MOROCCO

MULTI-SECTORAL PROGRAMME FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Joint Programme: Tamkine: Multi-sectoral MDG-F Joint Programme for the Fight against Gender-based Violence through the Empowerment of Women and Girls in Morocco

Thematic Window: Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

1. Introduction

“Tamkine” means empowerment in Morocco, and this is the key strategy through which the Multi-sectoral Joint Programme (the Programme) addresses violence against women. Taking a multi-sectoral approach, it joins together 13 national entities and over 50 NGOs. It aims to prevent and protect women and girls from all forms of violence by addressing the inter-linkages between poverty and vulnerability.

With programme support, women survivors of violence have greater access to legal, psychological, social and economic support. Since 2008, 4,651 women have benefitted from the programme-supported centres for women survivors of violence. The number of counselling centres has grown from 38 in 2008 to 52 in 2010. One example is the Batha Centre, a multifunctional centre where women find a safe space for themselves and their children and are able to develop livelihood skills in confectionery, goldsmith art, cookery, etc. It is run by the association Initiatives pour la Protection des Droits des Femmes (IPDF—Initiative for the Protection of the Rights of Women). The Centre mission goes beyond providing access to short-term care. It ensures support for women and their children and aims to prevent the recurrence of violence by promoting gender equality through education, advocacy and awareness-raising programmes. It also aims to offer improved access to quality services in terms of economic, social and political empowerment for women and girls.

2. Initial Situation

Tamkine was created to advance the fight against violence against women, and facilitate women’s empowerment in Morocco. Progress had been hindered by the lack of protection mechanisms and institutional care for abused women and girls, the lack of regulations of interventions in the field of the fight against violence against women and girls and social and cultural norms that propagate hierarchical roles of men and women and legitimize violence against women.

In Fes, at the time of the Centre’s creation, seven out of ten married women were victims of domestic violence. A total of 66.4 per cent of all women in the area had been victims of psychological violence, 49.5 per cent of physical violence, and 26.7 per cent of sexual violence. This situation was exacerbated by the lack of state structures to care for and empower women in crisis. The existing multifunctional centres were suffering from lack of a clear institutional vision regarding their implementation, their intervention strategies and their role in women’s empowerment.

The Centre’s interventions were hindered by the implementation of Law 14/05 regarding the conditions to open and run establishments of social protection (EPS – Etablissements de Protection Sociale), because the law only took into account abandoned children, women in a situation of family abandonment or exclusion, elderly without any support and the disabled. Centres for women survivors of violence were thus not fully considered under the law, resulting in an unclear institutional mandate. IPDF and its partners thus had to define the mission and organization of the Batha Centre and re-define its services to ensure that women survivors of gender-based violence and their children had access to quality services, while respecting Moroccan law.

3. Strategy

The Programme in Morocco had to gather a large number of partners, from various sectors and institutions. This gathering required the establishment of a governance structure that would facilitate this innovative cooperation as well as ensuring the operationalization of the Programme.

To respond to the needs of women survivors of violence specifically in the Fes region, IPDF, in cooperation with its Moroccan government partners and United Nation agencies, set out to establish a multifunctional centre able to provide survivors of gender-based violence with immediate support (psychological, clinical, shelter) during crisis, as well as a set of services that would support longer-term recovery and empowerment. The fundamental premise behind the services provided at the Centre is change through empowerment.
Initially, the creation of the Centre faced challenges in terms of the cooperation of national institutional partners, as it was difficult to secure substantial institutional engagement. A challenge was identified in communicating a clear vision of the Centre’s mission to the partners. However, participation was eventually ensured through the signing of cooperation agreements. The partnership with Morocco’s national institutions was central to the success of the Centre’s strategy to fill the institutional and legal void regarding care for women survivors of gender-based violence. These ‘contractual-partnerships’ ultimately legitimated and facilitated the implementation of the Centre’s services, guaranteeing governmental support for the Centre, particularly in the fiscal sense.

The common strategy that was developed based on the overall objective enabled the provision of multi-sectoral services affording continuous care for women. The ensemble of services provided (admission, support, shelter, training and integration into the workplace) constitutes a chain of services that is uninterrupted and guarantees continuous care and support. It also links to services available outside of the Centre, such as in hospitals, police stations, etc.

