

**ACTION FICHE FOR THE 2007 EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERSHIP
REGIONAL ACTION PROGRAMME**

1. IDENTIFICATION

Title	Partnership for Peace Programmes-2007		
Total cost	EC contribution 2007-2008: EUR 10 million (of which EUR 5 million to be committed in 2008)		
Aid method / Management mode	Project approach – Centralised management and devolved to EC Representation Office in East Jerusalem, EC Delegations in Israel and Jordan		
DAC-code	151150	Sector	Civil society activities

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Sector context

The overall objective of the programme 2007 is for the EU to contribute to conflict transformation. This will be done through the development of civil society organisations in order to help re-create the conditions for re-launching and supporting the peace process and to provide a solid foundation for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. The creation of a sustainable process to reach a just peace relies both on strengthening and increasing direct civil society relationships and co-operation based on equality and reciprocity between Arab and Israeli societies, including the Arab-Palestinian minority in Israel. To this end, initiatives under this programme can be undertaken by each country or jointly within and between Mediterranean Partner Countries¹.

2.2. Lessons learnt

Analysis of results from previous EU Partnership for Peace (PfP) programmes were conducted both externally and in house, and were used as a basis to define the priorities for the past Call for Proposals. Learning from these conclusions, the programme will enhance the daily interaction among staff, partners and projects. It will foster coherence between the projects to craft out the sense of a common programme and multiply impact and foster sustainability.

The conclusions of the evaluation undertaken in 2004 were taken into account when preparing the PfP Call for Proposals Guidelines 2005.

The Evaluation recommended a number of both logistical and strategic modifications to the current PfP Programme that could enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the effort. In the short term the European Union should improve the image of this

¹ Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, and West Bank & Gaza.

programme, to diversify its institutional base, and to reframe the programme in response to changing context and local concerns.

In order to address these short terms recommendations the Call for Proposals 2005 introduced the following priorities, which are also taken into account within this project:

- (1) Embedding a range of alternative mechanisms for handling disputes
- (2) Educating communities about concepts and skills for dealing with conflict and for promoting peace
- (3) Supporting marginalised groups in achieving a positive voice in society
- (4) Opening the political space for political discussion among conflicting groups
- (5) Complementary development actions

Complementary actions

The involvement of the European Union in the Middle East Peace Process is driven by the basic principles and objectives of the EU Mediterranean Partnership. The relationship between the European Union and its Mediterranean Partner Countries aims at “turning the Mediterranean basin into an area of dialogue, exchange and co-operation guaranteeing peace, stability and prosperity” through “strengthening of democracy and respect for human rights, sustainable and balanced economic and social development, measures to combat poverty and promotion of greater understanding between cultures, which are all essential aspects of partnership² (...).” Such a partnership in the Mediterranean area is concretely implemented through the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the relevant Action Plan adopted in 2005, offering the countries covered an increasingly close relationship with the EU, and to prevent the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbours.

The resolution of the Middle East conflict is central to the EU’s strategic interests. Its resolution remains high on the agenda of the EU external policy.

2.3. Donor coordination

As in the past (previous PfP program consultations with the United States, Canada, Norway and EU Member States have taken place) coordination with other donors should be foreseen.

² From the ‘Barcelona Declaration’, see:
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/bd.htm

3. DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives

The programme aims at supporting initiatives which are likely to have an impact on people's everyday lives by also including practical actions. These practical actions will focus on rebuilding mutual trust through reconciliation, building capacity for conflict resistance, empowering marginalized parties and launching joint development policies and strategies. These initiatives should broaden the base of support for the Middle East Peace Process through the promotion of communication and understanding and by showing the advantages of working for mutual benefit with tangible results.

3.2. Expected results and main activities

Expected results from the MEPP projects include:

1. Mutual trust between both communities is rebuilt.
2. Capacity for conflict resistance is strengthened.
3. Marginalised parties are empowered.
4. Joint development of policies and strategies is launched.
5. The base of support for the Middle East Peace Process is broadened.

In order to achieve the above mentioned results, the following priorities will be considered:

1. Cross border cooperation: Multinational projects rather than one-country projects.

For 2007 and 2008, the actions under this priority should be more practical than those in previous PfP programmes: favour cooperation projects on concrete needs (such as environment, municipality issues, community development, technical disputes or issues) rather than those based solely on dialogue and meetings.

2. Education and communication

Pioneer projects, targeting 'veto' and 'blocking' groups (communities opposed to the peace process), will be particularly welcomed. The actions under this priority could include:

- training sessions on conflict management and transformation (with special focus on non-violent approach, including promoting understanding between victims of violence),
- exposure of target groups to both their own narrative and that of the other community through educational activities and programmes designed to introduce long-term changes in attitudes, stereotypes and prejudices and to foster tolerance and understanding of the other side, applying lessons learnt from other conflicts in the world.

