

Action Fiche for Neighbourhood South civil society facility 2012-2013**1. IDENTIFICATION**

Title/Number	Neighbourhood South civil society facility 2012-2013 (ENPI/2012/024-286)		
Total cost	EU contribution: EUR 22 million (EUR 11 million for 2012 and EUR 11 million for 2013)		
Aid method / Method of implementation	Project approach - Direct centralised management		
DAC-code	15150	Sector	Democratic participation and civil society

2. RATIONALE**2.1. Sector context**

Last year's changes in the Southern Mediterranean countries prompted a rapid EU response. Within weeks, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Commission issued a **Joint Communication 'A partnership for democracy and shared prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean'**¹ setting out the immediate response to the historic events unfolding. Combined with the revision of the European Neighbourhood Policy, this led to the **Joint Communication 'A new response to a changing European Neighbourhood'**², which sent a clear message of solidarity and support to the peoples of the Southern Mediterranean. Furthermore, acknowledging civil society's role in contributing to policy-making and in holding governments to account, both Joint Communications gave a commitment to supporting a greater role for civil society organisations (CSOs) through a partnership helping CSOs develop their advocacy capacity, their ability to monitor reforms and their role in implementing, monitoring and evaluating EU programmes.

One year later the Joint Communication '**Delivering on a new European Neighbourhood Policy**'³ stressed the crucial role played by civil society as a force for democratisation ensuring sustainability and inclusiveness in the reform process. It also recalled the practical steps taken by the EU to establish a real partnership with civil society by building up the advocacy and monitoring capacity of CSOs and intensifying their dialogue with the authorities.

As one of these steps to provide greater support to civil society, on 20 September 2011, the European Commission adopted the **Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility**

¹ COM(2011)200 of 8 March 2011.

² COM(2011)303 of 25 May 2011.

³ JOIN(2012)14 of 15 May 2012.

2011⁴ with an initial budget of EUR 22 million for the Neighbourhood region. The objective was to strengthen civil society's capacity to promote and monitor reform, to carry out advocacy work and to increase public accountability. A budget of **EUR 11 million** is earmarked for the southern Neighbourhood countries in 2012 and the same amount for 2013, subject to the adoption of the 2013 budget by the Budgetary Authority.

The measures taken in the Mediterranean region fit into a much wider framework based on acknowledgement by the EU of the crucial role played by CSOs in promoting democratic governance, equitable development and inclusive growth. Conceived as a confidence- and consensus-building mechanism, **the Structured Dialogue**,⁵ for example, highlights common understandings on the main issues linked to CSOs' involvement in EU development co-operation and makes a set of recommendations to increase the effectiveness of all stakeholders involved in EU development co-operation. The messages and recommendations provided by the Structured Dialogue offer a rich setting in which to develop the civil society facility.

The growing role of CSOs and the need to engage with them are also recognised in the EU policy '**Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change**'⁶. This Communication emphasises the important role played by CSOs in partner countries and commits the EU to working together with them in the development policy and programmes. The other major new EU policy '**The future approach to EU budget support to third countries**'⁷, also underlined the importance of a participatory and inclusive approach where CSOs are amongst the key stakeholders, putting the emphasis on domestic accountability and transparency of the budget.

Furthermore in the **Aid Effectiveness Agenda**, in particular in the Busan Partnership Document, CSOs are recognised as independent development players; the importance of an enabling environment and democratic ownership of development policies and practices are also stressed.

2.2. Rationale of the Civil Society Facility

The Civil Society Facility is the operational response to the global and regional EU approach outlined in the above-mentioned Communications. Its aim is to boost CSOs' contribution to the policy-making process and encourage further development of their advocacy capacity and their monitoring of governments. It also envisages settling a deeper engagement and a sound dialogue between the stakeholders involved in the region. Reinforcing civil society will certainly increase its contribution to a more democratic debate both at national level and also within the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

⁴ C(2011)6471 of 20 September 2011.

⁵ Structured Dialogue for an Efficient Partnership in Development:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/who/partners/civil-society/structured-dialogue_en.htm.

⁶ COM(2011)637 of 13 October 2011, endorsed by Council Conclusions on 14 May 2012.

⁷ COM(2011)638 of 13 October 2011, endorsed by Council Conclusions on 14 May 2012.

The Civil Society Facility is also consistent with the **European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) Regulation**⁸ which states that the European Union assistance will be used to support democratisation, inter alia, by enhancing the role of civil society organisations and promoting media pluralism, combined with election observation and assistance, and to foster the development of civil society and of non-governmental organisations.

