its policies.

CEOSS was also active in the elaboration of the Ministry of Social Solidarity's 2030 Strategy for Persons with Disability. The activities of the second (employment) component, encouraged the convening of a national employment fair for PWDS under the auspices of the Prime Minister in 2014 and also encouraged the establishment of a PWD employment office at the Ministry of Youth and Sports. During the focus group discussions held with both government officials and representatives of the private sector in Egypt, the perceptions were aligned regarding the need to adopt a rights-based approach to PWDs, with a recognition that much work still needs to be done to "change people's mentalities and understand of the possibilities" (Ministry of Youth focus group participant). The role that CEOSS was able to play in this regard was a result of the extensive consultation and advocacy meetings they had to convene in order to implement the activities of the Convenio. These meetings were conducted with employers to fulfil the requirements of the second component (employment) and with government officials in order to guarantee approvals for adaptations on public sites (first component). Thus in Egypt, the requirement that the accessibility adaptations be implemented in public places had the unintended impact of positioning public organizations as partners in the process. This increased awareness among several ministries, who of their own accord, now plan for projects targeting PWD's within their budgets. In sites where adaptations took place, such as the Al Khalifa Hospital Clinics, services for PWDs have increased, which has had a positive impact on both the hospital and its clients.

It should be noted that this impact was only evident to the evaluators in Egypt. There was no evidence of value change and stakeholder buy-in in Jordan. In Lebanon, consultations with government agencies did not produce the same results, especially with the Ministry of Education, and difficult negotiations limited the number and diversity of adaptations performed, although AEC also had an already established and working relationship with the Ministry of Social Affairs which continues to operate.

In places where adaptations were not being used or no longer functional, this may have a negative impact on the perception of such projects by the general public as well as by the public organizations hosting the adaptation. The non-functional adaptations may be a result of lack of need, and therefore effectiveness, of the adaptation itself, or lack of a sense of ownership by the institution receiving the adaptation that would have ensured maintenance and proper use. In order to avoid what amounts to wastage and its resultant negative perception of the value of accessibility adaptations, mechanisms to ensure follow-up and maintenance need to be applied.

Impact as to changes in their lives and in how they perceive themselves was reported by direct beneficiaries of training and employment. This included the technicians trained by AEC and employed for adaptations as well as the beneficiaries trained and/or employed under the second component.

"Over the past six years, the training allowed us to be experts in this field. This is what we are proud of. Sometimes when people see me working on adaptations, they react like I am being forced to work, like I am someone that should be taken care of. But they see how well I do, and how much knowledge I have and how I am the one coming up with solutions, they change this perception. When we work (on adaptations) outdoors, and not in factories, this helps change people's perceptions." (CEOSS technician and PWD)

Several beneficiaries of vocational training reported a perception of increased social respect from their families and friends due to their new capabilities. Those that found employment through the project also reported changes in aspirations: "From the job I got at the garment factory, some of my salary I give to my mother, but I am also saving to get married." (PWD beneficiary, Egypt)

Several examples were given to highlight the impact of the project on beneficiaries during discussions with

AHS project team members. For example, the occupational therapist mentioned that at the level of Zarqa Governorate, the Project changed the perspectives of the local committee, “They started to think about solutions for problems if they occur. That’s good. It means we have raised the awareness of society.”

According to the coordinator, the Project made it easier for beneficiaries to preserve their dignity. Similarly, the occupational therapist gave the example of the elderly visiting clinics with adaptations. Before, she claimed, “They would have to wait in the car until someone comes to see them in the car. But now they are able to get in and receive treatment and get checked by doctors like everyone else. So after they were able to achieve this, they are now aspiring to ask for more. Now they are more confident to ask for their rights. In the past, no disabled person would ask for their rights.”

Increasing accessibility for the disabled was perceived as one of the biggest achievements of the Project. The therapist added that accessibility allowed disabled people to ask and aspire for more things. She said that their needs would change and gave the example of schools saying, “Now that disabled children are able to access schools, their aspirations became to excel in their academic studies.”

In terms of visibility, greater efforts could have been made to increase positive visibility of the Project through more effective dissemination measures, coordination with regional partners, and the Spanish awareness component. Some of the measures include, as was suggested by one of the partners, direct and greater advocacy and training for members of the media, more advocacy and awareness building activities with beneficiaries and stakeholders, and more engagements to highlight the services and outputs of the organisations, locally (i.e. using public spaces adapted for accessibility for events or purposes other than their core, to draw attention to the issue faced by PWDs and to highlight the services and products of the organisation).

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Design, Management, and Cooperation

- Overall, the cooperation, management, and implementation processes met the requirements of the Convenio and partners.
- Staff turn-over presented some challenges that could be better mitigated through a more documented planning process in order to facilitate the continuity of supervision and management.
- The North-South-South model contributed significantly to the institutional sustainability of the project and provided the project with numerous advantages in the implementation and management of the project, although it requires the further development of clearer operational guidelines.
- The shift in roles within the cooperation framework led to challenges in the continuity of management and supervision and to some confusion in decision-making.

Recommendations:

- Balance higher visibility for FPSC and AECID and have the lead South partner maintain their primary role of field administration and management without compromising on the quality and efficiency of the management and administrative processes.
- Clearer definition of roles, operational guidelines, and more frequent regional communications.
- Meetings for the purpose of aligning national plans with the regional programme would benefit the regional partners in reducing the sense of each country implementing its activities independently of the others and create opportunities for the utilisation and mobilisation of this network beyond this project.
- The project's information management should maintain a complete collection of relevant project documents and reports to assist in the continuity of the administrative support and management and to assist in the monitoring and evaluation of the project and, where possible and practical, in English (which is the most accessible project reporting language, with the other options being Arabic and Spanish).

