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Sida Decentralised Evaluation

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Uncovering the Power of Performing Arts: An Evaluation of the Tamasi Programme

Final Report

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August 2012**

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Nadia Masri-Pedersen**

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The views and interpretations expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AHDR	Arab Human Development Report
ATG	Alternative Theatre Group
ATTC	Arab Theatre Training Centre
BASR	Bethlehem Arab Society for the Rehabilitation
BC	British Council
CBO	Community based Organisation
D-CAF	Downtown Contemporary Arts Festival
DI	Dramatiska Institutet
EU	European Union
FB	FaceBook
I-Act	International Association for Creation and Training
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
MENA	Middle East and North Africa region
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
RBM	Results Based Management
SADA	Swedish Academy of Dramatic Arts
SEE	Studio Emad Eddin
SEK	Swedish Kronor
SIPA	Strengths, Improvement Points, Possibilities, Attention Points
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNRWA	United Nations Relief Works Agency

Preface

The following evaluation was commissioned by Sida. Its purpose is to serve as a “key document both for Sida’s assessment of the programme and for Tamasi’s future internal development.” The evaluation takes stock of Tamasi’s results during 2008 to 2012 and assesses the Programme’s *effectiveness*, *relevance* and *sustainability*. It also examines the extent to which Tamasi is contributing to Sweden’s goal of promoting human rights – particularly freedom of expression – in the MENA region.

The evaluation was undertaken by Indevelop in cooperation with GRM International and Tana. Sida commissioned the evaluation through the framework agreement for reviews and evaluations with Indevelop, who managed the evaluation and provided quality assurance of the reports and the evaluation process.

The evaluation team consisted of Cecilia Ljungman (Team Leader), June Taboroff and Nadia Masri-Pedersen.

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Tamasi Programme has been funded by Sida since 2008. Channelled through the Swedish Academy of Dramatic Arts, it primarily consists of support to eleven performing arts organisations in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine. The Tamasi Programme aims to promote *a more sustainable, viable, diverse and vibrant performing arts life in the societies* of the MENA region.

In accordance with the Terms of Reference, the purpose of this evaluation is to serve as a “key document both for Sida’s assessment of the programme and for Tamasi’s future internal development.” The evaluation takes stock of past experiences and assesses the Programme’s *effectiveness, relevance* and *sustainability*. It also examines the extent to which Tamasi is contributing to Sweden’s goal of promoting human rights – particularly freedom of expression – in the MENA region.

The evaluation was conducted from March 2012 to June 2012. The questions provided in the ToR have constituted the central basis for this framework, the data collection and the assessment process. An additional area of inquiry added by the Evaluators is the extent to which there is evidence that Sida support has contributed to conditions that promote empowerment.

Effectiveness

Overall, the Tamasi Programme, with its funding of SEK 41 million over the five-year programme period, has made a notable contribution to strengthening independent performing arts in the MENA region. By mounting original theatre productions authored by regional playwrights, developing additional rehearsal and performing spaces, bringing performances to more varied groups in new places and by seizing opportunities that have emerged as a result of the Arab Spring, **Tamasi has been effective in increasing access to performing arts**. An estimated 1,000,000 people (although some may be “repeats”) have seen performances by Tamasi partners during the programme period to date. In aggregate numeric terms, the increase in audiences reached is an impressive 62 percent in the last three years.

Since the previous programme period, **Tamasi groups have given greater focus to reaching underserved communities** during the programme period, particularly since the Arab Spring. The initiatives to increase the access to and involvement in performing arts among children are important efforts in this regard. The promotion of girls’ and women’s participation has been achieved by the Tamasi members in a number of different ways: through the content of their performances; the promotion of women’s and girl’s expression on stage; training opportunities for women; employment of women; and female leadership.

Training initiatives by Tamasi partners help fill a gap in provision of performing arts opportunities for learning in the MENA region where independent performing arts struggle to survive. The process of professionalization by Tamasi performers and theatre technicians during the programme period progressed as a result of a variety of activities, especially training (formal and informal), exchanges and international appearances. There is evidence of increase in skills at the level of the individual artist and group, in artistic and technical areas.

The effort to improve the organisational capacity of the members has also shown results. Among the important areas that have been strengthened through the Tamasi Programme are proficiency in Logical Framework Approach (LFA) and regional networking, although there is scope for sharing of outreach strategies and even greater interaction among the Tamasi members.

The group directors and their colleagues are dedicated to presenting quality performing arts and to exposing audiences to new and thoughtful theatre, music and dance. Performing arts, educational and social service actors in the region consider Tamasi members to be organisations of high professionalism. An indication of Tamasi's standing in the world of performing arts is the numerous invitations to perform at international festivals or other venues they attracted and the awards and honours they have received.

Overall, **the networks established by the Tamasi members are expansive and multi-layered.** The efforts to extend the network to other MENA countries, however, have not yielded the desired results. The Programme directed its expansion to Syria and Morocco but the current deterioration in Syria has severely hampered Tamasi's results in enlarging its geographic outreach.

Contributing to Freedom of Expression

Tamasi members support rights-holders to *exercise* freedom of expression. This activity is one of many building blocks that are fundamental – but by no means sufficient – for freedom of expression to be realised in a society. After decades of political repression, Tamasi members regard “liberating” expression as a main task. Thus, without exception, the Tamasi members show clear commitment to promoting freedom of expression in their processes, methodologies, activities and productions. They provide the physical and mental space for free expression and stakeholders regard independent performing arts as a forum for political expression and activism. **Most expression on stages of the Tamasi members relates to topical political, societal and human rights issues.** This reflects the groups' activist agenda and the fact that the artists they attract have something to say about the current state of affairs. Official censorship and conservative censure impose limits for Tamasi members who in turn aim at consistently challenging these limitations, a step at a time.

Contributing to Empowerment

The vast majority of the informants who told their stories provided examples of strengthened resources through participation in Tamasi activities. Notably, this in-

cluded acquiring personal or social skills, improving school performance, experiencing personal transformation and developing social capital through group participation and identity. The data on human and social resources gathered by the Team from the Tamasi stakeholders correlated with the findings of three different studies that were used as sources for this analysis. The range of types of human, social and material resources gained by the performers, trainees and volunteers is impressive. The Team deems that in principle these resources gained have the potential to contribute to empowerment among the concerned stakeholders.

There is evidence of both agency and achievement among a large number of those Tamasi stakeholders who provided their stories to the Team. Around a quarter of the informants have taken initiatives that reach beyond themselves, potentially affecting other people. This includes social and civic engagement, political activism, advocacy and imparting knowledge and skills to children.

Tamasi partners have made some significant contributions to creating conditions that enable people to improve their lives, albeit on a small scale commensurate with the scale of funding. These findings indicate that Sida's support has contributed to a degree of both empowerment and impact. However, causality cannot be established and while the Sida contribution appears significant in several of the cases examined, it is less clear in the case of political activism.

Efficiency

The Programme and the Tamasi member organisations are managed with a noticeable regard for efficiency. The members have slim management structures and basic offices with modest equipment. The groups make good use of email and skype for communications. Meetings are well organised with a well conceived agenda. The volunteer base and the leveraging of funds from other donors have contributed to a better than expected relationship between results achieved and Sida's financial input. A noteworthy effort has been made during the last programme period to improve the results-based management. Systematically implementing the requirements of an LFA format, however, has left qualitative data a little aside. The presentation of information has been fragmented and the reports are therefore challenging to read.

Sustainability

Some of the effects of the Tamasi Programme are likely to be sustained, provided that the region does not experience a markedly higher degree of religious and social intolerance. When the results have led to people finding their voice, the sustainability is arguably high in terms of continued beneficial effects.

The track record of the Tamasi organisations indicates tenacity, which stems from management by committed individuals. The organisations that have developed a volunteer base are among the most sustainable and there is considerable scope for some of the other organisations to consider developing volunteerism. While the Tamasi programme

has modestly furthered the sustainability of the members by enhancing organisational capacity, a critical factor for sustainability remains the ability to generate and raise funds.

Sida's share in funding of the different Tamasi programme partners is estimated to range between 7 to 80 percent, **with the majority of partners receiving about 40-50 percent of their budget from Sida.** Together members have secured funding from over two dozen different sources – mainly from other international donors, but also from NGOs, government grants and local businesses. Most Tamasi members also generate some revenue through their work, although the amounts tend to be small and vary according to the country in which the Tamasi members operate. Much of the additional funding secured by the members is *activity based*. **Thus the critical issue of great concern for the Tamasi members is how to secure core funding.** For the future, more rigorous attention to business planning and the development of fundraising strategies (including corporate and private donors) will be needed.

The Tamasi Programme has also contributed modestly to the sustainability of the overall performing arts sector in the region by spawning several formal and informal off-shoots and building capacity that has resulted in some multiplier effects. Nevertheless, with the reliance on local and/or international funding, the growth of conservative societal currents and the continued hold of repressive governments; MENA's independent performing arts sub-sector remains vulnerable and struggles to survive.

Relevance

The MENA region can be characterised by a deficit of freedom, a deficit of modern education and a deficit of women's empowerment. Tamasi's support to performing arts is relevant in this context since it directly enhances freedom of expression, cultural liberty, empowerment of women and educational content. The Tamasi partners have arguably increased their relevance to the target groups by seizing opportunities since the Tahrir Square protests of 2011 during which there has been a surge of free expression, particularly in the cultural sphere.

The Tamasi programme demonstrates strong relevance to the central needs of the member organisations – including organisational capacity, artistic production, training, networking, facilities, exchanges and professional collaboration. Yet with each organisation receiving only an average of SEK 425,000 a year for their activities, it is clear that many needs remain. The support has brought a regional dimension and perspective to their work that is very difficult to achieve in the MENA region which does not have a tradition of regional performing arts initiatives (with the exception of work supported by the Ford Foundation). This is critical given the fractured state of the MENA region where mobility barriers reinforce isolation. It is also fundamental for strengthening the ties among the independent performing arts activists who advocate for freedom of expression, cultural liberty and other human rights.

In regard to Sweden's strategy for the MENA region, the Tamasi programme appears to be **highly relevant because it focuses on exercising freedom of expression** at the grass-root level, an action that is both crucial to effect change in repressive societies and vital for realising human rights. The Tamasi groups are thereby on the front line – along with many other activists in other fields of work – of pushing the boundaries with regard to freedom of expression in social and political discourse. Their advocacy work is not a programme objective but is a more indirect outcome. Tamasi members raise human rights dimensions and issues in their productions, but leave audiences to interpret the messages, reflect on the content and draw their own conclusions. **This exercise of freedom of expression represents an extremely important counterweight to the fundamentalist trends sweeping the region.**

Through their values, approaches, content of their artistic work and partnerships; Tamasi members have shown commitment to promoting other human rights – such as children's rights, freedom from violence, political freedom, equality, non-discrimination, participation and, in particular, women's rights. The Tamasi support can thus be considered relevant to Sweden's sector area of Democracy and Human Rights.

The New Tamasi

The new Tamasi that will soon be formalised **owes its existence to the solid process-oriented support from DI/SADA and the multi-year nature of the Tamasi Programme.** Without the five-year time horizon of the last programme period, it is questionable whether the consolidation process would have reached its present level of maturity. It has taken time and guidance for the eleven Tamasi members – spread over four countries – to develop their current level of cohesion, understanding of the benefits of a network and common vision. The Tamasi group have decided that **Tamasi will be a collective.** Challenges ahead include strengthening its regional collaboration; establishing a secretariat, building networks; bringing younger generations into the central Tamasi fold; and, developing strategic ties with other advocates of free expression and other human rights. In addition to maintaining the current momentum within the collective, the prospects of Tamasi accomplishing its goals in the upcoming years will be bound by mobility constraints and political developments. The new Tamasi collective will also require human and financial resources. In addition to funds for the secretariat, there will be considerable transaction costs to maintain the collective. The likelihood of receiving significant resources from other donors without a commitment of Swedish funding is relatively low.

Recommendations

There are a number of areas in which Tamasi could act in the coming programme period to increase its effectiveness and improve its longer-term sustainability.

1. Tamasi should insure that the new strategic plan:
 - a. Outlines why and how Tamasi intends to **promote increased project collaboration** among the members.

- b. Discusses how Tamasi will further **strengthen bonds** among the groups at all levels. In particular, the Tamasi members should develop plans for how to **bring younger generations** into the Tamasi fold and establish productive working relationships at different levels. It should involve younger associates in this endeavour and encourage creative cost-effective options such as using social media.
- c. Considers how **sharing, reflection and documentation** of each other's expertise, methodologies and good practice can be undertaken and disseminated to best serve the needs of the collective and performing arts sector. Priority areas for sharing and documentation could be strategies for effective and sustainable volunteerism, working with educational and social service organisations, fund-raising, and the monitoring effort of TDP.
- d. Clearly defines how Tamasi intends to **build bridges beyond its members** and interact with others in the performing arts sector.

These priorities should be incorporated into working practices.