The Civil Society Facility provides a **comprehensive tool, implemented both nationally and regionally**, also for funding. It combines a focus on the local contexts (human resources, needs, legislative framework, interactions, etc.) with regional dynamics, coherence and common denominators. Action implemented nationally will be complemented and completed by the action taken at regional Mediterranean level, conceived as part of a harmonised framework that would enhance the national initiatives.

2.3. Situation of CSOs and challenges

The situation of CSOs in the southern Neighbourhood region differs from one country to another but some common features can be pointed out:

- In a large number of countries in the region the **political context** does not favor the blossoming of civil society and gives rise to legislation and regulations restricting its role. This has led to mutual mistrust between institutional representatives and members of civil society. Restrictions on fundamental rights, more specifically freedom of association, freedom of assembly and freedom of expression, including free media, may create major obstacles to the development of independent CSOs.
- The **capacity** of CSOs *per se* and with a view to engaging in policy dialogue remains weak despite training and information campaigns at local level. A national and regional mapping exercise currently under way should help identify the main capacity gaps. Promoting engagement by CSOs in the policy dialogue with their governments depends on tightening links and synergies between development/co-operation mechanisms and political dialogue at country level.
- Many CSOs remain **isolated**, which hampers their development and opportunities. Networking should be supported as it strengthens CSOs' capabilities and access to information. Furthermore networking offers them an easier access to authorities.
- Even if **participation by civil society in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership fora** is improving on a regional level, further committed efforts still need to be made. Furthermore, organisations which are eager to take part in the debate triggered by Euro-**Mediterranean** policies often have insufficient knowledge of the Euro-**Mediterranean** partnership mechanisms. Another problem is that current organisations at regional level do not always seem to be

⁸ Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, Article 1.

rooted in a dynamic structure that is representative of consolidated national positions.

- Access to funds remains difficult for many CSOs due to **complex procedures**; this is especially the case for grassroots organisations.

2.4. Lessons learnt

Civil society in the southern Neighbourhood countries used to be dominated by **poor capacity, fragmentation, isolation and lack of access to information and opportunities**. CSOs were seen mainly as service deliverers only. Numerous were active (as in Egypt), but few were capable of influencing policies. Their activities ran into security, legal and regulatory obstacles; CSOs were either controlled by the authorities or forced to live semi-clandestinely.

For this reason, while the **European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)** was fairly active in the region using its capacity to act without the host country consent and supported various actors involved in the Tunisian revolution uprising for example, the limited resources of the instrument for the area (13.7% of 2011 allocation) only allows to focus on most difficult cases and to create leverages for long-term changes⁹.

The uprisings that shook the Arab countries created more **space for the emergence of a comprehensive, thriving and active civil society**. Stakeholders became more organised and structured. They walked out of clandestinity determined to be drivers of change and to be politically vocal.

Although the situation is improving, major **challenges** like those mentioned in the previous section, still remain. Furthermore, the new context **raises new issues**, such as the **limited experience** of the new players in managing an organisation and projects, even if their expertise is satisfactory, in entering into dialogue with authorities, in using advocacy and campaigning tools, etc. It also raises the issue of the **representativeness and legitimacy** of these new players, their **internal governance**, their ability to *co-ordinate and network* with their peers instead of competing for resources, etc.

The EU is firmly committed to supporting efforts to shape a real civil society, active and influential in the southern Neighbourhood region. To this end, **promoting an enabling environment**¹⁰ with partner countries at political level is fundamental as the primary responsibility for this lies with the State. This can be done mainly in the

⁹ See EIDHR Ad Hoc report "*Delivering on the Arab Spring*", January-June 2012, available at www.eidhr.eu.

¹⁰ "Enabling environment": a functioning legal and judicial system that ensures the right to organise, the right to expression and information, and the right to participate in public affairs is an important part of an enabling environment. The rights of civil society organisations to operate and function freely can be defended on the basis of governments' obligations to protect and promote the rights of expression, peaceful assembly and association, amongst others, as guaranteed under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and other multilateral and regional treaties. (Civil Society and Aid effectiveness. Issues paper. Final Sept. 17, 2007) <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/59/11/39499142.pdf>.