Activity 1 – Accessibility adaptations:

While the overall implementation of this activity was carried out to high levels of excellence, some lessons learned include:

- The importance of active and constant engagement with local stakeholders has been demonstrated to engender stronger senses of ownership and commitment to the principle of disability access and the adaptations, once they have been completed.

Recommendations:

- Develop brief planning manual for adaptation of public sites for use by decision-makers responsible for the public sites that need to be adapted, outlining possibilities, processes, standards and guidelines information, and key decision points.
- Optimise the utilisation of model adaptation sites through programmed follow-up system that identifies for and encourages use of the sites.
- Develop and operate a systematic follow-up of all adaptation sites.

- Proper reporting systems may have reduced problems related to turnover of trained staff.
- Maintenance costs should have also been taken into account following completion of the project and means developed for them to be covered.

Activity 2 – Vocational training and employment:

Given the two different approaches used by the individual project partners in Egypt and Jordan, it is difficult to draw a comparison between the individual achievements of the two, however, the aggregated assessment of this activity, contained in the *Evaluation by Criteria* section below, provides an overall evaluation of the appropriateness of the activities.

After reflecting on the two approaches, the following lessons learned can be identified:

- Improved levels of cooperation on country-level planning is essential in aligning project partners' understanding of certain objectives and the design of activities in achieving the desired outcomes.
- Awareness raising activities on topics related to the employment of PWDs, including rights, type of employment, labour market requirements, and soft skills, are effective in changing the mind-frames of PWD beneficiaries and helped them in informing their decisions.
- Partnering with local and grassroots NGOS as well as linking beneficiaries with other funds and donors is essential in broadening the coverage of the vocational and employment component and generating strong senses of ownership and responsibilities.
- Cooperation and coordination with the relevant ministries, where permitted by local circumstances, has a positive impact on the impact of activities and in generating a greater sense of ownership from local and national authorities.

Recommendations:

- Evaluate the capacity of the partner organisations in establishing and maintaining an effective and impactful vocational training and employment service for PWDs and include capacity and systems building for the partner organisations as part of any future initiative.
- Emphasise the importance of strategic stakeholder partnerships as a necessary part any future initiatives approach.
- Establish strategic partnerships with other organisations active in the field who have successful cases of partnerships with governmental stakeholders.

Activity 3 – Internet Portal and Website:

- The utility factor of the website is potentially higher than it currently is, with the shortfalls resulting, in part, from lack of clarity amongst project partners as to the purpose and aims of the portal, which also resulted in decreased senses of ownership over the initiative amongst the partners.
- With the fast advances in information technologies, the potential for websites and portal platforms to become obsolete or dysfunctional is high and could be mitigated by more expert design and planning.

Recommendations:

- Re-examine the sustainability requirements of the website and portal and gauge what is required to build the membership numbers of users and develop a plan accordingly.

- Train project partners on the requirements of the website's accessibility certification.
- Decentralise the maintenance of the website, granting each country its own page and control of the information that gets uploaded, based on predetermined criteria and standards.
- Expand the links to the website on partner and NGO network websites.
- Activate the employment listings for PWDs in each country on the individual country pages of each site.

Humanitarian assistance activity

Recommendations:

- Reinforce the assistance being offered to the refugee communities currently in the partner countries.
- Broaden the coverage and reach of the organisations in order to facilitate the provision of disability aids and services to more PWDs, wherever they may reside. In Jordan's case specifically, this requires expanding the coverage to Syrian refugees outside of Zaatari refugee camp, especially since the majority reside in the various urban populations concentrated in the north of Jordan, but extending to many areas throughout the country.
- Expand the network of partner organisations as part of the expansion of reach and coverage.

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ANNEX 1: EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

TERMS OF REFERENCE
FINAL EVALUATION OF THE CONVENIO
IMPROVEMENT OF THE SOCIAL INTEGRATION
OF DISABLED PERSONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST
THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY
LEBANON, SYRIA, JORDAN AND EGYPT
4 YEARS
(10-C01-091)

1. INTRODUCTION

The **Object of Evaluation** is the Agreement “*Improvement of the Social Integration of Disabled Persons in the Middle East through accessibility. Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt*” (10-C01-091), conducted by the Foundation for the Social Promotion of Culture (FPSC) with funding from the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID).

The **basic reasons** for this final evaluation are:

- To comply with the rules contained in Law 38/2003 of November 17, General Law on Grants, and RD 887/2006 of 21 July, as well as Order AEC/1303/2005 of 27 April, which state that Intermediate and Final evaluations are mandatory for Development Agreements, funded by AECID.
- To open up learning processes which might bring about useful conclusions to improve the methodology of the intervention.
- To improve the management of future interventions through a systematic and deep analysis of the design, management, objectives and results (expected and achieved) oriented to the maximum the impact of the intervention.
- Verify the consolidation of communication channels between local partners, FPSC and AECID, through the analysis of participation and transparency criteria during the intervention.

Likewise, this evaluation will analyze the degree of achievement of the general objective of development aid: fight against poverty and particularly the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the countries of the Middle East.

Along this analysis, specific ones are also to be considered, which in the last years have found great interest in the politics of the big donors and Development Banks. These institutions consider evaluation as a required and fundamental halt to open up learning processes that bring about useful conclusions to improve the efficiency of international aid.

