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MORALE PROJECT

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THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS) IN SYRIA AND LEBANON POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Co-funded by the Erasmus + Programme of the European Union



CAPACITY BUILDING

for Curricula Modernization of Syrian and Lebanese HEIs & Lifelong Learning Provision

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Erasmus + KA2 - Capacity Building in the field of Higher Education

TOWARDS **SUSTAINABLE NGOs** MANAGEMENT & OPERATION WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON REFUGEES (MORALE)

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About **MORALE**

Morale Project is a structural project co-funded by the ERASMUS+ Programme of the European Union.

It aims at building the capacities of Syrian & Lebanese Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to train a new generation of high skilled professionals in Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) management & operation to enhance inclusion of refugees and the rebuilding of the South Mediterranean society.

MORALE Objectives

- To provide the NGOs labour market sector with high skilled professionals trained to effectively manage and operate in NGO environments by means of modernising Social & Behavioural Sciences related curricula and by offering lifelong courses targeting NGOs professionals at partner universities.

- To raise the awareness on the key role of HE in the provision of high level competences of the future NGOs professionals and strengthen inter-institutional cooperation among HEIs, NGOs and governments through targeted networking actions.

The Role of Higher Education in the Development of Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Syria and Lebanon: Policy Recommendations

- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are increasingly recognized by governments as crucial supporters of development across various sectors. Syria and Lebanon acknowledge the importance of collaboration with NGOs, including funders, disadvantaged individuals, civil society sectors, and the wider public, to achieve economic, social, and environmental progress. During crises, such as the Syrian and Lebanese conflicts, NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) play an essential role in filling gaps in social services and meeting the basic needs of affected communities, including water, shelter, sanitation, health, and development.

- The MORALE Project, co-funded by the ERASMUS+ Program, aims to enhance the capacity of Syrian and Lebanese Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to train skilled professionals in NGO management and operation. The project's objectives are twofold: first, to equip the NGO labor market with highly competent professionals by modernizing curricula and offering lifelong courses at partner universities. Second, to raise awareness about the vital role of higher education in providing high-level competencies for future NGO professionals and promoting inter-institutional cooperation among HEIs, NGOs, and governments. This summary focuses on the latter objective, examining the role of higher education in supporting the development of NGOs in Syria and Lebanon.

The following recommendations are proposed to enhance the Lebanese and Syrian higher education systems in relation to NGO-related education:

Strengthen Collaboration: Encourage and foster the willingness among universities to establish strong relationships with NGOs. This can be achieved through establishing dedicated liaison offices or departments that facilitate partnerships and collaborations between universities and NGOs. In addition, mechanisms should be established for regular dialogue, joint planning, and monitoring of collaborative projects to ensure that the objectives are met and both parties benefit from the partnership.

Scholarships and Financial Support: Introduce scholarships or funding opportunities specifically targeted towards NGOs. This will help alleviate the financial burden on NGOs and encourage their participation in educational programs offered by universities.

Awareness Programs: Develop and implement comprehensive awareness programs for NGOs. These programs can include workshops, seminars, and conferences that focus on educating NGOs about various aspects of their operations, including best practices, governance, and sustainability.

Dissemination Activities: Support and encourage NGOs to engage in effective dissemination activities. Universities can provide training and resources to NGOs on how to effectively communicate their work to the public, donors, and other stakeholders. This can include workshops on public relations, social media management, and storytelling.

Curriculum Enhancement: Review and update the existing curricula to include NGO-related topics. Integrate courses or modules that cover areas such as NGO management, governance, fundraising, impact assessment, and social entrepreneurship. This will ensure that students, especially management graduates, acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to work effectively in the NGO sector.

Establish Specialized Programs: Recognizing the growing demand for NGO management expertise, consider establishing new bachelor's or master's programs in NGO management. These programs should provide comprehensive training on the specific challenges and dynamics of working in the NGO sector.

Lifelong Learning Courses: Develop lifelong learning (LLL) courses specifically designed for NGOs. These courses can cater to the professional development needs of NGO professionals, offering opportunities for up-skilling and staying updated with the latest trends and practices in the field.

Foster Partnerships: Encourage universities to actively seek joint activities and partnerships with NGOs. This can involve collaborative research projects, internships, field visits, and guest lectures by NGO practitioners. Such partnerships will bridge the gap between academia and the NGO sector, fostering mutual learning and exchange of knowledge.