2. Tamasi should develop a **resource mobilisation plan** to diversify and expand its resource base, using their creative and imaginative talents to exploit possible funding sources including corporate sponsorship and local government. Tamasi should consider engaging professional expertise in this area as needed.
3. To decrease their reliance on donors, take full advantage of the changing political landscape in the region and enhance competitiveness; Tamasi members and the Tamasi collective will need to develop a road map of growth, next steps, and a review of current financing and projections for the next five year period. Each Tamasi member should **develop business plans**, with attention to local sponsors, willingness to pay of local audiences and diversification of income sources.
4. Linked to their ability to generate earned income, Tamasi groups and the collective should continue with the initial experiments in **analysing their audience**. They should carry out research into existing audiences (using sampling) and utilising the results, develop new strategies to improve current outreach. The research should investigate willingness to pay of audiences for performing arts. Again, it may be necessary to engage professional expertise in this area.
5. While Tamasi's comparative advantage is advocacy with a small "a", it should consider **developing strategic ties to experienced advocates of free expression and human rights** in the event that any of the members are pressured, threatened or closed down so that a joint, organised and effective campaign can be launched.
6. **The new Tamasi should develop its reporting** with the aim to provide more qualitative information and analysis; improve readability and; guide strategic planning more effectively. Better use of tables and annexes and quantification of qualitative data is needed to set out achievements and shortcomings.
7. In the next years, as some of the present leaders of the Tamasi groups move towards retirement age, the relevant Tamasi members should **consider developing succession plans**. The current succession plan being implemented in TDP can serve as a reference point.

1 Introduction

The Tamasi Programme has been funded by Sida since 2008. Channelled through the Swedish Academy of Dramatic Arts (SADA, formerly Dramatiska Institutet), it primarily consists of support to eleven performing arts organisations. The Tamasi Programme aims to promote *a more sustainable, viable, diverse and vibrant performing arts life in the societies* of the MENA region.

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

In accordance with the Terms of Reference, the purpose of this evaluation is to serve as a “key document both for Sida’s assessment of the programme and for Tamasi’s future internal development.” The evaluation takes stock of past experiences and assesses the Programme’s *effectiveness, relevance and sustainability*. It also examines the extent to which Tamasi is contributing to Sweden’s goal of promoting human rights – particularly freedom of expression – in the MENA region.

1.2 APPROACH

The evaluation was conducted from March 2012 to June 2012 by Cecilia M. Ljungman (Team Leader), Dr. June Taboroff (Cultural Resource Specialist) and Nadia Masri-Pedersen (Middle East Specialist).

The Team began by undertaking comprehensive desk research that involved studying reports, publications and websites related to the programme and performing arts in the region as well as political analysis of the MENA region. Annex 3 provides a list of documents reviewed.

To assess the data gathered, the Team applied the evaluation framework it devised which is included in Annex 5. **The questions provided in the ToR have constituted the central basis for this framework, the data collection and the assessment process.** An additional area of inquiry added by the Team is the extent to which there is evidence that Sida support has contributed to conditions that promote empowerment. The Team judged this to be important because it is central to Sida’s overall goal for Swedish development cooperation.

The Tamasi Programme consists of a myriad of activities. The Team has therefore relied heavily on a sampling approach, using twelve criteria as set out in Annex 7 (Inception Report). Prior to the field mission and in an intensive dialogue with the Tamasi members on what was logistically possible, a mix of primary and key stakeholders was selected.

In accordance with the ToR and subsequent discussion with Sida, a priority for the Team during the field visits was to gather as much data on effects, particularly in relation to freedom of expression and impact in the form of empowerment. In agreement with Sida, **the focus has been on contribution rather than attribution**. Since the ToR¹ asks *whether* there is evidence of contribution, the Team developed a “geological probe” approach to uncover evidence. Applying elements of a goal free evaluation techniques, almost 60 informants were asked to tell the story of his/her life in relation to the performing arts. The approach is further explained in the beginning of Chapter 5.

The Team conducted over 140 interviews – mostly an hour in length – with stakeholders in Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan during a visit to the region in the period of May 4 to May 18. In addition the Team attended the performances/rehearsals by I-Act, SHAMS, El Warsha and El-Funoun and conducted two participatory SIPA workshops (Strengths, Improvement Points, Possibilities and Attention Points) in Cairo and Beit Jala with the Egyptian, Palestinian and Jordanian Tamasi members.

Much of the data regarding contributions to empowerment has been based on personal stories gathered by the Team, particularly in Palestine, Egypt and Jordan. Minimal prompting was used by the Team when prompting informants to tell their stories so that the responses were not biased by the questions. As discussed in Chapter 4, although this data is anecdotal, the fact that it is largely consistent with the rigorous two-year multi-country DICE research project on the effects of drama education enhances its credibility.

Since Sida’s support to performing arts started in 1995, the Team has also had the opportunity to capture some of the longer-term effects of the previous support in the interviews. In Chapter Four we have not been able to distinguish between effects resulting from earlier grants and effects pertaining to the current support.

1.2.1 Stakeholders

The TOR specifies that primary stakeholders and additional stakeholders be queried. The Team was very conscious of **gathering data from as wide a range of informants as possible to avoid biases** related to interest in Sida’s continued funding of Tamasi. The list of informants is provided in Annex 2 and includes over 160 people. Some of these are key stakeholders who significantly affect or influence the intervention and who share responsibility for quality, sustainability, subsequent effects and impact. They have a strong stake in the evaluation results and in continued funding. These have been marked with an “x” in Annex 2.

Around one-third of the stakeholders interviewed belong to the Programme’s target population. They have thus benefitted from a Tamasi activity at some point. Their personal

¹ Question A7 states “Can the Tamasi program be said to have contributed to enhancing the freedom of expression in the MENA region?”

interest in continued support varies. In many cases, their direct interest in Tamasi's continuation is comparatively low – they have received training or attended classes and are now pursuing their own projects. In other cases, stakeholders interviewed from the target population continue to benefit directly or indirectly from Tamasi-funded activities. The letter “t” distinguishes members of target groups from other informants in Annex 2.

In addition, at least twelve informants were target populations of earlier Sida support. Six of this group are not primary stakeholders of the current Programme.

The relationship between each Tamasi organisation and its respective stakeholders can vary considerably. There are long-term trainees, one time trainees, trainers, core actors/dancers, occasional actors/dancers, volunteers, amateur/“recreational” (unpaid) artists and professional artists. Some performing artists or groups are independent but have regular interaction and strong ties with a Tamasi partner; others have had more limited interaction at some point during the programme period and do not have a strong stake in the organisation.

Several of the informants are external to the Tamasi Programme or are potentially indirect stakeholders. They come from former partner NGOs, other NGOs, government officials and other donors (a total of around 15 informants). Several members of the performing arts community who have been interviewed do not have a stake in Tamasi, but do have a high stake in the independent performing arts sector.

1.2.2 Definitions

The Tamasi Programme primarily supports eleven performing arts organisations in the region. In this report, they are often referred to as “Tamasi members” even though Tamasi is not yet a formal organisation. This distinguishes them from other organisations that also receive support from the Programme's Open Fund. The Tamasi members have decided that the formalised organisation will not take the form of a network but will resemble a **collective**.² Although the ToR refers to the constellation as a “network”, we avoid this term.

Most stakeholders referred to the protests at Tahrir Square and the events that followed as the “Egyptian Revolution.” Others have pointed out that the revolution is only beginning and what has happened is at best a rebellion. When referring to these events and changes, we have avoided the use of the term “revolution” unless in quotes.

² The Tamasi members regard a network as a looser form of organisation, which has an open or relatively open policy towards new members since its objective is to extend. In a collective, each member has a stronger ownership stake. Admittance of new members is more restrictive, typically based on established criteria that have to be met and the acceptance of the majority of other members.

1.2.3 Limitations

The evaluation faced several important limitations.

First, fewer person days were given to the Team than was stipulated in the ToR. To prepare this report, the Team used more than double the time that was allocated. Similarly, while the ToR specified that three field days be allotted to the study of each organisation, the reduced budget allowed for around one day. Most of the field visit interviews focused on target group interviews and focus groups. There was not sufficient time to study and assess in detail the extent to which each of the eleven organisations has been individually strengthened nor their possible shortcomings or weaknesses.

Given the limited time, the Team consciously prioritised the data collection in favour of covering the topics defined by Sida. Data gathering and analysis regarding freedom of expression have taken precedence, therefore, over gathering data on efficiency, organisational capacity and the individual members' funding base.

Second, the data analysis has also been somewhat limited due to lack of access to the individual Tamasi members' annual reports from 2008 to 2011. While the Team has had access to the consolidated annual report prepared by the Coordinator, these reports have not always contained the level of detail needed. Nevertheless, the Team acquired a handful of the 44 annual reports, which served to clarify and deepen the data collected.

Third, the Team was not able to cover each of the organisations with the same level of depth. The tight travel schedule did not allow for a trip to Port Said where most of El Mastaba's stakeholders are located. In Beirut the time available did not permit interviews with external informants or indirect stakeholders. Travel to Gaza was thwarted since transport with the Swedish Consulate in Jerusalem could not be arranged. The Team nevertheless managed to gather important data from Gaza through telephone interviews and recorded interviews with groups.

Fourth, much of the data on how performing arts contributed to creating conditions for empowerment are based on the personal perceptions of those interviewed. While personal perceptions are an important form of data for this type of analysis, the Team have not been able to independently triangulate the actual role performing arts played. On the other hand, the high correlation with DICE research project on drama and theatre education in Gaza and in Europe supports the anecdotal evidence gathered.

Finally, the Team has more data on effects from Palestine. The Team spent slightly more time there and met more Palestinian stakeholders. Further, Sida's support to Palestine dates from the 1990s, which meant there were also more examples of long-term effects in relation to empowerment and therefore more relevant stories to record. Moreover, the level of Sida funding in Palestine is higher than in the other locations.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report begins with a discussion of Sida support and a brief profile of the eleven-Tamasi members (a longer profile is provided in Annex 6). It then provides an overview of the Tamasi programme. In accordance with the questions on effectiveness set out in the Terms of Reference, Chapter 3 assesses effectiveness in relation to the first six questions in the Terms of Reference. The chapter also includes a brief consideration of Tamasi's efficiency.

Chapter 4 addresses the question "can the Tamasi programme be said to have contributed to enhancing the freedom of expression in the MENA region?" Chapter 5 explores the extent to which the Programme has contributed to empowerment and resulted in impact. Chapter 6 assesses the extent to which the Tamasi programme is sustainable in relation to results achieved, the member organisations and the performing arts sector in the region. The criterion of relevance is the subject of Chapter 7, with regard to the needs of the target populations, the Tamasi members and to Sida's goals and priorities. The final chapter, Chapter 8, provides overall conclusions and recommendations.

2 Background and Overview of Tamasi

2.1 BACKGROUND TO SIDA'S SUPPORT

Sida's support to culture in the MENA region began in Gaza and the West Bank in 1992. The main objective was to "encourage cultural life among children and youth in the field of theatre, literature and music". In 1996, through the Dramatiska Institutet (DI) Sida initiated its support to Theatre Day Productions in Gaza. By 1998 the support also incorporated a regional component, primarily assistance to the Amman International Theatre Festival. In total, Sida support from 1996 to 2003 amounted to SEK 21.5 million. In 2003, DI launched a regional MENA performing arts programme that totalling SEK 21.5 million for three years. The overall aim of the programme was *"to support democratisation and human rights in the MENA region through a strengthening of the qualitative and quantitative aspects of performing arts – not only in terms of artists and productions but also audience."* All the current members of Tamasi received support in this period, in addition to several other groups.

2.2 OVERVIEW OF THE TAMASI PROGRAMME

The Overall Objective of the Tamasi Programme: *Culture, enriched by diversity, triggers constructive and reflective dialogue that stimulates our societies to strengthen their internal immune system against disintegration.*

The assumption underpinning the Tamasi Programme is that culture allows for the practice and strengthening of human rights and democratic values. The Tamasi Programme document links the Programme's overall objective to freedom of expression in its discussion on voice and dialogue. The immediate objective of the Tamasi programme is *"a more sustainable, viable, diverse and vibrant performing arts life in the societies where we operate within the region."*

The Programme has defined four result areas and nine associated strategies to obtain these results. These are provided in Box 1 below and are assessed in detail in the following chapters.

Box 1: The Tamasi Programme's Objectives

Result 1: Increased access to quality performing art with main focus on the young generations.

- **Strategy 1:** Audience/outreach. Build and develop cultural democracy and diversity through outreach of the performing arts with the wider circle of society without discrimination.
- **Strategy 2:** Productions. Present varied forms of performances, with a high level of professionalism as the main common to nominate, with focus on the young generation.

- **Strategy 3:** Spaces. Development of permanent independent cultural/performing arts spaces, and acquisition of mobile structures and equipment allowing temporary adaptation of spaces for touring.
- **Strategy 4:** Children and youth. Create productions and performances with and/or for children; mentor train and support children and young people - particularly in marginalised areas; and promote performing arts in schools.