Another goal of the evaluation resides in serving the target group of right-holders. Several approaches to participation and social development methodologies underline the need to discard the idea of the beneficiary of a development project as a passive receiver, and to foster his or her role of main actor in the planning and relevance of the actions.

Ensuring the participation of the target group guarantees the adequacy of the planned activities and promotes the ownership of the dynamics of change. The target group becomes a critical multiplying agent that reinforces sustainability once the external aid is over.

It is therefore essential that the final evaluation should be conducted within a multi-perspective approach, thus offering a comprehensive analysis and integrating the interests and needs of each key stakeholder in the intervention.

The general objectives of the evaluation are:

- To assess the relevance of the intervention and its objectives regarding the problems identified in the Agreement and within the framework of the Spanish Cooperation and the Paris Declaration.

- To assess the design and implementation of the intervention: the coherence between foreseen results and achievement of objectives, as well as their accomplishment during the assessed period, reorienting them if need be.
- To assess the implemented activities, their contribution to the achievement of results and the efficiency of the resources used.
- To estimate the impact of the intervention considering its strategy.
- Special emphasis will be put to ascertain whether the intervention is incorporating the recommendations made in the Final Evaluation Report of Convenio 06-CO1-054 and the Intermediate Evaluation of Convenio 10-CO1-091. The points raised in the evaluation to be discussed during the current evaluation are: the follow up method of FPSC, the North-South-South coordination, the terms of the agreements between FPSC and the partners, as well as the agreements between AEC, the leading partner, and the others.
- Analyze the commercial feasibility of the products resulting from the training workshops and the adaptations workshops.
- Check that local authorities have participated in the design of the activities and visibility aspects are taken into account and conform to the applicable regulations.
- Confirm that both local authorities and/or beneficiaries are capable of assumption of the transfer of the project, as well as they are in conditions of assuring the auto-sustainability when the intervention is over.

As for the usefulness of this evaluation, we should expect recommendations regarding key elements used by the NGO in the intervention such as design and planning, management and implementation. Some of the areas where recommendations could be produced are:

- Strengths and weaknesses of the Spanish NGO, the local partners, the target group and other relevant stakeholders
- Strengths and weaknesses of the project implementation, and potential reorientations to maximize its impact
- Value added by the NGO in response to national development needs previously identified and others not considered at the time of its formulation
- Successful action lines and opportunities
- Strengths, competences and weaknesses of the intervention in relation with the cooperation opportunities in the country
- Short- and mid-term strategies

2. OBJECT OF THE EVALUATION AND BACKGROUND

- The Agreement is oriented to bring a major contribution to create a social atmosphere and a physical environment that favor all persons suffering from any type of disability, offering them the possibility to be direct and active agents in their own development.

For this reason, the Agreement develops a basic line of action aiming at the general objective, to improve the quality of life and the integration of the people with disabilities in the four target countries.

Moreover, the other specific action lines are:

INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION

In the first place, the Agreement aims to build the capacities of the regional network of local organizations in the target countries by means of building the capacities of the four local partners and, specifically, through the Internet portal to be created and developed during the Agreement. The goal of such a tool is to improve the services offered to PWD through the launching of an information system that enhances the coordination of services and renders the exchange of experiences possible on line.

ATTENTION-TO-PWD DIMENSION

Secondly, the Agreement seeks to directly facilitate the access of PWD to their civil rights through a better accessibility to physical spaces, employment and virtual services. With regard to physical spaces, a number of public places will be adapted to make them accessible to disabled persons (institutions and government agencies, etc.) As for employment,

specific training programs will be developed, and the access of people with disabilities to mainstream programs will be promoted. Finally, the digital platform will also offer access to a number of services through the net.

SOCIAL AWARENESS DIMENSION

In the third place, awareness activities for the Spanish civil society will be organized, in order to make them participate in the process of integration of PWD. To this effect, the results of the actions accomplished within the Agreement will be published in the website www.accessibilityforpwd.org. Likewise, several events will be scheduled in Madrid around December 3, the International Day of People with Disability, where the work done in favor of the disabled living in the Middle East will be presented. Experts from the South are invited to such events so they provide first-hand information on the sector. Other public awareness activities, such as a photo exhibition, interviews on radio, newspapers and social media will be implemented.

FPSC awareness activities on its work in the Middle East is systematically planned and organized by the Centro de Estudios para Medio Oriente (CEMOFPSC), a center of studies and think-tank established within FPSC.

The Agreement is implemented in the region of the Middle East. The target countries (Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt) were chosen because of:

- Their development level, being it that all of them except for Lebanon, are ranked countries with Medium Human Development in the recent HDI
- Their geographical location in area of permanent conflict
- The high number of disabled persons among their nationals
- The lack and precariousness of the public services.
- This Agreement is in synergy with the national, regional and international policies regarding the disability issue:

NATIONAL LEVEL (TARGET COUNTRIES)

The main law regulating the rights of people with disabilities in Lebanon is Law 220/2000, to which the Decree 7194 has been added recently. Likewise, the "Rights & Access" program should be highlighted, an initiative of the NGO Arcenciel, which has later on been adopted by the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA). The creation of the National Committee for the Disabled (Law 243) should be mentioned as well.

In Egypt, the reference law is Law 39/1975 on the rehabilitation of disabled persons and related amendments. Law 12/1996 on the rights of the child should also be mentioned, as well as the Amended Law 126/2008. Furthermore, there are many rehabilitation programs for PWD (56 in total) that bring together diverse organizations, from the Egyptian Ministry of Social Affairs to NGOs working in the sector.

In Syria, the legal reference is Law 34/2004 on the rights of PWD. There are private organizations that work with PWD, such as the Society for the Physically Disabled (1998) and the Syrian Society for the Blind (1997).