3. Influence institutions/decision makers, opinion makers and public opinion

These initiatives would bring together credible and representative participants from the different communities involved in the conflict to realise the existing visions of a future peaceful relationship between Israel and its Arab neighbours. Actions may include preparatory work in one country or cross border activities. Actions made up of one off or occasional meetings will not be eligible.

Other areas of action which could be included, for instance:

4. NGOs Capacity building

Train and build capacity of participating NGOs and those that may benefit from this programme, with the aim to upgrade and enlarge participation in the EU partnership for peace in the Middle East.

5. External evaluation: compulsory and included in the budget (as the audit reports).

The main activities to be developed under the projects financed by this programme include among other: training focusing namely on conflict transformation and resolution, negotiation skills, communication skills, peace building; development of curricula; monitoring of media; development of common media such as radio or newspapers; educational activities; peace campaigns; meetings between representatives of the different communities in the conflict; research on topics related to the conflict.

3.3. Stakeholders

The main stakeholders of the programme are the peoples of the Middle East. Beneficiaries are in particular NGOs including local organisations in the region and European partners. Civil society is a fundamental prerequisite to develop a democratic political system. Civil society is therefore the main target group of the envisaged activities under the programme. Special attention is to be paid to those communities opposed to the peace process (commonly called 'veto' or 'blocking' communities), and vulnerable groups such as women, youth and children. The target stakeholders will be those living in the Mediterranean Partner Countries already mentioned in point 2.1, namely the Middle East Region that is Israel and its neighbours.

3.4. Risks and assumptions

Regarding all projects and programmes under ENPI in this specific sub-region, there is a high risk of disruption of activities linked to the general political situation. Political instability in the area is in fact an inevitable major feature of the situation. Nevertheless, a certain degree of steadiness is necessary to implement and monitor projects. Indeed, in case a deterioration of the current status quo could prevail, repercussions toward the implementation of the projects may occur.

With regard specifically to the internal Palestinian conflict and the clashes between Hamas and Fatah the latest political developments such the Unity Government agreed in Mecca could open a window for a context leading to a more effective implementation of the new projects. Nevertheless given the instability of the political

landscape it is difficult to foresee the future evolution of the situation. A deterioration of the situation could lead to delays in the implementation of the activities and lack of joint activities between Palestinian and Israelis counterparts due to restrictions on movement and access. It would also affect the implementation of the projects in terms of monitoring by the services on the ground and visibility of the actions mainly due to security reasons.

3.5. Crosscutting Issues

Crosscutting issues, such as environmental sustainability, gender equality, good governance and human rights, are taken into due consideration in the context of the programme.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Implementation method

Centralised management (direct) devolved to EC Technical Assistance Office in East Jerusalem and to EC Delegations in Israel and Jordan.

The coordination between the different Delegations in terms of Project Management is basically made on the grounds of the nationality of the applicant and beneficiaries. Palestinian and European applicants are managed by the Jerusalem office whereas Israelis ones are managed by Tel Aviv. Projects which have activities in Jordan or Jordanian applicants are managed by Amman Delegation. Delegations services attend events, meetings and monitoring visits together when is relevant and keep themselves regularly informed on the projects' evolution.

4.2. Procurement and grant award procedures

The programme will be implemented through the launching of calls for proposals. Some activities will possibly be contracted after tender through a service contract.

All contracts implementing the action must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents lay down and published by the Commission for the implementation of external operations, in force at the time of the launch of the procedure in question.

The essential selection and award criteria for the award of grants (as well as the procedures concerning service contracts) are laid down in the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions. The maximum possible rate of co-financing for grants is 80%. Full financing may only be applied in the cases provided for in Article 253 of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation where financing in full is essential to carry out the action in question.

4.3. Budget and calendar

The overall budget for the program is €10 million: €5 million have been committed in 2007 and €5 million are to be committed in 2008 following the adoption of the present decision. The first Call for Proposals within this programme has been

launched during the second semester of 2007; a second call for proposals will be launched after the adoption of the present decision.

4.4. Performance monitoring

Performance monitoring will be ensured by the Commission services on the ground (EC Representation Office in East Jerusalem, EC Delegations in Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria). As in the past, regular monitoring missions to project beneficiaries will be undertaken in order to measure progress of project implementation.

4.5. Evaluation and audit

Priorities for the recent Call for Proposals in 2005 under the "EU Partnership for Peace" programme were identified on the basis of the findings of an evaluation of the Partnership for Peace programme and its predecessor, the "People to People" projects, undertaken by independent experts in 2004. These findings should also be taken into account in the context of the Calls for Proposals launched in the framework of the present decision. At the extent possible, quality indicators will be indicated in each project.

An annual certification of expenditure will have to be submitted as part of the contract requirements. A mid-term and a final evaluation of the results achieved by the project will be done by external experts entrusted by the EC. These evaluations will be funded from other sources because of the "N+1" rule applying to the contracting-out period of this decision.

4.6. Communication and visibility

EU visibility guidelines are to be respected by all beneficiaries. Services on the ground will check the visibility component of the actions through field visits and will increase public visibility of the actions when possible.