Result 2: Higher professionalism in performing arts with special focus on the young generations.

- **Strategy 1:** Capacity building
- **Strategy 2:** Exchange and regional activities

Result 3: A strong local ownership

- **Strategy 1:** Strengthen each organisation's identity and sustainability.
- **Strategy 2:** Develop the regional network "Tamasi".

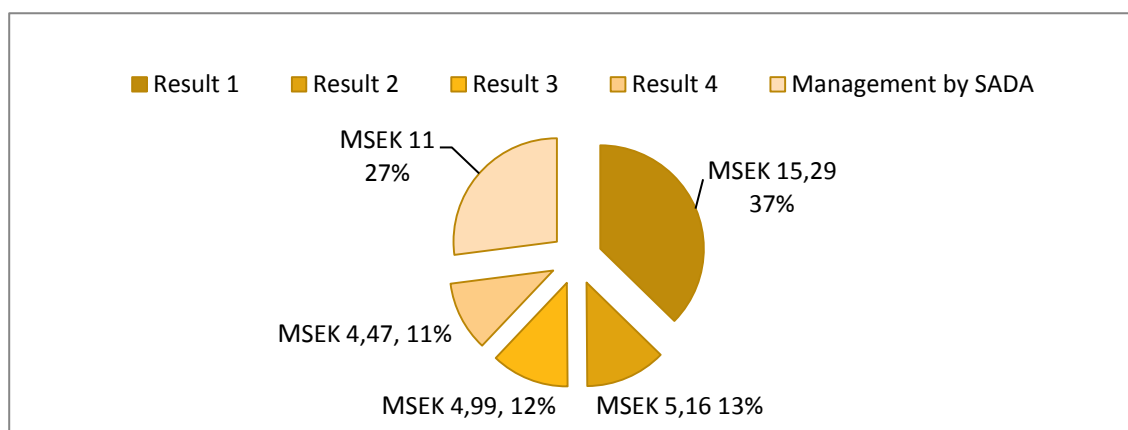
Result 4: The regional programme has been strengthened and expanded.

1. **Strategy 1:** Expansion and support activities

According to the programme document, the most important programme results (defined as Results 1 and 2) are undertaken at the **local level** independently by the Tamasi members. The document also foresees **regional level work** (defined as Results 3 and 4) through annual network meetings; regional festivals – in particular the Creative Forum in Alexandria – and through collaboration with the Arab Theatre Training Centre (ATTC). To a lesser extent, Tamasi operates at the **national level** through the so-called DNA Network established in 2005 by Dramatiska Institutet (DI) and the three Palestinian Tamasi members. During the programme period, a similar national structure has been initiated in Egypt, although it is thus far not as developed as the DNA Network and artistic and practical collaborations have yet to be undertaken.

The 2006 Evaluation of DI's programme in the region recommended a stronger presence in the region to strengthen ownership among the regional partners, coordination and the identification of opportunities. As a result, a SADA coordinator has been based in Cairo since 2008, while a second staff member in Sweden has been responsible for the budgetary and financial aspects of the programme. The coordinator's tasks have included monitoring, organising annual meetings, preparing annual reports, determining annual budget allocations, providing backstopping support to the members, facilitating communication among the members, identifying projects for support from the Open Fund and managing the expansion to Syria and Morocco.

The five-year programme budget amounts to SEK 41 million. The funds are allocated according to the diagram below:

Figure 1: Tamasi Programme Budget Allocations 2008-2012

With some slight deviations, the funds have been allocated according to plan. Result 1 represents 37 percent of the budget allocation, while Result 2, Result 3, and Result 4 average 12 percent each or 36 percent in total. **Each organisation received on average of SEK 425,000 a year for their activities.** Result 4, also called the Open Fund, has dispersed an average of SEK 630,000 annually for collaboration with groups in Syria, Morocco and special interventions in the region. In addition, an average of SEK 325,000 a year has funded exchanges with Sweden during the years 2008 to 2011.

In view of formalising Tamasi, the Tamasi members applied for and received 15 months of additional “bridge funding” from Sida in 2011. With these funds, the Tamasi members aim to register Tamasi and to define and implement the mechanisms and procedures needed for proper financial and management coordination. This bridging grant amounts to SEK 1,125,000 – including a 10 percent administrative cost for SADA.

2.3 SHORT PROFILE OF THE TAMASI MEMBERS

Eleven groups form the core of Tamasi with a presence in Egypt (5 groups), Lebanon (2 groups), Jordan (1 group) and Palestine (3 groups):

Egypt

El Warsha Theatre Company is rooted in traditional popular arts and is the region’s oldest independent theatre company. It offers drama, music and dance training for young artists and performs all over Egypt.

Studio Emad Eddin (SEE) provides theatre space, equipment, and rehearsal spaces for young Egyptian artists and its members. It also offers long-term training and residencies. It has recently acquired the use of two large theatre venues in downtown Cairo that it manages.

Temple Independent Theatre is a small performing theatre group associated with SEE and the only Tamasi member that exclusively focuses on artistic productions.

El Mastaba Centre consists of five musical groups based on different Egyptian folkloric traditions – several of which have received international recognition. El Mastaba also runs two children’s music groups/schools.

I-Act was founded by the Alternative Theatre Group (ATG) – the first independent theatre group in Alexandria. I-Act sees theatre as an instrument of change and liberation for the expression of youth. It organised the former Creative Forum festivals and now runs the Reveil festival.

Lebanon

SHAMS is an independent cultural association located in a former war zone. It manages the largest theatre space among the Tamasi members, the Sunflower Theatre. It also supports youth in engaging in cultural activities in theatre, dance, music and multi-media arts

Arab Theatre Training Centre (ATTC) provides regional training workshops in performing arts and facilitates collaboration in the performing arts sector.

Jordan

Al Balad Theatre is a multi-purpose theatre house that functions as a space for music, theatre, dance, film and visual art. It hosts three festivals every year – a regional storytelling festival, a women's festival and a music festival.

Palestine

Al Harah Theatre promotes human rights and freedom of expression through theatre performances and training workshops. It partners with civil society organisations and schools around the West Bank to reach a range of audiences (children, people with disabilities and marginalised communities).

Theatre Day Productions (TDP) promotes quality theatre for children and with children. It performs all over Gaza, runs a long-term curriculum programme for theatre performers and trainers in drama and video animation and trains school teachers in drama education. It is the largest of the Tamasi members. West Bank independent organisations set up by graduates of TDP exist in Hebron, Jerusalem, and the north West Bank.

El Funoun Popular Dance Troupe was established in 1979 and is a volunteer-driven dance organisation with roots in the traditional Palestinian Dabke dance. Its main troupe has performed all over the world. It also runs a children's troupe and trains children in culturally underserved communities through its outreach programme.

3 Effectiveness

Chapter 3 presents findings and analysis on effectiveness in conformity with the six evaluation questions on effectiveness posed in the ToR. It assesses whether the Tamasi Programme has:

- Increased access to performing arts in the region;
- Increased access to performing arts for women and youth in particular;
- Enhanced professionalism in the area of performing arts in the MENA region;
- Managed to create strong and viable networks in the area of performing arts, both between the members of the program, and within broader circles of relevant groups;
- Contributed to strengthening the groups that are members of the network;
- Helped to strengthen the situation for performing arts in the MENA region.

The efficiency of the Tamasi Programme is also discussed by examining programme management, monitoring and cost-effectiveness.

Rather than presenting the analysis organisation by organisation, the Team has taken a thematic approach that largely reflects the structure of the Tamasi Programme. The first section analyses the different aspects of Tamasi's work to increase access to performing arts. It largely corresponds to Tamasi's Result 1 and its four strategy areas. Section 3.2 assesses Tamasi's results in contributing to professionalism in the region (Result 2). Section 3.3 covers the effectiveness of the Programme's efforts to strengthen the member organisations and their networks (Result 3, Strategy 1). The final section analyses the progress of strengthening Tamasi, its efficiency and results in expanding the regional programme (Result 3, Strategy 2 and Result 4).

For each of the elements of effectiveness, a brief contextual analysis is provided to help illuminate how the activities and members in the Tamasi network relate to the current context and potentially contribute to the ongoing political transformations in the Arab world (question A8 of the ToR). Where possible the needs and priorities of the beneficiary population are also discussed.

3.1 INCREASING ACCESS TO PERFORMING ARTS

This section addresses the following two questions from the ToR:

A 2: Has the Tamasi program increased access to performing arts in the region?

A 3: Has the Tamasi program increased access to performing arts for women and youth in particular?

Increasing access to performing arts has been a key goal of Tamasi. This involves promoting physical, mental and intellectual access to performing arts. In line with the methodological framework, the critical questions examined by this section are the extent to which Tamasi's efforts have:

- Promoted access to physical space for performing arts
- Increased the number and range of productions
- Increased the number of performances and range of events
- Enlarged and extended the size, increase and types of audiences reached – including underserved communities, women, children and youth
- Engaged audiences and involved children and youth in creative performing arts activities
- Involved organisations, institutions or groups of special interest for audience building and outreach
- Advocated for and provided public information about performing arts.
- Been affected by the political transformations in the region.

From 2009 the Tamasi Programme began systematic collection of quantitative data on access to performing arts.³ Much of the data provided below on promoting access to performing arts is therefore from 2009 onwards.

3.1.1 Regional Context

Increasing access to performing arts in the MENA region faces many formidable challenges. Censorship and governmental control is strong - particularly in Jordan, Egypt (pre-Arab Spring) and Lebanon. In part because of this, independent performing artists in these countries lack access to venues. Physical space for rehearsing and performing is particularly acute in Egypt and is considered a key constraint in the effort to promote access to independent theatre, music and dance. Societal repression and the stigma traditionally associated with working in theatre are strong in all countries. The conservative forces in society oppose physical exposure of women in public - in particular in mixed company – and some groups consider music as sinful. The MENA region's school systems leave little room for creativity or critical thinking. Regional politics have resulted in poor or impossible mobility over certain borders, which limits reach. During the period 2008 and 2012, the conflict in Gaza and the political events in Egypt created further obstacles for people's access to performing arts.

3.1.2 Performing Arts Spaces⁴

The issue of physical space for independent performing arts in the region is critical. Stakeholders canvassed by the 2006 evaluation of the *Dramatic Institute Performing Arts project in the MENA Region* listed lack of performance and rehearsal space as the number one problem for independent performing arts in the region. The Tamasi Programme has aimed to develop permanent independent cultural/performing art spaces and acquired mobile structures and equipment to help adapt spaces for performances when touring.

³ There is no systematic data from before the Programme period to create a pre-programme baseline.

⁴ Please see Annex 8 for additional data on providing access to physical performing arts spaces.

At the start of the programme period, Al Balad Theatre, SHAMS and SEE were the main members that provided physical spaces for rehearsals and/or performances. SEE's main activity is providing space to its members, which have increased by over 100 percent to over individual 2500 members (including 500 amateur, semi-professional and professional troupes). Since 2008, a number of new venues have been acquired by Tamasi groups, thereby increasing the physical space available for performing arts:

Box 2: Space Lost and Rebuilt in Palestine

Over time, Tamasi members in Palestine have faced serious setbacks with regard to theatre space. The precursor to Al Harah lost its theatre space – which it had built with in-kind donations from the community – when the town was bombed by the Israeli Defence Forces. Likewise, the community centre in Deheishe camp – where Al Harah performs regularly and runs classes – has been bombed and bulldozed three times. It has now been rebuilt again with contributions from the local community. Municipal political agendas led TDP to give up the Norwegian funded Holst Centre in Gaza and the Happiness Centre in Hebron in 2004. Two years later, it had built a new theatre in Hebron and Gaza.

- With funds from the Ford Foundation (but with core funding support from Sida funding), SEE is opening four new rehearsal spaces in 2012 as well as a multimedia room. SEE has furthermore acquired the use of two additional Cairo theatres: the well-equipped Falaki Theatre (seats 230) in the old American University compound in 2011; and an old downtown cinema with two halls seating 800 people each which it has been granted free and exclusive use of by a real estate company.
- Al Warsha and El Mastaba have developed small performance and rehearsal spaces in Cairo with funds from the Tamasi Programme.
- I-Act inaugurated the Teatro Eskendria in 2012 which will function as a multi-purpose cultural centre. I-Act leveraged Sida funding to acquire support for the theatre from a number of other donors.
- The Beit Jala Municipality has granted Al Harah free use of a renovated community building from 2012 onwards where it will run Palestine's first centre for performing arts training.
- TDP has developed mobile materials and equipment to be able to create performing arts spaces, in particular in schools. In 2009, TDP created 72 temporary spaces. This increased to 146 and 168 spaces in 2010 and 2011 respectively.

The developments achieved in relation to expanding physical space for independent performing arts extend beyond the goals set in the Programme document.