Finally, in Jordan, Law 31/2007 on the rights of persons with disability and the national strategy on the affairs of PWD, also published in year 2007. Furthermore, the Higher Council for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities and several civil society organizations also take care of the target group.

REGIONAL LEVEL (MIDDLE EAST)

The most important regional initiatives regarding the Agreement's objective are:

- Initiative of the Arab Decade for Persons with Disabilities (2004-2013)
- The participation of Arab countries at the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons, where Lebanon acted as representative of the group. Arcenciel has helped with the drafting of the official position of the Lebanese government, through the Ministry of Social Affairs

- The four Arab Parliamentary Symposiums on Disability Legislation, held between year 2005 and 2007
- Regional Symposium on Health Vocational Training 2005
- Regional Training Course on Injury and Violence Prevention

INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

In the framework of the United Nations, the Agreement follows the guidelines of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of 2008, signed by the four target countries, ratified by three of them (Syria, Jordan and Egypt), and whose optional protocol has been as well ratified by one of them (Syria).

According to the UN, 80% of PWD live in developing countries, such as the target countries of this Agreement. Currently, due to the Syrian war, such number has increased and it is going on.

The Disabled People International Organization (DPI), in its Strategic Plan 2007-2011 establishes a series of priority objectives that coincide with the ones of this Agreement.

The Agreement develops four action lines aiming to achieve the accessibility and the social and economical inclusion of PWDs:

- Accessibility to Physical Spaces: adaptations in public spaces, removal of physical obstacles
- Accessibility to Employment: vocational training for employment towards a better social and economical integration
- Accessibility to Virtual Services: capacity building for the regional network of NGOs working with persons with disabilities so as to improve the information system on available services (virtual platform)
- Raising the awareness of the Spanish civil society on the situation of PWD in the Middle East (annual seminars in Spain)

TERM OF THE AGREEMENT

Scheduled start date of the Agreement: September 1, 2010.

Expected date of completion of the Agreement: September 30, 2015.

BUDGET OF THE INTERVENTION

Total of the intervention: 3.650.000 EUR

AECID grant: 3.000.000 EUR

- PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATIONS
 - LEADING LOCAL PARTNER OF THE AGREEMENT
 - *LEBANON: ARC EN CIEL (AEC)*

FPSC has signed a partnership agreement for the implementation of this project on disability with local partner arcenciel (AEC), a Lebanon-based organization.

FPSC assumes the role of leading NGO of the Agreement, while AEC acts as the regional leader, which coordinates all the work with the other NGOs in the field. Finally, each local NGO will be in charge of the implementation of the Agreement's activities in its own country, under the supervision of both AEC and FPSC.

- OTHER LOCAL PARTNERS IN THE AGREEMENT
 - *SYRIA: YADAN BI YAD (YBY)*

The Syrian NGO "Yadan bi Yad" ("Hand in Hand") is based in Aleppo. YBY is an association created in 2007 which has shown a great ability to perform their programs in favor of PWD. YBY has worked together with the Syrian Ministry of Social Affairs since its creation.

- *JORDAN: AL-HUSSEIN SOCIETY FOR THE HABILITATION/REHABILITATION OF THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED (AHS)*

This Jordanian NGO is an organization founded in 1971 that provides rehabilitation and integration services for people with physical disabilities, especially children. This organization has an extensive experience in the field of disability and is affiliated to the Jordan University.

- *EGYPT: COPTIC EVANGELICAL ORGANIZATION FOR SOCIAL SERVICES (CEOSS)*

This NGO has its headquarters in Cairo, and other satellite offices in Upper Egypt. In addition to its broad geographic presence, and its proven management abilities, it has acquired a large experience in the services to disabled people.

The agreements between FPSC and AEC with the local organizations have been relevant to the intervention. The selected evaluation team will have access to the complete information on the partners during the Cabinet Phase.

TARGET GROUP

According to the United Nations, 10% of the world's population is disabled. Most of the activities of the Agreement are located in the Middle East, where the ratio of people with disabilities is even larger, due to a number of factors, i.e., the following outstand: conflicts that have ravaged the region during the last decades, as well as socio-economic reasons such as intermarriage, discrimination against women, economic crises, etc.

The Agreement targets the following groups:

- 5,000 people with disabilities, who will use the adapted places (an average of 100 cases of disability using each one of the 50 adapted physical spaces during a 12-month period)
- 560 people with disabilities, who will access vocational training, and out of whom 140 will access employment
- 180 people with disabilities, who will benefit from the information system on services at a regional level (digital platform)
- 185 members of the portal (25 institutions and 160 individuals), who will sign up on the Internet portal (digital platform)
- 1,085 Internet users, who will access the portal and download materials
- 60,000 Spanish citizens, who will take part in the awareness campaigns and activities carried out in Spain

3. INVOLVED ACTORS

The involved stakeholders in the Agreement, which could be involved in the evaluation process, being it a participatory evaluation, will be as follows:

- Responsible of the Agreement at FPSC's headquarters
- Delegates of FPSC in the countries of implementation
- Local partners
- Public Administration: responsible bodies for Social Affairs, Governor of the target area, etc.
- Staff at the Adaptations Unit
- Users of the adapted public spaces
- Vocational training providers (trainers and regular professionals)
- Vocational training attendants
- Technical staff of the Internet Portal
- Users of the Internet Portal
- Organizers of the CEMOFPSC events

- Attendants to the awareness raising events both in Spain and in the field
- Representatives of the Spanish Cooperation in each of the countries of execution (OTCs and cooperation antennas)

The Assessment Management Unit will consist of FPSC staff in both headquarters and field and one representative from each of the local partners involved in the project. The Management Unit will be the speaker for all matters relating to the management of the evaluation (drafts ToR, hires the evaluation team, participates in the Monitoring Committee).