Association Committees and appropriate Sub-Committees of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

Promoting true participation by CSOs, not only consultation, in policy-making is the key. Measures to strengthen their management, advocacy and campaigns **capacity** and their ability to monitor reforms and to play an efficient watchdog role are also very much needed. CSOs' efforts to **network and co-ordinate** should be supported. They also have to be encouraged and supported in enhancing their **internal governance, accountability and transparency**. Besides their role in fostering democratisation and rule of law, CSOs action to address the structural causes of the Arab Spring such as **economic and social conditions**, should also be supported.

The Civil Society Facility aims to help achieve those objectives. For example, in Tunisia, the **first phase**¹¹ provided extra funding for measures offering local added value for community development and reaching the most deprived regions. Funding for local development was a strong demand of the CSOs which, besides the capacity-building dimension, also focused on job creation.

2.5. Complementary actions

The Civil Society Facility takes a coherent and supporting approach towards the other programmes and instruments targeting CSOs, such as the **geographic and thematic programmes**. It complements them in areas and/or countries where engagement with CSOs needs to be enhanced.

In the context of the ENP policy, the Civil Society Facility especially complements the **Support for partnership, reform and inclusive growth (SPRING)** programme¹² which is entering its second phase. The main purpose of the SPRING programme is to address two of the three pillars of the new Neighbourhood Policy (deep democracy and inclusive growth). But if these are to be achieved, building a real partnership with society (the third pillar) is fundamental. Therefore CSOs' role in promoting and monitoring reform, carrying out advocacy work and increasing public accountability will be the key in this context.

The **European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)** and **thematic programmes under the Development Co-operation Instrument** (on non-state actors and local authorities (NSA LA), Investing in People, Migration and Asylum, and the Environment and Natural Resources) have global coverage and are implemented largely through calls for proposals in which applicants, mainly CSOs, have a right of initiative.

The ongoing **civil society ENPI South regional programme**¹³ will also result in a regional network of national civil society organisations that can be active participants

¹¹ The Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility 2011 contribution of EUR 1 million for Tunisia was used to increase the budget available for the launch of the Non State Actors call for proposals from EUR 1.5 million to EUR 2.5 million (Ref. EuropeAid/131665/L/ACT/TN). It has allowed to select a higher number of local development projects.

¹² C(2011)6828 of 26 September 2011.

¹³ http://www.enpi-info.eu/mainmed.php?id=308&id_type=10.

in the new Neighbourhood South civil society facility 2012-2013. Complementarity and synergies with this regional programme will be ensured when implementing the civil society facility.

The Civil Society Facility will also be complemented by the future **European Endowment for Democracy** which will support, among others, emerging pro-democracy movements and (non-registered) CSOs who have less access to EU support. The European Union's programme **Strengthening democratic reform in the southern Neighbourhood**¹⁴ implemented by the Council of Europe will also ensure consistency with the civil society facility.

2.6. Donor co-ordination

Various support mechanisms and initiatives for CSOs are already being implemented by the EU Member States and other donors in Neighbourhood countries. Co-ordination with these will be of utmost importance to **avoid fragmentation** and provide **effective support** to CSOs without overloading them with multiple initiatives and demands.

Therefore, further development of the activities under the civil society facility at the implementation stage will have to take into account specific donor schemes in each of the countries and **avoid overlaps**. Among other things, the current mapping exercise will help to produce a better picture of the CSO landscape and of the different measures being taken to support civil society. EU Delegations will keep other donors informed of the progress made under the civil society facility in the country-level donor co-ordination groups.

3. DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives

The **overall objective** of the Neighbourhood South civil society facility 2012-2013 is to **strengthen and promote CSOs' role in democratic changes and reforms** taking place in the southern Neighbourhood countries.

The civil society facility will pursue the following **specific objectives**:

1. to strengthen **CSOs' involvement** in the policy-making process and in policy dialogue; to strengthen CSOs' role as watchdog players;
2. to increase **CSOs' capacity** to promote reforms and promote public accountability;
3. to support **CSOs' role in local development**.

¹⁴ C(2011)9544 of 22 December 2011.

3.2. Specific objectives and expected results

Specific objective 1 - To strengthen CSOs' involvement in the policy-making process and in the policy dialogue; to strengthen CSOs' role as watchdog players

Expected results:

- The role of CSOs in policy dialogue and their relationship with authorities are increased;
- A more structured dialogue between the authorities, the EU and the CSOs around the development and the implementation of sector support policies and programmes is set up;
- CSOs are more involved in designing and monitoring relevant sector support programmes;
- CSOs are involved in new aid modalities; CSOs oversight and monitoring of budget support programmes is systematised;
- CSOs are effectively involved in the programming of EU policies and assistance, in their implementation and in their monitoring;
- CSOs, and in particular the social partners (trade unions and representatives of employers, play a major role in the achievement of inclusive growth; they undertake a structured, open and effective social dialogue. The structures for the social dialogue are strengthened.