The Tamasi members have also made use of non-traditional spaces to improve access to performing arts during the programme period. For instance, in Palestine El-Funoun has performed about 8 times a year outdoors in 14 different towns, each time reaching, on average, 1600 people. Al Harah organised the first street festival in Beit Jala in 2011. It intends to organise the festival annually from now on.

In Egypt, performing in the streets during the Mubarak regime was nearly impossible, although some of the Tamasi associated groups had a few minor successes in this area.⁵ During and since the fall of the old regime, the Egyptian Tamasi groups and their associates have been active in public places. This has included performing at Tahrir Square, in low-income neighbourhoods and the monthly El Fan Medan (Art in the Square) movement, which has emerged since the Tahrir Square protests (please see section 3.1.11). Another notable outdoor event was the 2012 Downtown Contemporary Arts Festival (D-CAF) in Egypt, which Orient Productions/SEE organised with some partners based in Downtown Cairo.

3.1.3 Productions

The Tamasi members have steadily increased the number of productions since 2009. In 2009, the aggregate number of productions undertaken by the Tamasi members was 28. By 2011 the number had increased by nearly 40 percent to a total of 39. In addition to the 39 productions, the *50 Days, 50 Years* Festival that SHAMS organised in 2011 resulted in an additional 22 productions. In total, the Tamasi partners have produced well over 100 shows since 2008.

Table 1: Tamasi Productions 2008 to 2011

	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total so far
Total number of productions	N/A	28	40	39	107
Number of productions for children		15	18	20	53

Tamasi's total number of shows has not only been relatively large, but also significantly varied in artistic format and content. The productions have involved dance, music, drama and multidisciplinary performances. At least half of the productions each year have specifically focused on young audience and the other half have been suitable for mixed audiences. The range of topics covered include social justice, women's rights issues, corruption, Arab identity, children's rights, children's fairy tales, the water crisis, religion, HIV/AIDS and regional war and politics. These are further discussed in section 7.4.3.

⁵ Small groups of young performers associated with El Warsha staged a few "guerrilla performances" with the Townhouse Gallery on the street, reaching a large audience. Time and place for the performances were passed by SMS. Equipment and actors would mobilise themselves quickly, perform and hastily pack up just in time to escape shutdown from the authorities. El Mastaba's musicians would also sometimes perform on the street before the change of regime – but usually in connection with weddings.

3.1.4 Performances

The number of performances given by Tamasi groups has increased during the programme period. In 2008 the groups performed in total 886 times, which increased by nearly 80 percent to total 1,583 by 2011. Of these performances, the proportion for child audiences was just over half in 2008; by 2011, this share had increased to two-thirds.

Table 2: Tamasi Performances 2008 to 2011

	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total so far
Total number of performances	886	1242	1452	1583	5163
Number performances for children	497	525	972	1074	3068
Number of performances for culturally underserved		513	1066	1127	2706

3.1.5 Festivals

Tamasi has also been responsible for important national and regional festivals which have drawn significant audience numbers. The four most prominent festivals organised by Tamasi members during the programme period have been the Creative Forum by Independent Theatre Groups (I-Act); the Spring Festival (SHAMS) the Hakaya Storytelling Festival (Al Balad) and Reveil (also by I-Act) – which replaced the Forum when it was cancelled in 2011. Although not foreseen in the Programme Document, the Tamasi members organised 8 new festivals, bringing the total to 12 festivals. Each festival presents between 13 to 32 performances and attracts between 1,000 and 6,300 spectators. Half of the festivals have had a national/local scope. The other half have been mainly regional, but also included participants from outside the region. Most festivals are supported by a variety of other organisations such as the British Council, Mawred and local businesses. While Sida may not be a major funder of the festivals, its core support to the organisations has been instrumental in the ability of the groups to organise these complex events.

The festivals organised by Tamasi members during the programme period represent a relatively effective means of promoting wider access to performing arts. Details on the festivals are provided in Annex 8.

3.1.6 Audiences

The Tamasi Programme's annual **aggregate audience numbers have grown substantially since 2008**. In 2008, according to Tamasi's statistics, the Tamasi partners estimated that they reached about 198,000 people through their performances. By 2011, this number had increased by 62 percent to 311,000 – not including the tens of thousands that experienced Tamasi performances at Tahrir Square during the final days of the Mubarak regime.⁶

⁶ There are different estimates of how many demonstrators were present at Tahrir Square. Conserva-

Table 3: Tamasi Audience Figures from 2008 to 2011

	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total so far
Total audience numbers	198000	187698	321962	311000	1018660
Child audience numbers	103000	92175	214828	224973	634976
Culturally underserved audience numbers		92617	247469	242400	582486

All performing groups and theatres have presented performances to children since 2008. In 2009, around half of the Tamasi audiences - 92,000 people - were estimated to be **children** (i.e., under the age of 19). By 2011, the proportion had risen to **72 percent** or 225,000 children and youth.⁷ In effect, from 2009 the child audience numbers have increased by 144 percent.

In principle, the Tamasi Programme has aimed to perform to “marginalised,” “de-favourised” and “decentralised” groups: underprivileged communities which are **culturally underserved**.⁸ As shown in Table 3 above, around half the audiences reached by Tamasi partners in 2009 were classified as culturally underserved. By 2011, this figure had increased by 162 percent to 242,400 people.

In numeric terms, the audience numbers reached are impressive. An estimated 1,000,000 people (although some may be “repeats”) saw performances by Tamasi partners during the programme period to date, in addition to the hundreds of thousands who saw Tamasi partners’ performances during the demonstrations at Tahrir Square. **The critical questions, however, are what is the composition of the audiences, where are they reached and through what means.** Breakdown of the aggregate audience data - as well as for young and underserved audiences - reveals that the increase in recorded audience figures is to a large extent due to the sizeable audiences reached in Gaza through TDP’s Summer Games Project with UNRWA. This event involved around 170,000 more spectators in 2010 and 2011. The Summer Games also resulted in large aggregate figures for young and underserved audiences for 2010 and 2011. However, because UNRWA has not succeeded in securing financing for its Summer Games Project and the project is slated to be stopped, the aggregate number of children reached by the Tamasi members is expected to decrease significantly in 2012.

tive estimates give around 300,000 people during the most crowded days.

⁷ Excluding the audiences at Tahrir Square.

⁸ UNDP refers to these people as culturally “undernourished” in the *Arab Human Development Report*, 2002. In Egypt this includes most areas outside of Alexandria and Cairo and the more low income neighbourhoods in Cairo. In the West Bank, the people who have least access to cultural, creative and educational activities are communities in the northern and southern parts of the territory, refugee camps and Bedouin groups. However, there are also many pockets with villages scattered around the West Bank that are insular and conservative. Gaza as a whole is regarded as cultural underserved. In Jordan, rural areas, low-income neighbourhoods and refugee camps (Palestinian and Iraqi) are underserved.

Meanwhile, other Tamasi partners saw either no change, modest increases or decreases in audience attendance. Tamasi explains this as a result of financial limitations caused by the reduction in the Tamasi budget allocations from 2010 onwards, coupled with donor reticence caused by the global financial crisis. In addition, the unrest affecting both Egypt and Lebanon reduced performances and audience numbers.

Numbers of audience participants has been highest in Palestine where the three Palestinian members accessed 241,000 people in 2011. In Gaza, the audience figures in 2010 and 2011 amount to more than 10 percent of the population. Larger amounts of funding; supportive authorities (Palestinian Authority in West Bank and UNRWA in Gaza); and, relatively easy access to venues and well-positioned local civil society partners have been key factors that have improved the Tamasi partners' ability to increase access to performing arts in Palestine. Meanwhile, with Egypt's population standing at some 84 million (2011 estimate), the relative reach of Tamasi's five Egyptian members is minute. In Lebanon and Jordan (population of 4 and 6 million respectively), Tamasi's two theatres, both with decent audience capacities, reach around 20,000-25,000 people a year, placing them in between Egypt and Palestine in terms of audiences accessed in relation to population size.

The 2006 evaluation criticised DI's programme for not reaching more cultural underserved people. During the current programme period, however, the Tamasi members have shown **notable success in reaching beyond easily accessed audiences**. For instance, El Mastaba's weekly audiences that attend performances in Suez, Port Said and Ismailia belong to the country's underserved. Likewise, many of Al Harah's and el Funoun's audiences, particularly those in conservative parts of the West Bank, are also underserved and isolated. Al Warsha, SHAMS, I-Act and Al Balad Theatre have also made some efforts to reach audiences from marginalised and underserved communities within the capital and/or in rural areas. The Tamasi members have been encouraged by the successes of reaching new underserved audiences since it has demonstrated the art of the possible. They believe that that in the coming years much more is possible.

Meanwhile, most performances at home base have tended to attract relatively more advantaged groups of spectators (intellectuals, other artists, students, culturally active people, foreigners, etc.). While these groups tend to be economically more privileged (and less culturally underserved), they arguably constitute an important target group since they have an increased potential for functioning as agents of change and influence with regard to promoting freedom of expression. Members of these groups were among the core activists during the Arab Spring movements. For them, performing arts activities and events can provide safe meeting points and place for discussion, interaction and learning.

With the exception of SHAMS, none of the groups has carried out systematic analysis of the composition of their existing audiences or the motivations for attendance. Similarly the groups have not undertaken audience development strategies. For the future stages of Tamasi, the partners would benefit from introducing a more rigorous approach to audiences analysis and development.

Box 3: Reaching Underserved Communities in Egypt

Actors in Egypt state that they initially felt anxious to perform to new audiences because they were unsure of how they would react. Performing on stage – particularly by actresses – is considered to be a base activity by many conservative communities.

A group of youth actors associated with El Warsha took their play, *The Tahrir Monologues* outside of Cairo. The play includes stories from a range of different real people at the Tahrir demonstrations, such as those of a mother of a killed activist and a man from the security forces. The play gave these audiences perspectives about the Tahrir events that they would not otherwise have had because of the limited access to or skewed public information at the time. The actors maintain that the spectators were deeply moved. Afterwards, many were eager to discuss the play. The actors felt inspired about engaging in discourse with new audiences – they reported that it made them feel hopeful about change and enthusiastic about reaching out to more communities.

3.1.7 Audience Participation

While exact data on the extent, quality and depth of audience participation has not been possible for the Team to gather, interviews and documentation analysis reveal that while audience participation has sometimes been passive, there is evidence that Tamasi members have generally encouraged audience involvement. Most the performances in all countries visited have been followed by a discussion session with the audience that has lasted at least 30 minutes.

This is particularly true of the children's performances and performances to culturally under-served groups. For some of the Al Harah children's performances audiences are even encouraged to interrupt the show and interact directly with the actors.

3.1.8 Children and Youth Participation in Performing Arts

Promoting access to performing arts is not only a question of engaging people as audiences, but also entails promoting their participation in free expression and the creative processes of theatre, dance and music. For children and youth, studies⁹ have shown that free expression and creativity have important educational, social and developmental dimensions.¹⁰ Drama education is particularly relevant in the Middle East, where the schools in general give little encouragement to individual thinking and creativity.

⁹ See for instance the analysis and results of the Pan-European research project DICE.

¹⁰ In his book *Imagine: How Creativity Works* Jonah Lehrer explains that when children are allowed to create: "they are able to develop the sophisticated talents that are required for success in the real world... they learn how to cope with the complexity and connect ideas, how to bridge disciplines and improve first

The Tamasi Programme Strategy 4 for Result 1 specifically focuses on creating productions and performances with children; mentoring and training children and young people; and promoting performing arts in schools.

The number of children that have gained access to performing arts by participating in creative activities (drama workshops, dance classes, music schools, volunteer work in theatres, theatre productions for kids, etc.) organised by Tamasi was 6375 in 2009. By 2011, this figure decreased to 3740. According to the Tamasi members, this is due to a switch towards longer-term creative activities that focused on fewer children and young people. Al Harah and TDP have been the most engaged in this area of work, although El-Funoun, El Mastaba, I-Act, SHAMs and Al Balad have also undertaken activities to promote opportunities for expression among children and young people. The results are summarised in Annex 8.

Box 4: Effects of Drama education in Palestine

The Palestinian Ministry of Education has noted that when a play is performed for children at school, the attendance rate among parents is higher than for any other event.

drafts. These mental talents can't be taught in an afternoon – there is no textbook for ingenuity, no lesson plan for divergent thinking. Rather, the child has to learn by doing". Jonah Lenrer *Imagine: How Creativity Works*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, New York: 2012

3.1.9 Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Access

Tamasi audiences have been comprised of roughly equal numbers of males and females, in aggregate terms, throughout the years. Exceptions include El Mastaba's music performances, which take place in conservative areas and tend to attract more men (estimated by El Mastaba to be around 70 percent). In contrast, El Funoun's dance performances tend to attract more women than men and Al Balad's 2011 International Women's Day Festival catered specifically to women (co-produced with the Aat Network, a Jordanian women's network).