An evaluation Monitoring Committee validates the ToR, approves the planning documents designed for the evaluation, facilitates the evaluators' work and their access to the sources of information, approves and, if necessary, supplements the work documents that will be prepared, supervises the quality of the process (documents and reports), approves the final conclusions and spreads the results of the evaluation.

The Monitoring Committee shall consist of:

- A representative of FPSC's headquarters
- The delegates of FPSC in the countries of implementation
- The Agreement Coordinator appointed by each local partner
- Representatives of the Spanish Development Agency in the countries of implementation (OTCs and cooperation antennas)
- Representatives of the beneficiaries in the countries of implementation

The **Monitoring Committee** of the Agreement is the regular channel of monitoring the Agreement. It includes members of AECID and the FPSC, it will meet mandatory at the time of the discussion of the final report.

Document	Source
Agreement Proposal	FPSC
Base Line Study	FPSC, Field
Regulations	FPSC, AECID
Budget Frames	FPSC
Annual Action Plans of the Agreement (PAC 1 – PAC6)	FPSC
Strategy documents to fight poverty in partner countries (DELP)	FPSC, AECID
Master Plan of the Spanish Cooperation	AECID (Website)
Special Plans of Action (PAE) for Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt	AECID (Website)
Joint Commission documents with partner countries	AECID (Website)
Specific studies	FPSC, Field
Technical and Financial Follow Up Reports for years 1 and 2	FPSC
Partners' Strategic Plans on Disability	Field
Mid-term Evaluation of Agreement 10-CO1-091	FPSC
Final Evaluation of Agreement 06-CO1-054	FPSC
Other	

4. SCOPE OF THE ASSESSMENT

With regard to the scope of this evaluation, and due to the foreseen level of implementation during the first half of the Agreement, the field study can be carried out in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. However, a trip to Syria would be inadvisable at the moment.

The study will include **three main levels of analysis in reference uniquely to the assessed period**:

- **DESIGN OF THE INTERVENTION**

The evaluation will assess the design of the Agreement as a whole, taking into account the internal consistency (complementarity of goals and instruments within the intervention) and relevance of both its objectives and activities.

- **MANAGEMENT OF THE INTERVENTION**

The evaluation will analyze the institutional structure, the planning and the coordination among actors, as well as the Agreement management, the adequacy of human, material and technical resources, the effective participation of the various stakeholders, etc.

Special emphasis will be placed in analyzing the way in which the funds are channelled, verifying the agreements between partners, cash flows, plans and time periods will also be dealt with.

Initial training on AECID rules and regulations, in addition to the planning for ongoing monitoring performed by AEC in the partners countries will be verified.

Attention will be paid to the organization by AHS of an International Conference on the Rights of Persons with Disability. The conference was held on Tuesday April 14th, 2015 at the Hashemite University in Zarqa /Jordan. The activities related to the Agreement were set as an example of a right based approach to PWD.

The training plan will be checked in order to verify that the knowledge acquired by the beneficiaries is adequate and corresponds with reality.

It will be verified that the new platform incorporates in its design and contents the criteria of coordination between partners and universal accessibility.

The focus of North-South-South cooperation will be taken into account with regard to the signing of agreements and the existence of action plans shared between local partners and the beneficiary organization.

- **EVALUATION OF RESULTS**

The evaluation will assess to what extent the results and objectives are being reached, as well as their contribution in achieving the objectives of Spanish cooperation. It will be useful, as well, to determine their importance regarding the predicted impacts, expressed in terms of size and sustainability, the effects on the physical or socioeconomic environment, and the degree of involvement of national and local institutions and of the communities where the activities are implemented. In the same way, the evaluation will assess the complementarity with other similar projects implemented on the field by other organizations, agencies or public institutions.

The three levels of analysis shall provide conclusions and recommendations so as to improve viability of the Agreement.

Whereas the mid-term evaluation prioritizes the design and managing levels of the intervention, the final evaluation will focus more specifically on the evaluation of results.

The evaluation will use the indicators designed during the formulation and, moreover, during the re-formulation of the Agreement, after the answer to a requirement of the AECID and the production of the Base Line Study and the Base Line of the Agreement. If need be, the evaluator shall design and propose new indicators for a better measurement of the progress.

The time period to be assessed by the evaluation spans from the start of the Agreement on September 1, 2010, to September 30, 2015.

5. QUESTIONS AND LEVELS OF ANALYSIS OF THE ASSESSMENT

The Final Evaluation of the Agreement is an evaluation of the design, management and results of the intervention.

Levels of analysis:

- **PROCESS PERSPECTIVE**
Evaluating the design of the cooperation policy of the NGDO in the countries, concentrating mainly on the areas of planning, managing and implementing the intervention.

Evaluating the implementation process and the project management, assessing the operational structure of the NGDO in the countries of implementation.
- **CONTEXT PERSPECTIVE**
Assessing the political, social and economic context in which the intervention is being carried out, and how it relates to this environment.
- **OBJECTIVE PERSPECTIVE**
Finally, assessing the achieved results and objectives based on the analysis of the selected interventions in each country.

The project cycle of each intervention shall be studied, assessing, among other elements, its impact on promoting gender equality, environmental sustainability and cultural diversity and its consistency with the national strategies on the sector and the national development goals.