Indicative type of activities:

- Multi-stakeholder consultations at national level involving CSOs, national authorities and EU Delegations to identify ways to facilitate civil society actors' participation in (selected) sector policy dialogues between the EU and partner countries and in implementation of relevant bilateral projects and programmes will be organised. In this framework, national entry points (sectors) will be identified and prioritised by the authorities in dialogue with CSOs;
- Involving of CSOs in the monitoring of budget support targets and in reporting of annual budget support reviews;
- Consultation with CSOs can make part of the matrix of conditionalities for a sector support programme;
- Workshops, meetings and consultations are organised by the EU Delegations at an early stage during the programming process;
- Concerning the strengthening of the social dialogue: organisation of preparatory activities such as preparatory surveys, preparatory workshops and conferences; organisation of joint trainings for the social actors to strengthen their abilities to undertake dialogue and foster co-operation and collaboration

among them; identification and dissemination of results of social dialogue processes; exchange of best practices, etc.

Specific objective 2 – To increase CSOs’ capacity to promote reforms and promote public accountability

The capacity development package to be implemented in each country will be determined on the basis of the assessment made under the Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility 2011.

Expected results:

- Operational capacity of CSOs in monitoring progress towards democratisation and reforms, public policies and actions are raised;
- Operational capacity of CSOs in advocacy and lobbying are raised;
- Professionalism of CSOs raised, notably to enable them to act as partners for co-operation with government authorities;
- Strengthened networks of CSOs that may facilitate co-ordination and lobbying;
- Increased understanding and knowledge by CSOs of EU (and more specifically ENP) policy-instruments and programmes;
- Increased understanding and knowledge of new aid modalities and EU procedures;
- Technical and organisational skills as well as political skills are targeted.

Indicative type of activities:

- Identification and dissemination of good practices regarding CSOs-oriented ENPI programmes and the participation of non-state actors in new aid modalities such as budget support programme;
- Organisation of trainings, seminars, meetings;
- Ad-hoc support (e.g. helpdesks for CSOs, support to CSOs umbrellas, etc.) is provided;
- North-South exchanges are supported as they offer a good opportunity of peer-learning and of networking among CSOs from the North and from the South. North-South exchanges between CSOs regarding the manner in which to most effectively engage in policy dialogue with the authorities could be promoted.
- Activities targeting the facilitation of information to CSOs, such as internet platforms or resource centres can also be funded.

Specific objective 3: to support CSOs' role in local development

Expected results:

- Available funding opportunities for CSOs' actions contributing to local development are increased;
- Local human resources are valued. The role of local CSOs in the current democratic changes is promoted. Empowerment of CSOs is enhanced through their action in favour of local development;
- Participation of local CSOs in policy dialogue is improved. Interaction between CSOs and local and national authorities is promoted;
- Participation of deprived populations in the definition and in the implementation of strategies and projects related to local development is promoted;
- The living conditions of vulnerable and marginalised populations (women, youth, handicapped persons, poor people) will be sustainably improved;
- Jobs will be created and sustained through the mobilisation of human, cultural and natural local resources and by the involvement of women and youth people;
- Negotiating capacity of local producers is improved; this will allow them to take over growing part of the added value of their economic activities.

Indicative type of activities:

- Topping up of the national calls for proposals in the framework of the NSA LA Thematic Programme;
- Activities funded could encompass innovative approaches from CSOs aiming at supporting and setting up services in the field of economic development;
- Support to CSOs' involvement in local policy dialogue, capacity-building and networking;
- Trainings on procedures in order to overcome CSOs' lack of technical skills to respond to calls for proposals. Grassroots organisations will be specially targeted.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

The risks linked to **political instability** in the region and to possible changes of government or regimes should be mitigated by monitoring the situation and supporting democratic structures and principles. This goes directly to the core of the civil society facility, which sets out to promote a more participatory approach to decision-making processes by broader inclusion of CSOs.