The content of a significant number of Tamasi productions specifically address gender relations and women's empowerment. Womanhood/girlhood in Arab society, virginity, oppression, rape and gender relations are topics covered by over a dozen Tamasi productions (see Section 7.4.3).

Most of the Tamasi organisations themselves represent a relatively balanced mix of men and women. Women are increasingly assuming key roles in Tamasi organisations – although there are slightly more men than women in the leading positions in most organisations. Further, the organisations have actively promoted gender balance in training activities for children, young people and adults. The percentage of female artists belonging to Tamasi organisations who have been trained in performing arts has increased from 39 percent in 2009 to 66 percent in 2011.

Drama class is not just about theatre education. It provides many other great skills for life. It is also an education that teaches you to accept others, function without a hierarchy and undertake teamwork in a mixed group of people. It is about respect and trust and exchanging ideas. It teaches character and social skills. It teaches you how you can be free to talk to thousands of people. It is a way to communicate with everyone – rich and poor. Theatre has no borders. You can break the ice. – A Tamasi partner in Jordan

At first I was sceptical. After all, it costs a lot to produce a play. First, I noted that the children and young people really enjoy learning theatre. Then I saw how they become interested in art. After a while, they need art to survive – it gives them hope and helps them find a different way of life. They join the political struggle or find voice through culture. – A partner of Al Harah

The Team noted that most members have female trainers as part of their core associates. Evidence gathered through interviews reveals that the number of female trainers has increased during the current programme period. However, since Tamasi does not collect data on number of female trainers in the network, exact numbers are not possible to present.

El Funoun, TDP, Al Harah, El Mastaba, Al Warsha and Al Balad – and their partners and associated groups – have faced significant gender-related resistance during outreach activities in culturally underserved areas. In its performing arts activities, the Tamasi members systematically try to promote mixed groups of boys and girls. It discusses and negotiates with community leaders, government officials and families. In some cases,

I recall how 15 years ago in Hebron El-Funoun dancers were pelted with eggs and tomatoes because male and female dancers were holding hands. Now Hebron has the (independent) Yes Theatre (sprung out of TDP), which has three women performers! Social change is happening, one step at a time. – Government official in Palestine.

We have proven that with dialogue and patience things can change. We must not to give up on or dismiss conservative communities. One community at a time, we can change people's mindsets. – Stakeholder in Palestine.

(TDP in Gaza and two El-Funoun groups) a compromise reached is to have female teachers for women and girls and to segregate them from men and boys and establish a separate group. Interviews confirmed that most community members eventually changed their negative views of performing arts, became very proud of their sons and daughters and not only found the activities acceptable – but also beneficial. Nevertheless, there are still dissenting voices and girls tend to drop out of activities when they reach their last year of school.

One Tamasi member explained that the last four years of community outreach has shown that with dialogue and time, even the most conservative communities can be won over to see the benefits that performing arts bring to boys and girls.

Against a background of social disapproval of the performing arts by traditional society in the MENA region, resistance to females on a public stage – particularly in the company of men or boys – remains intense in many communities. In a region where women's human rights are often undermined by traditional practices, patriarchy and discriminatory laws, providing women with opportunities for free expression becomes particularly relevant. The Tamasi partners have shown commitment to promoting women's rights and gender equality in relation to access to performing arts.

Annex 8 provides further evidence and examples of how the partners have promoted women's empowerment and equality.

3.1.10 Working with Partners

In all countries, the Tamasi partners have engaged with non-performing arts partners to increase people's access to performing arts. Tamasi documented around 400 local collaborations in 2009 and an increase to 575 of such collaborations in 2011.

While these figures do not necessarily represent new partners each time, the Programme's interaction with different partners is significant and often helpful in diversifying its outreach capability. Civil society partner organisations have included human rights organisations (Women's Rights Network, the Palestinian Network for Children's Rights, Defence for Children International, RUWWAD), international NGOs (CARE, Peace-for-Jerusalem, World Vision), specialised civil society organisations (the Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation - BASR, the Jordanian Aat Women's Network, the Arab Education Forum) and UNRWA.

In the West Bank (and to a certain extent in Jordan), the partners have established fruitful relations with local authorities. This gives access to community centres, youth clubs, schools, theatres and street festivals. In Palestine the Tamasi groups have also established productive partnerships with the school authorities (the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and UNRWA in Gaza) to access school children. This collaboration is possible due to years of lobbying and awareness-raising that both organisations have undertaken. Reaching school children has been more challenging in Egypt, although some modest results have been achieved nonetheless by I-Act, Al Warsha and El Mastaba.

3.1.11 Advocacy and Public Information

Promoting access to performing arts requires that information about productions, shows, groups, festivals and performing arts itself is made available. While it has not been possible to assess this parameter of access to any depth, some observations can be made:

According to its Annual Reports from the programme period, the Tamasi members have documented 250-380 newspaper or online articles, around 100 television features, 20-50 radio features, and a couple of documentary films every year. This amounts to an average of about 40 media exposures per organisation a year, with its own large audience.

In addition, El-Funoun has been the subject of three films, while El Warsha's work during the revolutionary year of 2011 was featured in “The Dream of Sheharazad”, a film directed by the South African documentary filmmaker Francois Verster.

Furthermore, Tamasi has established a modest presence on the Internet. Most of the organisations have established websites, however two are not fully functional or updated. Some groups have YouTube videos on the Internet. Al Balad and Studio Emad Eddin have Facebook pages with a notably active participation and around 3000 and 1500 members respectively. Al Harah does not have FB members but 1200 “likes.” Both Al Balad and Al-Harah use Twitter, as do the D-CAF and Hakaya Festivals. These technologies are obviously more used by potential artists and practitioners of performing arts than by other Tamasi target groups.

Posters and printed notices are another effective means of publicising activities and conveying messages, which can potentially reach target groups such as the marginalised and culturally underserved. **The Tamasi members have created a strong visual profile by means of their graphic arts.** For example, the Creative Forum produced a visually expressive series of posters over its lifetime and the opening of I-Act’s Teatro Eskendria was accompanied by a coordinated series of graphics, including the opening night programme, posters, etc. TDP, Al Harah and SHAMS Sunflower Festival also created identifiable visual brands that reinforce the concepts of voice and social commentary. In societies with high rates of functional illiteracy visual messages can be a means to reach underserved audiences.

Al Balad deserves mention for expanding its information work beyond its own activities by producing a monthly cultural and entertainment guide for Amman. The booklet is glossy, of high quality and informative. It has become a key source of cultural informa-

tion in the city for residents and tourists in Amman. It contains advertisements and also receives funds through subscriptions.

On the advocacy front, the Tamasi members have made modest efforts, although this is not a goal area as such. The Palestinian groups were involved with the Palestinian Theatre League which resulted in the Ministry of Education agreeing to allow theatres to perform for the public schools during school hours and that children pay a nominal fee for the performance. TDP has also organised drama awareness campaigns and workshops in Gaza for teachers in UNRWA managed schools.

In Lebanon SHAMS joined other artistic organisations and created a group for lobbying against the censorship. For eleven organisations over five years, these efforts are modest, but in line with what can be expected of organisations whose main and regular functions do not include initiatives in this area.

The Egyptian Tamasi groups joined the campaign “We are all Egyptians” after the church bombing in Alexandria. During the Tahrir Square protests, the Egyptian Tamasi members formed part of the Coalition of Independent Cultural Institutions and Collectives who are advocating for free expression. A constitutive declaration was issued on February 24, 2011. Progress has been slow, however, and a clear strategic approach has yet to be implemented. As stated by Sayed Mahmoud Hassan, “Since the revolution, the political and cultural elites have been far too busy with political affairs to pay attention to cultural and artistic issues. It is also significant that precisely these topics do not appear in the programmes of the new liberal parties formed since the uprising.”¹¹

3.1.12 Effects of the Arab Spring and Political Unrest¹²

A critical question is the extent to which the political transformations in the region have affected Tamasi’s ability to promote people’s access to performing arts. Evidence reveals that these transformations have had a combination of negative and positive effects. On the negative side, the unrest in Egypt led to the closure of the Creative Forum festival in 2011, which in previous years attracted large numbers of spectators. Most Egyptians partners have had to cancel or reschedule performances and delay productions during parts of 2011. Moreover, during the period 2008 and 2012, the armed conflicts in Gaza and Syria and the political events in Egypt also created obstacles for people to access performing arts. In Lebanon, the Sunflower Theatre, located in the middle of the Christian, Shiite and Palestinian enclaves (which is itself a mark of the open attitude towards audiences), has faced reduced audiences in times of greater political unrest,

¹¹ Sayed Mahmoud Hassan “Egypt’s Cultural Sector in Limbo. Passages.” *Passages*, No 58, Issue 1/2012.

¹² This evaluation was conducted before the results of the Egyptian election which took place in mid June 2012.

since the public opt to stay home. The spill over from the conflict in Syria has created further difficulties for SHAMS.¹³

At the same time, the ousting of the Mubarak regime in Egypt and the resulting loosening of controls have allowed for greater access to new – and in particular underserved – audiences. Tahrir Square offered an immense audience for the Tamasi members who performed there. As discussed above, open spaces and new venues became more accessible for performances. For instance, groups associated with El Warsha performed in Menia and popular squares in Cairo in 2011. In 2012, El Warsha started to tour some of its work with the support of Care Egypt and recently performed in an official Culture Palace in Middle Egypt for the first time – censorship and control would not have made this possible before. El Mastaba and I-Act (ATG) have also ventured into new neighbourhoods and villages – especially during the election period – to perform to audiences that included workers, farmers and students.

Moreover, in Egypt different stakeholders reported that the “typical” group that have frequented independent theatre performances has changed significantly since the events at Tahrir Square. As one informant stated *“I used to recognise most faces. Now I know only a handful.”*

The fall of the Mubarak regime removed the restrictions for staging work on the streets, cafes or other public places, thereby offering other options for promoting access. Suddenly the independent culture sector was able to work without the usual censorship and permits. Stakeholders speak of an explosion of cultural activities in public places. As stated by one stakeholder *“claiming the street is a very new concept in our society.”*

The new D-CAF festival – the Downtown Contemporary Arts Festival Egypt’s which SEE organised in 2012 broke new ground by arranging performances in streets, storefronts and rooftops in downtown Cairo. It re-appropriated public spaces and used downtown spaces that have been shut for many years as venues for the festival events. The D-CAF festival also reached many Egyptians who had not had much exposure to performing arts.

3.1.13 Summary of Promoting Access

Promoting access to performing arts in the MENA region entails addressing a caustic mix of formidable challenges. Government control, conservative pressures, insecurity, lack of venues, travel restrictions in the region, autocratic education systems and limited funding in different ways affects Tamasi’s ability to promote access to performing arts. Despite this, the Tamasi Programme has reached or surpassed its goals in this area and increased people’s access to performing arts in a region with very scarce provision.

¹³Annex 8 contains data on how insecurity has hampered audience attendance.

Given the modest financial size of the programme, the variety of productions, the number of performances and the audience figures are noteworthy.

The outreach to culturally underserved communities has become a greater focus during the programme period, particularly since the Arab Spring, and more efforts could be undertaken to increase the audience numbers from this group in the future. In the efforts to increase the access to and involvement in performing arts among children, there is clear attention to culturally underserved communities. Working with different partners has been critical in this regard. In Palestine, where Tamasi members are able to partner with authorities, the reach has been particularly wide.

The promotion of girls' and women's participation has been emphasised in different ways. The Tamasi members have been successful in raising the issues of gender equality and women's rights – through the content of its performances, the promotion of women's and girl's expression on stage, training opportunities for women, and employment of women within Tamasi organisations.

Security and the political events in Egypt have in some cases had negative effects on audience levels, but the performances in Tahrir Square reached an indeterminate but significant number of spectators. By seizing opportunities that have emerged as a result of the Arab Spring the Tamasi members in Egypt have also brought performances to more varied groups in new places – in particular outdoors. Tamasi's aim to develop spaces has been surpassed given the additional space obtained, in part leveraging Sida support to attain funds from other donors.

The Tamasi members have made good use of media exposure to promote access to the performing arts. Its promotional material is generally of high quality and some groups are advanced in the use of social media. Although not a goal area as such, the members have also been involved in modest advocacy efforts to promote audience access to the performing arts, with some apparent results.

3.2 ENHANCING THE PROFESSIONALISM OF PERFORMING ARTS

This section addresses the following question from the ToR:

A 4: Has the Tamasi program enhanced the professionalism in the area of performing arts in the MENA region?

We interpret the term "professionalism" as referring to both the artistic quality and the effort to professionalise the subsector. In line with the evaluation framework, the critical questions related to enhanced professionalism are the extent to which the Tamasi programme has:

- Increased the number and types of training activities
- Increased the number of artists trained (female/male)

- Participated in regional and international tours, festivals and exchanges
- Contributed to multiplier effects in the sector
- Improved quality of the Tamasi members' work evidenced by awards and international invitations.

Following the brief overview of the regional context, the following sections examine the questions above.