Depending on the context and the framework of the intervention, the evaluation shall assess the quality and consistency of its design, its alignment and compatibility with each country's context of development of and with the priorities of the Spanish Cooperation, its internal harmonization and the consistency of the tools used within each geographic area.

On the basis of this analysis, the evaluation team shall identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the intervention and provide recommendations so as to improve the Agreement. These recommendations shall focus on the strategic design, operational management, used tools and achieved results in each evaluated action.

6. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

This evaluation will consider the evaluation criteria of the development cooperation (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, feasibility and impact) and will assess the level of achievement.

Given these criteria and their interrelationship, the information needs that have to be covered during the analysis have been identified and some key evaluation questions have been prepared, to which the evaluation team must respond. The evaluator shall complement them with as many other questions as he may deem necessary.

- **RELEVANCE**
Adequacy of the intervention to the context, the identified problems and the priorities established by the beneficiaries, public administrations and donor community will be evaluated. The analysis will take into account the criteria of alignment in relation to public policies developed in each country and the synergy with other donors and NGOs working in the area.
 - How relevant is the intervention as it was formulated from the beginning to the needs and priorities of the target population according to the new socio political circumstances of the implementation term?
 - How do beneficiaries prioritize their needs? Is there a connection between the priorities set by the beneficiaries and the objectives of the Agreement?
 - Have the priorities of the beneficiaries changed since the start of the Agreement?

- Are the lines of the Agreement consistent with the guidelines established in the sector strategy papers that affect them and with the country strategy papers of the concerned areas of implementation?
 - Are the operating principles of the NGDO consistent with public policies that affect the country? Has there been consultation and agreement with the public authorities throughout the identification, formulation and implementation of the Agreement?
 - Are the objectives of the intervention strategy compatible with other policies and running programs?
 - Do the objectives and results of the evaluated action fit with the context in which they are performed?
- **EFFECTIVENESS**
Degree of compliance with the objectives set by the NGDO at the strategic and operational levels. The coverage of the intervention in relation to the planned beneficiaries shall be taken into special consideration.
 - Have the planned activities been implemented? Are they sufficient and necessary to achieve the expected results?
 - Have the intended results been achieved? What factors, internal or external, have influenced the achievement of the results?
 - Will it be possible to achieve the previewed specific objective?
 - How many beneficiaries does the Agreement serve? How were they selected?
 - What has their involvement in the project been?
 - Are there groups of both opponent people or negatively affected by the project? Was anything done to minimize its negative effects?
 - What gender impact has the project had? Was there any specific activity aimed at promoting gender equality?
- **EFFICIENCY**
Measuring the extent and the results of the Agreement in relation to the financial, material and human resources as well as to the time invested in its implementation. Efficiency aims at showing how resources are transformed into results.
 - Have funds been available at the planned time? Have there been modifications in relation to the formulation?
 - Was the profile of the managers appropriate to the intervention and its objectives? What project follow-up mechanisms have been used?
 - Are the material resources directly related to the achievement of the results? What have the indirect investments for these achievements been?
 - Were the deadlines planned in the formulation met? What external or internal factors have motivated any given delay?
 - Has the cost per beneficiary been calculated in the implementation of the planned activities?
 - Has there been a real coordination between the leading partner AEC and the other partners (in terms of frequency of meetings, exchange of experiences and feedback on processes)?
- **IMPACT**
Impact is equal to the visibility of positive and negative global effects caused by the intervention. The elements of the planning matrix to be considered under impact are the general objective, the specific objectives and their correlation.
 - What expected long-term effects have been achieved or are expected to be achieved?
 - Has the project caused any change of attitude in the target population during the evaluated period?
 - Are beneficiaries aware of the achieved effects or of the effects that might at one point be achieved?
 - What long-term effects is it foreseen to achieve with regard to local partners and their capacity building?

- **SUSTAINABILITY**

Likelihood that the development processes might continue beyond the time of action of the NGDO, maintaining and managing the results of the Agreement and even launching of new complementary actions.

- If the beneficiaries are the key economic players, can they cover the cost of services? Are they going to participate by providing funds?
- If the cost of the results had to be covered institutionally, was the funding available for this purpose?
- Level of involvement and ownership by the authorities, the local partners and the target group.
- Are the persons and institutions aware of their responsibilities? Did they develop or possess the needed capacities to sustain the flow of benefits? Do they assume as their own the benefits or results of the project?
- How will be the transfer of the intervention, so as the autosustainability of it, beyond the end date?

7. METHODOLOGY AND WORK PLAN

- **METHODOLOGY**

Suggestions for methods to be used:

- Interviews with key sources of information, in particular with the direct beneficiaries of the project, as well as with focus groups.
- Direct observation, including visual inspection of the interventions.

- **WORK PLAN**

This type of interviews and direct observation will provide information in cases where possibly random sampling may be difficult or inadvisable.

The evaluation will have three phases, other than the preparatory activities:

- Phase 1: Cabinet study
- Phase 2: Fieldwork
- Phase 3: Preparation of the Final Report

Phase 1: Cabinet study

Estimated time: 2 weeks from validation of the work plan.