The Centre is based on three fundamental principles:
• A strict confidentiality policy ensures security and privacy for the users;
• Physical separation between living, clinical, administrative and financial spaces; and
• The women are the main actors in their empowerment.

The chain of services provided to women survivors of violence allows them to escape crisis situations, and to gain practical skills and personal empowerment. The Centre provides integrated services that go beyond simply offering admission and support, such as trainings and integration into the workplace. These services support women in becoming independent economic actors. Empowerment is not only the goal, but also the means to protect women against the recurrence of gender-based violence. Support for these women along the empowerment process is possible thanks to the partnerships developed with both governmental and non-governmental organizations in the field, as well as UN agencies, each bringing their own capacities and specialties to the chain of services.

The Centre’s management also relies on a continuous strengthening of the staff’s capacities through trainings, and is directed by ‘research-action,’ which aims to provide an updated diagnosis of the context and on the issue of gender-based violence, so that the intervention strategy established in partnership with state and association actors adapts accordingly to be as relevant as possible.

4. Progress and Results

In 2009, the Centre offered shelter and care to more than 1,000 women. By January 2010, this number had almost doubled, with more than 1,900 women being welcomed at the Centre.

The Centre and its chain of services succeeded in raising awareness among the population about women’s rights and gender-based violence. Radio was an important vehicle for this aspect of the programme. With the support of UNESCO, various communications materials such as posters, pamphlets and flyers were produced. Trainings to strengthen Batha Centre’s staff communication capacities were also organized.

Partnerships, especially with institutional partners such as the Ministry for Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development (MDSFS – Ministère pour la solidarité, la femme, la famille et le développement social) were consolidated, and the increased visibility of the Centre also led to better cooperation with key local actors, including the Police and other government actors. These partnerships are keys to sustainability of investments.

5. Lessons Learned and Challenges

• Importance of the fundamental rights of women: consider the survivor of gender-based violence as an autonomous person, avoid her re-victimization and allow her to be the actor of her own empowerment process.
• Importance of the implementation of a confidentiality policy in any structure that supports women survivors of gender-based violence.

• Importance of strong partnerships with the public sectors, particularly actors specialized in trainings and professional integration. Importance of partnerships in general and of coordination with all the actors along the chain of services, from admission to workplace integration.

• A participative process with consultations of all the actors involved during the Programme’s conception allows for more sustainable results. The national partners’ actions will be more coherent with the Programme objectives and the institutions will integrate the actions through the governance system. Therefore, some of the Programme actions will be consequently integrated into the sectoral plans of the partners.

• The Programme participants must be represented in all bodies.

• If the project covers multiple regions, its governance bodies must not all be located in one place. Decentralization gives voice to the local actors and decision-makers and helps to avoid a homogenization of responses to different needs.

6. Sustainability and Potential Application

The Conventions agreed upon and signed by IPDF and the Wilaya’s guarantee official state support to the Centre for five years. The sustainability of the Centre’s work is also supported by the use of tools and manuals that were developed, such as the Manual of Procedures and the Communications Plan.

During Phase II of the Programme, a concept note involving six agencies was written and sent to the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women in April 2012. As Tamkine comes to an end, action is taken to keep some elements of its coordination structure. An inventory of actions that pursue Tamkine’s initiatives is being prepared. Elements of this Programme were also integrated as an intervention axis in Outcome 3 of the UNDAF 2012-2016 in Morocco, prompting UN agencies to sustain their Joint Programming efforts to fight against gender-based violence.

This initiative could be replicated, as long as it is adapted to the institutional and organizational local environment. The Batha Centre is a good model to follow for adaptation in new contexts. Reproducing this experience also requires a partnership between the public sector and civil society in order to ensure that services are provided up to the point when the women are equipped to integrate into the workforce.

7. Main Sources

Modélisation du Centre Multifonctionnel Batha pour l’autonomisation des femmes victimes de violence base sur le genre.


Rapport de l’évaluation finale du programme conjoint multisectoriel de lutte contre les violences fondées sur le genre par l’autonomisation des femmes et des filles au Maroc.

11 Second-level administrative subdivisions of provincial governments.