3.2.1 Challenges in the Region

University courses in theatre arts in the region generally lack practical training. The large size of university classes means that students receive very little individual attention and have limited opportunity for practical training.

Moreover formal theatre education, for example in Egypt and Jordan, generally leads to working in the government sponsored arts, with its challenges to freedom of expression. For those who are not able to attend university, one of the only entry points into performing arts is independent training, which is a rare opportunity.

Performers interviewed indicate that for the most part they have a “day job” in order to support themselves. Often they are employed in the tourism industry, IT, the school system, in family businesses or are students. It is clear that it is difficult to support oneself in performing arts and few in our sample work full time in the theatre. There are also various hurdles to entry in the performing arts profession. For example in Egypt, to be allowed to be part of the Actor's Union, one must have a university degree. Tamasi training provides another option for becoming a theatre professional.

3.2.2 Tamasi's Efforts to Raise Professionalism

Tamasi members regard professionalism as essential for the health of the performing arts. They hope that by providing training, they hope to contribute to a viable professional scene where artists can pursue performing arts as a career. They seek to i) address prevailing gaps in theatre education by providing preactically oriented training, and ii) provide alternative career paths in the sector.

Tamasi's results in raising professionalism must be viewed in the light of the Programme's relatively small financial allocation of SEK 5,162,000 for capacity development in the region during the Programme period. Two-thirds of this amount has been allocated for travel and exchanges. The in-country training and capacity-building have amounted to an as little as SEK 65,000 per year for each of the seven organisations involved in training and an average of SEK 38,000 per year for exchanges. The latter figure does not include the sums that ATTC has received for its training activities in the region (in total SEK 725,000 between 2008 to 2011) or the sums that I-Act have been allocated for organising regional capacity building activities at the Creative Forum and Reveil festivals (in total SEK 1,510,000 between 2008 to 2011).

i. Training

It appears that the relatively small share of the Tamasi budget devoted to training has been a strategic decision in relation to other donors' priorities. While many donors are unwilling to fund theatre production costs (with the exception of Mawred), they tend to be more positive about funding capacity development activities. In fact, several of the Tamasi partners receive funds from other donors for training and exchange activities.

Despite the small budget, Tamasi's training figures are significant: according to Tamasi's monitoring figures, 794 people have received training by Tamasi members since 2008 – although the figure may include some repeats.

The percentage of women in these training activities has increased from around 40 per cent to over 60 percent. Since 2008, however, the numbers of trainees has decreased by about one-third. Tamasi explains this by **a trend towards longer-term training** as well as the cancellation of the Creative Forum in 2011.

Table 4: Capacity Development Figures for Tamasi Programme¹⁴

	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
Number of trainings to raise artistic capacity – long-term	No data	6	9	7	22
Number of trainings to raise artistic capacity – short-term	No data	104	83	65	252
Number of artists in Tamasi organisations trained in performing arts	235	231	170	158	794

Tamasi partners employ a spectrum of approaches to increasing professionalism in the region. As the only organisation devoted specifically to capacity building in Tamasi, ATTC has a special role to play. In the first part of the programme period it undertook a training needs assessment. With its staff in Jordan and Lebanon it has also supported some research – notably the three-year long regional Dance Refl-action research project. Otherwise, ATTC's main activity is organising training and seminars to develop the technical, artistic, and managerial capacities of young people active in the field of performing arts in the Arab world. With trainers from the region and Europe, it has coordinated nearly 40 workshops/seminars during the programme period, about half of which have taken place in Jordan and Lebanon. Other training venues were Syria, Morocco, Egypt and Bahrain.

¹⁴ It is not clear to the Team if these figures also include training activities not directly funded by the programme.

As the organiser of the Creative Forum and later Reveil, **I-Act** also plays a central role in the Tamasi Programme with regard to increasing professionalism. The Forum and Reveil have offered intensive training workshops for actors, dancers and other specialists in the performing arts. Equally important, they have created an opportunity for exchange among institutions – theatre groups, national performing arts institutions, NGOs and others. Although the evaluation Team has not examined these festivals in depth, all stakeholders interviewed who had participated in them found them to be useful.

Over time ATTC, with I-Act, has developed a pool of experienced trainers who are able to provide the appropriate skills to meet requests from around the region. This pool also promotes efficiency as it promotes sharing of resources, for instance ATTC pays fees while I-Act pays expenses. **The development of this pool of trainers has become a positive feature for the performing arts sector in the MENA region.** During the program period Tamasi trainers gave training sessions in Bahrain, Morocco (I-Act), and Syria, simultaneously contributing to the programme goal of extending the regional dimension of Tamasi.

El Warsha has taken a more individually tailored approach to capacity development that involves mentoring, apprenticeship for its core performers and is not linked to university courses. One external informant likened El Warsha to a “drama academy.” Its apprenticeship programme is based on the themes of freedom, democracy and theatre for about ten apprentices in the areas of directing, acting, set design, light design, and stage management, among whom were five core artists who received specialized vocational training. In addition basic and intermediate training was given to two new theatre arts students and training of trainees for five local trainers (voice, movement, singing and acting). Interviews revealed that numerous performing artists in the region have developed their skills at El Warsha.

TDP offers a systematic training curriculum (see Box 2), while training for **El-Funoun**, **Al Harah** and **El Mastaba** generally takes the shape of regular rehearsals, in-production training and a few specialised workshops, often with a foreign or local expert. On occasion they have sent members for specialised training abroad. Each of these organisations has a children’s and/or youth group that also receive regular training during the year.

Box 2: Theatre Professionalism in Gaza

TDP has developed a three-year curriculum for starting actors and drama teachers. A cycle of production, touring, and specialized training constitutes the main framework of the curriculum, with extra courses by guest teachers, usually from abroad. Each year 20 participants, men and women, are chosen by audition. The training focuses mostly on acting, improvising, personal development, physical training, drama techniques. To date, TDP has 35 graduates, all working in the profession. To address the fact that women in Gaza are usually unable to perform in public, it transformed its video animation programme for women into a three-year programme in 2011. A third strand of training offered by TDP is for theatre technicians. One of TDP’s strategies to promote a professionalised sector is to help their audience understand that theatre arts is a profession. Every child who sees a performance receives a programme with the name of all the people involved.

Much of the capacity building activities of **SHAMS** and **Al Balad** are part of the festivals (see Section **Fel! Hittar inte referenskölla.**) and other events that they organise as performing arts venues. **SHAMS** works closely – and effectively - with young theatre artists to provide them opportunities to stage their works and learn theatre craft. **Al Balad** also builds capacity by arranging informal apprenticeships for its volunteer corps with visiting professionals.

SEE's core activity is providing rehearsal facilities but also is involved in building capacity by hosting workshops, master classes and events at its facilities with experts from the region or abroad. Its most notable training effort is the two-month workshops for theatre directors, contemporary dancers and choreographers which it has run for three years. The trainees present their work as part of the 2BE Continued festival. All trainees audition for a place in the workshops.

Whereas the training outputs appear relevant, the Team has no data to confirm the extent to which these outputs contributed to the intended outcomes (apart from the multiplier affects mentioned in 3.2.4). While informal training needs assessments have been undertaken by ATTC during the programme period, **the extent which the training provided is based on needs assessment is unclear.** Likewise, the extent to which the Tamasi partners have systematised regular trainee feedback through questionnaires is unspecified (it was mentioned in a few interviews).

ii. Tours and Exchanges

Tours and artist exchanges have been an important source of professional development for the Tamasi members during the programme period. It helps to counteract the relative shallowness of the independent performing arts scene in the region. A sizable part of the exchanges and tours were funded by other sources – institutes, embassies and other donors. In most cases, the groups travelled to festivals where they also could participate in workshops and other enriching activities. Examples of the countries in which the groups have performed include:

- **I-Act** - UK, Jordan and Tunisia
- **Al Harah** - UK, Germany, Tunisia and Turkey
- **El-Funoun** - Russia, China, Kuwait, Syria and Jordan
- **SEE's** members - France, the Netherlands and Canada
- **El Warsha** members - France, Syria and Jordan
- **TDP** - Netherlands and Belgium and its Hebron Kids4kids group- Greece
- **SHAMS** - France and Syria
- **Temple** - Jordan, Belgium, Germany and the UK
- **El Mastaba** groups - Abu Dhabi, Greece, UK (the Barbican), Denmark, Austria and Australia

The number of tours has ranged from a high of 22 in 2011 to 8 in 2008, and amount to 70 tours in all. The geographic breakdown for the Tamasi tours 2009 to 2011 is provided in the table below:

Table 5: Tamasi Tours 2009-2011

	Europe	Americas	Asia	MENA
Number of regional and international tours 2009-11	29	1	1	31

During the programme period several young performers trained by Tamasi have taken part in an artistic exchange. These exchanges represent an important way to open minds through a first-hand experience of working in another cultural setting. Similarly, the groups have had external experts hold special workshops for artistic development. While SHAMs, I-Act and Al Balad have collaborated with a range of performing arts specialists as part of their festival programmes, the other groups have also engaged in artistic/developmental exchanges of different kinds. These include, inter alia:

- **SEE** has organised residencies for half a dozen members to the Netherlands, Lebanon, France and the Young Vic Theatre in London and received a resident from Gaza.
- **El-Funoun** has collaborated over the years with a Japanese-American choreographer
- **Al Harah** and **El-Funoun** sent two performers each to Portugal for three weeks as part of an exchange
- **Al Harah** collaborated with an Italian director
- **TDP** collaborated closely with Gdansk University and brought around a dozen external experts from Europe to support its curriculum programme
- **El Warsha** organised an internship in the Netherlands.

3.2.3 Multiplier Effects of Enhancing Professionalism

Previous trainees in El-Funoun, Al Harah, and I-Act work as trainers. SEE has had several trainees who now work professionally as artists, choreographers, and even stage managers; often forming new groups. **Therefore training not only is an input to increased professionalism, but it offers an additional career path for Tamasi artists thereby meeting a need for alternative employment for beneficiaries.**

A number of staff/members of El-Funoun and Al Harah train children and youth outside of their organisations. In 2007 – in the period before the Tamasi Programme – Al Harah trained 13 trainers from culturally underserved areas. During the current programme period, Al Harah has been following 6 of these trainers, monitoring their progress, helping them network (including with the Tamasi network) and providing them with opportunities.

3.2.4 Quality

Quality is a key aim of the Tamasi members. The evaluation Team is not in a position to judge the quality of the over 100 different Tamasi productions or 274 training sessions during the programme period. Videos, photographs, media coverage, discussion with external informants and attendance at performances that took place during the field missions point to a generally high quality performances. The performances are often reviewed in major newspapers, magazines, radio, and television and are posted on some of the websites of the groups.

An indication of Tamasi's standing in the world of performing arts is the invitations offered to their artists to perform at international festivals or other venues.

The list below represents some of the prizes, honours or residencies that were awarded to members:

- El-Funoun was awarded with a prize from Paltel group, "Palestine International Award for Excellence and Creativity 2009-2010".
- El-Funoun was awarded with the Yasser Arafat Achievement Award 2011.
- Al Harah's Director elected Vice President of Euromedinculture in Munich.
- Al Harah won Best Performance Award at the Children's Theatre Festival in Romania for "Hanin El-Bahar", directed by Raeda Ghazaleh.
- Al Harah won Best Performance Award at the Arab University Theatre Festival in Jordan, by trainees from Phoenix Center and Al Harah Theatre.
- Al Harah won first THAW Scholarships Award by New York's Theatre Against War in recognition of its work and activities during war.
- Mastaba Center was awarded with Roskilde Festival World Music Award at the WOMEX World Music Expo in Copenhagen for ensuring "a basis for traditional Egyptian music needs to be recognised, for giving its inspirational value to the entire scene of world music".
- Mastaba was invited, among three other musicians to play at the event A Night at Tahrir Square Barbican in London as a group who helped "create the soundtrack to Egypt's revolution".
- An I-Act member won IYPAE British Council Award and UK industry tour.
- SEE's Director was chosen to be a Clore Cultural Leadership Fellow.
- For the 2012 European Union of National Institutes of Culture (EUNIC) conference on the role of the creative sector in MENA societies, three Tamasi projects were selected for presentation.
- An Al Balad member was the winner of the 2011 Etel Adnan Award for Arab Women Playwrights. The text will be presented at the 9th Women Playwrights Conference hosted by Riksteatern in Stockholm August 2012.
- El Warsha's artistic director has frequently been invited to international events and forums and El Warsha regularly receives cultural groups visiting Egypt.