There is a risk that the authorities might **not see the added value of involving CSOs** in the policy dialogue or that they might not provide an enabling environment that puts in place modern and transparent institutions to encourage accountability and good governance and ensure fair and transparent rules. The EU's political dialogue with partner countries therefore includes the requirement to engage with CSOs at

national level and to promote a more enabling environment for the work of civil society, in an attempt to counteract any unwillingness on the part of partner countries' authorities to engage with CSOs.

On the other side, another risk could be the **unwillingness of CSOs to engage** in policy dialogue with the State or simply the lack of incentives to do so. Tripartite dialogue (between the authorities, the EU and CSOs) will then help to highlight the usefulness for CSOs and also for the authorities of conducting a dialogue and working together.

3.4. Crosscutting issues

The programme is actor-oriented and not limited to one sector. The inclusive approach taken in the definition of CSOs will ensure representation of **multiple sectors of activity**.

The focus on an enabling environment for CSOs' work, and by the same token on difficulties faced by CSOs in their activities (harassment and restriction of **fundamental rights** such as freedom of expression, freedom of association and freedom of assembly), will contribute to respect of human rights.

The programme aims at reinforcing CSOs' contribution to the decision-making process and fostering interaction between authorities and civil society. This participatory approach to decision-making lies at the heart of the **good governance** principles and is a core component of democracy. The civil society facility will enhance the accountability of the governments and for the reforms implemented vis-à-vis a structured and solid civil society. It will also enhance the representativeness, transparency and internal democracy of CSOs themselves.

The civil society facility will mainstream **gender equality and youth issues** and seek to integrate, and capitalise on, the existing thematic, regional and bilateral programmes already implemented with CSOs active in the fields of gender equality and support for youth.

3.5. Stakeholders

The programme will primarily support **CSOs in the widest sense of the term**, as defined in Article 14 of the ENPI Regulation¹⁵: non-governmental organisations; organisations representing national and/or ethnic minorities; local citizens' groups and traders' associations; co-operatives, trade unions and organisations representing economic and social interests; local organisations (including networks) involved in decentralised regional co-operation and integration; consumer organisations; women's and youth organisations; teaching, cultural research and scientific organisations; universities; churches and religious associations and communities; the media; cross-border associations; non-governmental associations and independent foundations.

¹⁵ OJ L 310, 9.11.2006, p. 1-14.

Special attention will be paid to the new organisations and networks that have emerged in the wake of the Arab spring and which are **representative** of civil society.

Local authorities in partner countries, as defined in the same Article of the ENPI Regulation (‘decentralised bodies in the partner countries, such as regions, departments, provinces and municipalities’), will be considered partners, especially where partnerships between CSOs and local authorities can demonstrate added value.

Partner governments’ authorities should be associated in the capacity-building activities, case by case. The Civil Society Facility should ultimately also aim to foster public institutions’ ability and willingness to associate CSOs in policy dialogues, co-operation activities and sector reforms.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Method of implementation

In the framework of direct centralised management, the proposed programme will mainly combine both **service contracts** and **grants**. Technical assistance will be provided through service contracts managed by Headquarters, and by service and/or framework contracts managed by the EU Delegations, where the latter have expressed the wish to implement certain technical assistance components at local level.

Reinforced financial allocations at local level will be implemented through **calls for proposals launched by EU Delegations or by Headquarters**. EU Delegations will have the possibility to launch, for all specific objectives, call for proposals under the civil society facility or joint local calls for proposals, with those planned under the EIDHR or the NSA LA thematic programmes. The possibility of having different lots for each specific programme/instrument will also be contemplated. In such cases, with full regard to the specificities of each programme in terms of eligibility and scope of activities the requirements for the award of grants under the civil society facility, regarding-essential selection and award criteria (i.e. minimum and maximum size of grants, rate of co-financing) will be aligned with those of the EIDHR or the NSA LA thematic programme as reflected in the respective 2012 and 2013 Annual Action Programmes¹⁶. In those cases, the participation may be restricted to correspond to the eligibility conditions (nationality of applicants and/or partners) defined in the financing decisions funding these thematic calls for proposals.

A specific **regional call for proposals**, launched by Headquarters, supporting region wide issues in line with the objectives of the civil society facility would strengthen networks of organisations at regional and sub-regional level and contribute to sharing

¹⁶ As reflected in the NSA LA Annual Action Programme (AAP) 2012 “Non-state Actors – actions in partner countries (in country and multi-country interventions)” (http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/aap/2011/af_aap_2012_dci-nsa.pdf), and the EIDHR AAP 2012 “Country-Based Support Schemes – Strengthening the role of civil society in promoting human rights and democratic reform” and AAPs 2013 currently in the process of being approved.

expertise and best practices. Whenever relevant, regional grant contracts will be managed by EU Delegations.