- Analysis of available documents concerning the activities of the NGDO in each country
- Identification and review of the documents regarding the context of each country for national, regional and local development strategies
- Identification of key informants at headquarters (area manager at the NGDO, AECID) and field (Cooperation Antennas in Lebanon and Syria, OTC in Amman and Cairo, Cultural Centre, External Relations secretary, etc.)
- Conducting interviews with key informants at headquarters
- Requesting and reviewing additional information
- Design of methodological tools for the collection of data, processing and analysis of information, to ensure the reliability of sources and the rigor of the processing and analysis in the field

Phase 2: Field work

Estimated time: 4 weeks

- Conducting interviews with key informants in Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt specially to direct beneficiaries, and requesting additional information from other organizations and institutional or international actors

- Utilization of the methodological tools designed for the collection of the available information
- Implementation of a representative number of surveys that provides an overview of the performance of the NGO in the specified temporal and geographical area
- Direct ocular inspection of the interventions, whenever possible
- Analysis of the achieved results and impacts
- Drafting of the Field Work Report, including a report on activities carried out in the field work mission

Product Phase 2: Field Work Report

Phase 3: Preparation of the Final Report

Estimated time: 4 weeks

- Writing the Final Report which will integrate the evaluation of the different levels of analysis
- Once the report is written, the evaluators will schedule a final meeting with the involved stakeholders: target group, local partners, donor agency and representatives of the groups of key informants, to share and discuss with them the first drawn results, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation

Product Phase 3: Final Evaluation Report

The *Final Evaluation Report* will include 3 levels of analysis integrated and interrelated. It will annex the *Field Work Report*.

After submission of the *Final Evaluation Report*, the evaluation team may participate in the activities for the presentation of its results.

The team will maintain its independent judgment and does not need to agree upon the terms of the report with other actors. During the course of interviews, the evaluators may choose, if they wish, not to be accompanied by persons outside the evaluation team. It is recommended to use the Methodology for Assessment of the Spanish Cooperation (2001) and the reviewed Evaluation Management Guidelines of the Spanish Cooperation (2007).

8. STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION OF THE EVALUATION REPORTS

The *Field Work Report* should gather a report on the activities carried out (interviews, meetings, visit to projects, surveys or workshops with the target group, etc.).

It is recommended that the Final Report should be structured according to the following proposal.

ANNEX 2: CONVENIO DOCUMENTS LIST

Document	Source
Agreement Proposal	FPSC
Base Line Study	FPSC, Field
Final Survey Study	FPSC
Regulations	FPSC, AECID
Budget Frames	FPSC
Annual Action Plans of the Agreement (PAC 1 – PAC6)	FPSC
Strategy documents to fight poverty in partner countries (DELP)	FPSC, AECID
Specific studies	FPSC, Field
Mid-term Evaluation of Agreement 10-CO1-091	FPSC
Final Evaluation of Agreement 06-CO1-054	FPSC
Project Financial Report	FPSC
Website business plan and analytics	FPSC, Field

ANNEX 3: EVALUATION AND DATA COLLECTION CRITERIA AND TOOLS

The criteria and the relevant questions used to guide the evaluation are as follows:

Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How relevant is the intervention as it was formulated from the beginning to the needs and priorities of the target population according to the new socio political circumstances of the implementation term?• How do beneficiaries prioritize their needs? Is there a connection between the priorities set by the beneficiaries and the objectives of the Agreement?• Have the priorities of the beneficiaries changed since the start of the Agreement?• Are the lines of the Agreement consistent with the guidelines established in the sector strategy papers that affect them and with the country strategy papers of the concerned areas of implementation?• Are the operating principles of the NGDO consistent with public policies that affect the country? Has there been consultation and agreement with the public authorities throughout the identification, formulation and implementation of the Agreement?• Are the objectives of the intervention strategy compatible with other policies and running programs?• Do the objectives and results of the evaluated action fit with the context in which they are performed?
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have the planned activities been implemented? Are they sufficient and necessary to achieve the expected results?• Have the intended results been achieved? What factors, internal or external, have influenced the achievement of the results?• Will it be possible to achieve the previewed specific objective?• How many beneficiaries does the Agreement serve? How were they selected?• What has their involvement in the project been?• Are there groups of both opponent people or negatively affected by the project? Was anything done to minimize its negative effects?• What gender impact has the project had? Was there any specific activity aimed at promoting gender equality?
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have funds been available at the planned time? Have there been modifications in relation to the formulation?• Was the profile of the managers appropriate to the intervention and its objectives? What project follow-up mechanisms have been used?• Are the material resources directly related to the achievement of the results? What have the indirect investments for these achievements been?• Were the deadlines planned in the formulation met? What external or internal factors have motivated any given delay?• Has the cost per beneficiary been calculated in the implementation of the planned activities?• Has there been a real coordination between the leading partner AEC and the other partners (in terms of frequency of meetings, exchange of experiences and feedback on processes)?
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If the beneficiaries are the key economic players, can they cover the cost of services? Are they going to participate by providing funds?• If the cost of the results had to be covered institutionally, was the funding available for this purpose?• Level of involvement and ownership by the authorities, the local partners and the target group.

- Are the persons and institutions aware of their responsibilities? Did they develop or possess the needed capacities to sustain the flow of benefits? Do they assume as their own the benefits or results of the project?
- How will be the transfer of the intervention, so as to ensure sustainability of it, beyond the end date?