3.2.5 Summary

Training initiatives by Tamasi partners fill an important gap in provision of performing arts opportunities for learning. **Such opportunities are few in the MENA region.** The results in raising professionalism must be viewed, however, in the light of the relatively small financial allocation to capacity development. Nevertheless, during the programme period there is considerable evidence of progress towards professionalization by Tamasi performers and theatre technicians. This increase in skills is occurring at the level of the individual artist and group, through the means of workshops, apprenticeships, mentoring, and longer term training. There is evidence that Tamasi-led training is

contributing to the creation of a cadre of performing artists. Ultimately there is also a positive impact on the performing arts sector in the region, although this is more difficult to assess. Significantly, performing arts, educational and social service organisations consider Tamasi to be theatre organisations of high professionalism. An indication of Tamasi's standing in the world of performing arts is the invitations offered to their artists to perform at international festivals or other venues and the awards and honours they have received. What is clear is that the group directors, and their colleagues, are dedicated to presenting quality performing arts and to exposing audiences to new and thoughtful theatre, music and dance.

3.3 STRENGTHENING OF TAMASI MEMBERS

This section examines effectiveness in relation to the following question in the ToR:

A 6: Has the Tamasi program/Sida's funding contributed to strengthening the groups that are members of the network?

The question is related to Tamasi's goal area of establishing strong local ownership of the programme by strengthening each organisation's identity and sustainability (strategy 1). The critical questions include the extent to which the members have strengthened their:

- Structures, identity and processes
- Networking/partnering capacities¹⁵

In addition to examining the above, this section begins with an overview of the organisations.

3.3.1 Overview of the Tamasi Organisations

While the content and activities of the Tamasi members are different, as organisations, **they are similar in many ways – they employ a handful of core employees (except TDP which employs 16), have generally light administrative structures and operate with modest budgets.** The Evaluation found that the member organisations are all tenacious, flexible and creative – characteristics necessary in a region where governmental and mobility restrictions can be very constraining.

The organisations share a deep commitment to social change, diversity and free expression, and a passion for the performing arts. The commitment seems to permeate throughout the organisations and influence the organisational culture. For instance, several organisations – such as El-Funoun, El Warsha, Al Balad, SHAMS and Al Harah - promoted an inclusive mix of social, cultural and/or religious backgrounds. Likewise,

¹⁵ This also relates to ToR question A5 which is discussed in the following section.

the main facility-providing organisations – Al Balad and SEE - make a strong point of open and transparent processes in allocating space.

The leadership of most of the organisations are of about the same generation – born in the 1950s and 1960s. While many have strong characters, there generally seems to be a relatively open and embracing management style in most organisations in which dialogue is encouraged.

There seems to be a strong sense of cooperation, identity and community among the staff/members/volunteers of the organisations. Many stakeholders spoke of their Tamasi organisation as a “second family.” This sentiment was particularly strong among the Palestinian organisations and at Al Balad. In the latter case, volunteers have shown strong support when the theatre has been criticised by, for instance, the Muslim Brotherhood.

Box 3: El-Funoun Summer camp is a yearly gathering for all 120 members (this includes many former dancers and thus different generations) of El-Funoun to participate in a three day and night gathering. The members reflect on the organisation’s activities, achievements, and challenges, and plan for the future. Discussions also cover topics such as the performing arts sector in general in Palestine, normalisation, the media, social change and volunteerism. The Camp includes dance performances and inter-generational reflection.

The structures of the organisations vary. Some of the organisations have volunteers –El-Funoun and Al Balad rely very heavily on this base. Organisations such as ATTC, Al Balad, and El-Funoun have active boards and board members. About half of the Tamasi members are registered as non-profit organisations. In Egypt and Gaza the partners do not have this option due restrictions imposed by the authorities. They have had to develop creative solutions that involve extra administrative and legal processes to be able to operate as non-profit organisations. Similarly, Al Balad in Jordan has considered changing its non-profit status to avoid government control.

The organisations have had ties with DI/Sida for many years – several from their start (Al Balad, ATTC, Al Harah and SEE). All organisations maintain that the partnership with DI/Sida has been critical. In particular, **the flexible funding policies of Sida coupled with the dialogue, support and mentoring offered by DI was highly valued.**

3.3.2 Strengthened Organisations

The Programme budgeted just under SEK 2.2 million for strengthening “the own organisation’s identity and ownership of the programme” over five years or **5 percent of the Programme budget**. Al Balad and SHAMS, the two physical theatres within the

In El-Funoun we take freedom of expression for granted. We speak out and are part of the decisions. I was shocked when I started working in other organisations where there was hierarchy and no room to voice opinions. In El-Funoun we do not always agree, we have discussion and fights, but it is always open. – Former El Funoun Dancer and Board Member.

group, have received the greatest amount of support – on average about SEK 90,000 a year. ATTC has received an average of SEK 60,000 for organisational development a year. The other organisations have received an average of SEK 25,000 annually. This represents relatively small sums. (In comparison, a consultant typically costs between SEK 35,000 and SEK 70,000 for the development of a website in Egypt.)

According to the Annual Reports, the Tamasi members have strengthened themselves since 2008 in the areas of management, administration, communication, finances, fund-raising, networking, language skills, accounting and advocacy. Although no benchmarking of the relative capabilities of the organisations was carried out in the 2006 evaluation, there are indications of improved capacity. In 2011, 50 people “had participated in activities to strengthening the organisations” or approximately all core staff employed by the organisations. Stakeholders interviewed found the activities useful but the team has not been able to gather detailed evidence of enhanced capacities.

While it is beyond the scope of this evaluation to assess each partner’s management system and although observation suggests that some are stronger in this area than others, the Team has been able to establish evidence of the following aspects of effectiveness:

- All organisations fulfil multiple functions, ranging from public information, to graphic design, programming, travel arrangements, fundraising, accounting, and report writing.
- All organisations have developed their websites to provide information to the public. Several of them are in good shape, but a few need further work to function well technically, better showcase the organisations and provide useful information.
- All organisations have devoted resources to raising funds, several with successful results.¹⁶ This is positive, as far as it goes, but the need for funding of core activities remains (This is discussed further in Section 6.2).
- Several organisations have received some form of management administrative training (e.g. TDP, Al Balad, SEE, El Warsha, SEE) while others appear to have mainly undertaken internal staff development (e.g. Al Harah, SHAMS, ATTC).
- All organisations have developed their capacity in the logical framework approach after several joint workshops and backstopping from the Programme Coordinator. This is evidenced by i) the Programme’s planning matrices; and ii) the range of monitoring information – particularly quantitative data – that has been produced by each organisation.

¹⁶ In the time available, the Team was not been able to gather data on the resources devoted by each organisation to funding-raising. Nor was it able to establish the exact financial composition of each organisation’s budget.

- The planning processes of the organisations have improved. The members prioritise annual activities that relate to the Programme's results and strategy areas in collaboration with SADA. While the Team has not had access to the planning documents or individual reports of every organisation, it appears that each organisation prepares a detailed annual planning matrix that conforms to the logical framework approach.¹⁷
- TDP has developed what appears to be advanced monitoring capacities to assess effects, through its collaboration with the DICE network (discussed in Chapter 5) and the University of Gdansk.

Although the organisations gained a level of stability during the programme period, some organisations are concerned about the level of extra administrative and management capacity that would be required in relation to becoming a collective and the exiting of SADA.

The overall capacity of some organisations has been significantly strengthened due to access to new and/or improved infrastructure. As discussed in section **Fel! Hittar inte referenskölla.**, since 2008 El Warsha, El Mastaba, SEE and I-Act have acquired – directly or indirectly with Sida funds – important new spaces for rehearsals and performances. TDP has gained equipment that allows it to transform school rooms into stages, while El-Funoun has been supported with equipment for travelling shows. Al Harah was offered free use of the community centre in Beit Jala built by Peace for Jerusalem and in 2011 the mayor of Beit Jala has granted a building of cultural significance to Al Harah for use as a training facility (still being renovated). Most impressive is SEE's "physical" growth with access to two comparatively large theatres and a new set of four rehearsal rooms to complement the existing four spaces.

Box 4: Example of Quality Control of Monitoring Activities

"In 2011 drama and video-animation workshops were, as usual, checked by senior artistic staff for being in line with our drama method tested in the successful effect measurement research of previous years. Although the proper effect was reached, TDP noted a lack of reflective capacity by the drama and animation children. We think that reflection on their experiences in drama will deepen the effect. Accordingly, new capacity has to be built in our artistic staff, increasing theoretical and philosophical knowledge for reflective interaction with children." *From TDP's Annual Report, 2011.*

3.3.3 Partners and Networks

The Tamasi members have expanded their networks *locally, regionally* and *internationally*. In the SIPA workshops, this was regarded as a principal strength of the group.

¹⁷ The overall RBM of the programme is discussed in Section 3.4.4.

According to the Annual Reports, Tamasi organisations as a whole have increased their membership in networks from 13 to 24.

At the **international level**, the Tamasi members have festival partners (e.g. Roskilde Music Festival, Edinburgh Festival, the Brouhaha Festival in the UK and the Arab Theatre Festival in Germany), which has led to international tours. As discussed in section ii, the groups also have contacts with a number of experts, theatres and organisations (e.g., the Riksteatern, Backa Teatern, Young Vic in the UK, the Schnawwl Theatre, Clowns without Borders, FREEMUSE) who have provided workshops, training, collaborative opportunities and residencies for the Tamasi members. At the same time, many of the organisations have developed relations with international institutes (Pro-Helvetica, Goethe Institute, Swedish Institute and French Institute).

At the **local/national level**, the partnerships and networks of the Tamasi members vary, depending on their geographical location and programme content. Some of these partnerships are with organisations that primarily work in other fields (e.g., El Warsha is partners with CARE; Al Harah works with Child Protection International and BASR; Al Balad collaborates with the CBO Ruwwad; TDP works with UNRWA). Local authorities, schools and community organisations are also important for many partners, particularly for their respective outreach work. Several partners are also involved in networks – the Egyptian partners are part of the Coalition of Independent Cultural Institutions and Collectives; Al Harah is part of the Palestinian Children's Rights Network; SHAMS has joined up with other cultural and human rights organisations to lobby for freedom of expression.

Other relationships have been established with other performing art entities and individuals. SEE has around 500 groups that use its spaces for rehearsals. Other Tamasi members have a number of performing arts partners with varying degree of closeness. Some of these are practically sub-groups, many are off-shoots and others are partners with which they collaborate with occasionally. According to the Annual Reports, Tamasi had 400 local collaborations in 2009 and 575 in 2011. How these are counted is not stated in the report.

At the **country level**, there has been a growing tendency towards more interaction among the Tamasi members. In Lebanon belonging to Tamasi was cited as an incentive for the two groups to keep in closer touch and share information. In 2011, the Palestinian Tamasi members organised a set of dance workshops with a Swiss choreographer, which represents a unique joint activity during the programme period. With evidence of the benefits of such interaction, there is more interest in intensifying contacts.

At the **regional level** – aside from the Tamasi specific meetings, the former Creative Forum and the Hakaya festivals represent key events for regional networking at which many and sometimes most Tamasi members have attended. The Spring Festival in Lebanon and the Reveil festival have also offered important opportunities to meet. Through its regional training workshop ATTC has played a key role in offering linkages in the region. It has been particularly important with regard to linking up people and

organisations in other parts of the region. For instance, it established the Tamasi Programme's contacts with Morocco and conducted several workshops in Syria. El Warsha has also worked with groups in Syria, while Al Harah has participated at the Euromedinculture Art Forum in Tunisia several years in a row. In 2012, three Tamasi members were invited to the European Union of National Institutes of Culture (EUNIC) conference at the Dead Sea.

A persistent problem is the lack of regional mobility funds which impedes exchange. One answer to the difficulties was the project *Istikshaf* initiated by the Arab Education Forum (Amman/ Ramallah) and the European Roberto Cimetta Fund.

While most Tamasi partners have some form of direct collaboration with other Tamasi members (aside from the regular Tamasi meetings), **the number of joint projects among the partners is comparatively few**. Part of the problem has been that the organisations have not known each other's work well enough to see opportunities. Perhaps by virtue of being placed in a country that is the most logistically accessible and because of its multi-sectoral profile, Al Balad Theatre appears to have had the greatest number of bilateral contacts within Tamasi organisations. The members say that today they see many more possibilities for collaboration and co-operation.

3.3.4 Summary

The achievements presented in the two previous sections with regard to increasing audiences and strengthening professionalism have reinforced the Tamasi members capabilities as performing arts organisations. The effort to directly improve the organisational capacity of the members has also shown significant results. Important areas that have been strengthened through the Tamasi Programme are the adoption of a logical framework approach and the regional networking, although there is scope for even greater interaction and joint productions among the Tamasi members. Overall, the networks that have been established by the Tamasi members are expansive and interwoven.

3.4 STRENGTHENING OF TAMASI

This section examines the following questions in the ToR:

A 5: Has the Tamasi program managed to create strong and viable networks in the area of performing arts, both between the members of the program, and within broader circles of relevant groups?

A 7: The evaluation Team shall consider whether the program has been cost-efficient/sufficiently funded, i.e. the evaluation shall juxtapose results achieved with the amounts of Sida funding.

Question A5 relates to the Tamasi's goal area of developing the Tamasi regional network and strengthening and expanding the regional programme. Thus this section examines the internal development of Tamasi as a joint entity and its programme management and the work to expand the network through the Open Fund.