4.2. Procurement and grant award procedures

1) Contracts

All contracts must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents published by the Commission for the implementation of external operations in force at the time when the procedure in question is launched.

Participation in contracts will be open to all natural and legal persons covered by the ENPI Regulation. Further extensions by the authorising officer to other natural or legal persons will be subject to the conditions laid down in Article 21(7) of the ENPI Regulation.

2) Specific rules for grants

The essential selection and award criteria for grants are laid down in the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions. They are in accordance with the principles set out in Title VI ('Grants') of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the EU. When derogations from these principles are applied, reasons must be given, in particular in the following cases:

- Financing in full (derogation from the principle of co-financing): the maximum possible rate of co-financing for grants is 90%. Full financing may be applied only in the cases provided for in Article 253 of Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the EU.
- Derogation from the principle of non-retroactivity: a grant may be awarded for action which has already begun only if the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the action before the grant is awarded, in accordance with Article 112 of the Financial Regulation.

4.3. Indicative budget and calendar

The total budget of the programme is EUR 22 million, out of which EUR 11 million for 2012 and EUR 11 million for 2013 subject to upon the adoption of the 2013 budget by the Budgetary Authority and the availability of the corresponding funds.

The indicative split between the regional and national components is as follows:

2012:

- EUR 5 million for the national component (grants);
- EUR 4 million for the regional component (grants: regional call for proposals).

2013:

- EUR 5 million for the national component (grants);
- EUR 6 million for the regional component (service contracts and grants).

Part of the funds of the 2012 allocation (indicatively up to EUR 2 million) may be used for funding proposals selected under the regional call for proposals launched under the 2011 budget of the Facility (lot 5 of call for proposals EuropeAid/131140/C/ACT/Multi), subject to the validity period of the list and to the quality of the proposals. As the overall objectives of the Facility were defined in 2011 for the entire remaining programming period (2011-2013) the objectives of the calls for proposals launched with 2011 funding are perfectly compatible with the objectives of the current fiche. Unused funds if any would be allocated to the regional component mentioned above.

The regional call for proposals will be indicatively launched in first half of the 2013. Due to the nature of the civil society facility the contracts funded consist generally in smaller scale actions. No precise breakdown or forecast can be given at this stage due to the nature of this support and the split between the headquarters and the EU Delegations. The contracts will be signed between the adoption of the Financing Decision and the end of year n+1. The indicative implementation of the contracts period will be 36 months from the date of the signature.

4.4. Performance monitoring

Monitoring of the activities will be ensured through a monitoring clause in each of the technical assistance contracts, which will provide for measuring performance and achievement of the objectives, and through the usual results-oriented monitoring (ROM) used for grants and projects. Objectively verifiable indicators exist (e.g. the number of consultations undertaken by governments with CSOs, compliance with international standards by national legislation on associations, etc.). Baselines also exist, notably as regards the issue of freedom of association, which has been examined and monitored over the years by regional programmes in the ENPI South programme (EIDHR-funded projects that ended in 2010/2011 have produced annual reports with specific sets of criteria).

4.5. Evaluation and audit

A mid-term and final evaluation will be carried out in the course of implementation of the programme.

Expenditure incurred will have to be certified, as part of the obligations of the contracting parties in the framework of implementation of this programme. Mid-term and final evaluations of the results achieved will be entrusted to independent consultants, as will external audits (which will be carried out if necessary). These evaluations and audits will be funded from sources other than the project budget.

4.6. Communication and visibility

The EU visibility guidelines will be followed by all projects. Visibility and communication in the partner countries will be ensured with the support of EU Delegations, in line with the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions¹⁷. The objective will be to ensure communication about the civil society

¹⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/documents/communication_and_visibility_manual_en.pdf.

facility and, more generally, about EU efforts to support CSOs in the southern Neighbourhood countries.

The technical assistance component of the programme will also develop a strategy focusing on communication and the visibility of the Civil Society Facility through, among other things, publications, on-line information and information sessions. In particular, a programme website will be developed under the technical assistance component, in order to centralise all information regarding all components of the Facility and all opportunities available to CSOs in the region and to raise the profile of the EU's efforts on CSOs.