Impact (Summary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What expected long-term effects have been achieved or are expected to be achieved? • Has the project caused any change of attitude in the target population during the evaluated period? • Are beneficiaries aware of the achieved effects or of the effects that might at one point be achieved? • What long-term effects is it foreseen to achieve with regard to local partners and their capacity building?
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Data collection methods and tools are as follows:

Desktop review	<p>An initial screening was carried out in line with the preliminary methodology specified in the technical proposal. The documents used as primary resources, as per the study terms of references, are listed in Annex 3.</p> <p>A review of existing documents from various relevant national (such as the Jordanian Department of Statistics, government policy papers, etc.) and international sources was carried out. Publications used included recent country policy documents, assessments, surveys and peer-reviewed journals on disability in the MENA with specific focus on Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Egypt. When researching for literature, screening relied on factors such as relevance and applicability of information to PWD context as well as other issues such as the source and year of publication.</p>
Participant observation	<p>Participant observation is considered a useful method in studies that require evaluation because it deals with what people actually do rather than what they claim to do, and allows the researcher to witness first-hand what happens in practice (Gillham, 2008). Observation is particularly suited to understanding processes and relationships between people, events and activities where understanding of the cultural context is important.</p> <p>Participant observation was used during visits to sites where adaptations were made. Informal interviews were carried out with site managers to gain a better understanding of the whole cycle of Convenio and perceived strengths and weaknesses, as well as share and compare views of beneficiaries with project partners and key informants. The visits to the sites also allowed the evaluating team to see in practice what happens.</p>
Selection of site visits	<p>The evaluation team initially targeted all sites with adaptations made as part of the project in each country. However, due to time constraints, a selected number of site visits were made in Jordan, Egypt, and Lebanon. Nevertheless, the evaluation team made sure to choose a representative number of sites in the event where it was not possible to visit all locations.</p>
Collecting observations	<p>Field notes were written up during site visits, which consisted of notes taken during the visits. Notes were also documented of the contextual details of the visits including the environment, people and conversations that took place (see Annex 4 for the site visit assessment guidelines).</p>

Semi-structured individual interviews

Semi-structured individual interviews were used with key informants and the project partners as these provide the ability to ask participants a series of open-ended questions from a topic guide. Semi-structured interviews also provided depth to the evaluation findings, yet unlike structured interviewing allowed flexibility in terms of the sequence of questions put forward, the way the questions were asked or framed, and room to ask further questions in response to the replies (Bryman, 2008). Moreover, they allowed flexibility and discretion by encouraging interviewees to elaborate on their replies (Davies, 2000).

A total of XXX individual interviews were conducted, out of which XX were in Jordan, XX in Lebanon, XX in Syria and XX Egypt. Of the XX individual interviews, XX were with project partners and XX with key informants (See Appendix 5 for a detailed list of individual interviews in each country).

Semi-structured focus groups

Semi-structured focus groups were carried out with the partner teams working on the Convenio under evaluation.

Through the focus group, the evaluating team was able to obtain a variety of views about the effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the Project. Furthermore, it highlighted the way in which participants had both shared and contradictory views on a variety of issues. It also allowed the research team to better understand on the views of participants are developed, communicated and changed through interaction with other members (Barbour, 2013).

A participatory approach was applied during focus group interviews to foster the idea that beneficiaries play a key and active in planning and implementation of the project as well as to ensure relevance of activities and promote ownership of the dynamics of change.

ANNEX 4: LIST OF INTERVIEWS, FOCUS GROUPS, AND SITE VISITS

The evaluation sample consisted of the following groups:

KEY INFORMANTS

Key informants played an important role in facilitating access to sites where adaptations were made. In addition to the desktop review, the information provided from key informants provided input the evaluating team a knowledge base that could be further elaborated on during site visits and discussion with direct beneficiaries.

Key informants were identified through discussions with FPSC and the local partners during phase 1 of the evaluation. Semi-structured individual interviews were carried with key informants provide a holistic understanding of the political, social and economic context in which the intervention was carried out, and how it relates to its environment on a macro level.

A total of 39 key informants, composed of the following groups:

Project Partner Managers

Semi-structured individual interviews were carried with project partners to gain an in-depth understanding of the design of the cooperation policy of the NGDO in the countries, concentrating mainly on the areas of planning, managing and implementing the intervention. Individual interviews with project partners brought insight into implementation process and the project management of the Convenio, and facilitated assessment of the operational structure of the NGDO in the countries of implementation.

Key informants were identified through discussions with FPSC during phase 1 of the evaluation.

Project Partner Team Members

Semi-structured focus group interviews were carried with project partner teams in order to assess the achieved results and objectives based on the analysis of the selected interventions in each country.

External Stakeholders

Comprising of representatives of CSOs, governmental institutions, and NGOs that were involved or affected by the work of the Convenio.

BENEFICIARIES

The evaluation team had initially aimed to target project beneficiaries and conduct focus group and individual interviews with them. However, this was canceled because of the difficulty of reaching out to direct beneficiaries. In order to address this limitation, the evaluation team made sure to interview site managers and trainees during visits to locations where adaptations were made.

SITE VISITS

Eighteen site visits were conducted in Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt over the course of the field work. The sites visited include:

Location	Area	Type of visit
Sin el Fil Municipal Park (Horsh Thabet)	Lebanon	Unguided
LPHU office building	Lebanon	Unguided
Saida Technical Institute	Lebanon	Guided
Baalbek Technical Institute	Lebanon	Unguided
Qaim Maqam Metn	Lebanon	Baalbek
El Khalifa Hospital	Egypt	Guided
Health Insurance Hospital	Egypt	Guided
Noubar Medical Centre	Egypt	Guided
El Amal School for Deaf	Egypt	Guided
Al Msherfeh Health Clinic (Zarqa)	Jordan	Unguided
Yajooz Health Clinic (Zarqa)	Jordan	Unguided
Khadija Bint Khowailid School	Jordan	Guided
Jabal Faisal Girls School	Jordan	Guided
Vocational Training Centres (x2; Zarqa)	Jordan	Guided
Zarqa Governorate Building	Jordan	Guided
Hashemite University (Zarqa)	Jordan	Guided
2 schools in Amman	Jordan	Unguided