3.4.1 Arriving at a Common Vision

The Programme has allocated SEK 2.8 million over five years to develop a joint organisation. This as covered costs for annual Logical Framework Approach (LFA) workshops, meetings and travel.

All members knew at least some of the people in the other organisations – many were friends or colleagues and had collaborated in different ways over the years. Yet, the leadership of the Tamasi organisations did not all know each other's *organisations* that well. There were a few misconceptions, and, in some cases, a slight rivalry. Some of the Tamasi members admitted that when the Tamasi programme was first launched, they were somewhat resentful to have to be “bunched up” with a number of other organisations to “make it easier for the donor.”

Few had the knowledge and insight that DI/SADA had acquired over the years by virtue of working with a range of independent performing arts entities in the region. This awarded DI the ability to see the potential of a network. Yet it was not initially clear to their partners what the added value of collaborating would be – more than facilitating funding processes for the donor. As one stakeholder explained, “We did not understand DI's vision at the time. Now we understand, and it makes good sense.”

It took time for the group to develop the necessary cohesion and a common understanding of what benefits and opportunities a joint organisation could bring.

Tamasi reports suggest that by the end of 2008, the Tamasi members had yet to align their visions for the network. In 2009, the monitoring group had been formed, baseline figures established and a Yahoo document sharing group set up. While the Palestinian organisations had formed their own DNA network during the previous programme period, the Egyptian partners started to meet as a sub-group.

In the beginning of 2010, there was a sense within Tamasi that while other results areas were on track, Result Area 3 – to develop a regional network – was still lagging behind. At the time two ideas were floated concerning what a future network could look like: an open network which only funded joint projects; or a structure like the Tamasi programme, resembling a collective. A steering group was formed, monthly Skype meetings were held and a couple of internal newsletters were drafted. By 2011 there was a growing realisation of the potential of the network. A bridge proposal was submitted to Sida in the second half of the year.

In 2012, the members express strong support for a formalised Tamasi. An identity has formed, rooted in the common core values that all groups share – a strong commitment to free expression, human rights, diversity and social change; combined with an equal commitment to artistic quality. They are artists and activists with a firm belief in performing arts as a key vehicle in the pursuit of open, diverse and democratic societies.

While negotiations have not always been easy, the members have developed an important level of respect for each other and mutual trust. This was made abundantly clear during interviews and the SIPA workshops. Members express a pride in their accomplishment so far as a group, particularly since such initiatives are rare in the Arab world. **The ownership is in the hands of the organisations,** but there is a natural measure of apprehension about embarking on the endeavour in the face of the high demands of running their own organisations.

3.4.2 Formalising Tamasi

By 2012 the Tamasi group decided that Tamasi will be a collective. While they will partner at national and regional levels with other groups, the members agree that Tamasi will wait five years before it opens its doors to new members as a way to ensure integrity of the collective. After researching different options, including possibilities in the region, the group decided that Tamasi will be registered in Sweden since this offers clear legal conditions.

A representative committee has been formed to oversee the formalisation process. By-laws and internal rules and procedures for financial management and coordination are being devised. The members have together selected a competent Cairo-based coordinator who started working in March 2012. Her background includes work in programme management, international development and human rights activism. It is foreseen that she will be joined by an accountant.

“Eleven organisations sat around a table for hours and hours throughout the year, struggling together – no one even thinking of leaving – to make the start of this network happen.... It is quite something. As time passed, it became clear that this big group wished to find strength to speak to power, and to represent the performing arts working in... (MENA), in all forms, with freedom of expression as its calling card.” – TDP 2011 Report

The strategic vision for the collective is currently being formulated. In May 2012 the groups met to discuss and elaborate this vision. It seems that the organisations have a plan regarding the delicate issue of how to fairly allocate the resources among themselves. The bridge funding proposal to Sida also mentions the need for an “emergency fund” – a contingency fund which the group can access as necessary in relation to socio-political developments in the region.

3.4.3 Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

In both SIPA workshops, **the desire for more joint initiatives was strongly expressed.** This included production, training and other activities. According to the Tamasi members, not enough collaboration had taken place at the activity level. This was partly because it had not been clear how they could join forces when not enough was known about each other’s projects. It was also because each group was too focused on their own plans and activities. The cooperation in Tamasi has resulted in members identifying several possible ways to join forces. Furthermore, within the Tamasi group, relevant methodologies and approaches have been developed which others within the

group would like to learn about. For example, TDP is the organisation that has worked longest in drama education and has developed approaches that are relevant in the region. Many techniques and lessons can be drawn from its peer-reviewed work with the European DICE network to monitor the effects of drama education. Another example – there are many others – is El-Funoun that has over 30 years of experience of promoting volunteerism. There are **clearly important benefits that can be gained from sharing each other’s expertise** and reflecting on methodologies and good practices – and documenting this work.

Even though Tamasi will be formalised as a collective, the Tamasi members agree that it will be **crucial for the group to build “bridges beyond Tamasi.”** This would involve partnerships with younger/smaller organisational groups; and more projects/cooperation with other Arab countries (Syria /Morocco /Tunisia). There is some tension within the group concerning this matter in which focus on consolidating the collective is pitted against the risk of becoming a club. To maintain relevance, many partners argue, the group will require “new blood” and a healthy “blood circulation,” at least over time. A related challenge is how to determine the level and form of external relations for Tamasi.

Most Tamasi members feel that the group has a role to play in advocacy. By being pre-

(Tamasi) is like a gypsy, gathering cultures from different places and colours. .. I would like to have more interaction with other Tamasi members. It is very important in relation to the Arab Spring. Tamasi should ... encourage (more) Arab exchange. – A Young Stakeholder

sent, engaging in debates and participating in relevant fora, the group and its members certainly have several opportunities to **engage in advocacy with a small “a.”** As a group it also has a certain leveraging power. However, a regional entity is best suited for regional advocacy and in MENA there are few regional institutions that would be relevant to actively lobby. Furthermore, the Tamasi members are not geared to undertaking systematic advocacy campaigns, like for instance, Article 19, PEN or Freemuse and their respective national-level partners. On the other hand, Tamasi would do well to develop strategic ties to strong advocates of free expression and other human rights. In the event that any of the members are pressured, threatened or closed down, the Tamasi collective could be systematic in leveraging these organisations to rally support.

An important challenge for most of the Tamasi members is to **bring in younger generations into the Tamasi fold.** The organisations recognise a need to ensure that there are younger colleagues with adequate capacity who can eventually take over and continue with the collaboration within Tamasi. The Tamasi members have agreed to find means to bring younger members to meetings to the extent possible. Many young performing artists associated with the Tamasi members have a hunger to interact regionally. Facilitating interaction through face-to-face meetings, joint projects and festivals is preferred. Given that funds are limited and logistics often complicated, the Team believes there is considerable potential in promoting connections via social media. The

Team encountered young people, even in culturally underserved areas who are active in social media. SEE and Al Balad both have active Facebook pages. Open discussion groups, practice area or thematic networks could be established with encouragement from the Tamasi leadership. Perhaps incentives, as relevant, could be worked into such initiatives. With so many committed and active young people associated with Tamasi groups, with the right support, vibrant dialogue in the virtual realm could be achieved. Finally, to mobilise **sufficient resources for the collective will be a considerable challenge** and an area of great concern of the members. On the positive side, a network-like collective entity has a better chance of receiving funds than individual organisations. On the other hand, many donors prefer to earmark their support and tend to provide relatively small grants for cultural activities.

3.4.4 Monitoring, and Programme Management

The patient and firm support from DI/SADA, with a focus on process, has been instrumental for the Tamasi Programme. Having a staff member based in the region for most of the years has been a crucial asset. According to the members, there has been respect for their autonomy and an open exchange and dialogue. The technical support, particularly from Swedish performing arts professionals, was also regarded as being beneficial. Many members described their partnership with SADA as unique and referred to the central three women at SADA as “The Three Graces.” At the Beit Jala SIPA workshop the organisations recognised DI’s foresight in shaping the Tamasi programme.

Efficiency

The evaluation Team has not undertaken a full financial analysis of the Tamasi Programme. A few observations can nevertheless be made concerning efficiency. First, Tamasi management by SADA is **time efficient and flexible**. The Open Fund has allowed the Programme to seize opportunities as they arise. This has been particularly important in light of the developments related to the Arab Spring. Second, the relationship between financial input and outputs appears to be reasonable. In the earlier programme period, DI retained 35 percent of the support to cover management costs, which the Team was informed is the percentage retention set by Swedish universities. For the Tamasi Programme, the cost, according to our calculations, has amounted to 27 percent, which amounts to an improvement of 8 percent. This is regarded as a low overhead compared to other Swedish academic institutions.

The overall impression is that the Tamasi member organisations are also **managed with serious regard for efficiency**. They have slim management structures, and basic offices with modest equipment. The volunteer base of some of the organisations makes the output highly efficient in financial terms. Likewise, the fact that the Tamasi members have leveraged funds that have contributed to the Tamasi objectives has greatly enhanced cost efficiency. Most activities have been completed within set timeframes.

Results Based Management

An important role of the SADA programme coordinator has been to manage the monitoring process. Based on demands from Sida for a revised LFA framework and monitoring systems, a need to strengthen the groups’ and SADA’s capacity in results-based

management was acknowledged at the end of 2008. It was also seen as vital for any future network structure after the phase-out of SADA as programme manager. The groups were also aware of the need to develop means to measure the effect of their work on development processes.

SADA and the members formed a monitoring group and LFA workshops were conducted annually, with the facilitation of Swedish consultants. It is clear that **a noteworthy effort was made to improve the results-based management**. By 2009, the Programme had devised a comprehensive matrix and gathered quantitative data for a range of indicators. Since then, the partners have kept track of everything from sex-disaggregated audience numbers to number of partners, festival encounters and to media reports.

Although the overall goal of the programme is formulated in a somewhat enigmatic way (it initially led the evaluation Team to mistakenly wonder if the group included religious conservatives!), the goal structure is sound. The results framework is clear, concrete and logical. The monitoring effort and the volume of data are impressive. Few small organisations manage to meticulously follow an LFA approach in the way that the Tamasi programme has. By systematically implementing the requirements of an LFA format, however, qualitative data has been left a little aside. **Information has been fragmented and the reports are challenging to read**. The Team has seen three annual reports prepared by two Tamasi members which reveal a richness of information that has been streamlined into much less meaningful quantitative data in the aggregate reports. It is of course a great challenge to combine diverse data from 11 different sources and still keep the report to a readable length. It is also a challenge to balance the information among the 11 organisations. This the reporting has managed very well.

More tables, annexes and quantification of qualitative data could help. Breaking down the data would also be more informative and could be more useful for the strategic planning of the members and the group itself. For instance, instead of reporting on the total number of local collaborations formed (575), it could be useful to include what form they take, in what countries they occur, are they governmental, non-governmental, etc.

Open Fund

A final area of responsibility that SADA has overseen is the **Open Fund**. A total of SEK 4.47 million, or 11 percent of the budget, was allocated to this fund. Of this, SEK 1.3 million was allocated for exchanges between Sweden and the region between 2008 and 2010. Tamasi established four criteria to guide the selection of recipients:

- 1) Support to continuity and enhanced sustainability of previous DI support
- 2) Support to groups that work with underserved communities
- 3) Support to theatre productions and performances by young independent Syrian theatre makers
- 4) Support that respond to new developments in the region.

Syria has been a main focus of the Open Fund. A Syrian dramaturg was hired by SADA as a consultant. Most of the funds for Syria have supported productions. In 2009, an agreement was made with the Syrian Opera to co-sponsor productions. Due to political developments, this agreement did not work out and in 2011 SADA decided to support young artists without involving public institutions. In total, the support to Syria has amounted to around SEK 1.45 million so far. In addition, support has been provided to Syrians through four training initiatives organised by ATTC.

The Team has not been able to examine the support to Syria. While it seems that important network contacts with Syria have been established, in which ATTC and El Warsha have been involved, the Tamasi collective as a whole has had limited interaction with Syria.

Efforts to extend the network into Morocco via projects funded through the Open Fund have resulted in a few training events organised by ATTC and a study visit by the SADA Programme Coordinator.

SADA has allocated the remainder of the Open Fund in line with the other three criteria listed above. This has included supporting traditional Egyptian dance (training of boys and performances) and an Egyptian avantgarde theatre group – (totalling SEK 770,000). Both groups were supported in the previous programme period and the aim of the funds of this period was to ensure greater sustainability. Support to the 100 Copies electronic music festival and participation at the Spring, Hakaya, 2beContinued and Forum festivals has also been covered by the Open Fund. Most of these events had a strong youth focus. In 2011, the Open Fund was used to fund opportunities that arose as a result of the Arab Spring (e.g., performances at Tahrir Square and revolutionary performance by El Mastaba's groups).

4 Freedom of Expression

This chapter examines the following critical question from the ToR:

A 7: Can the Tamasi program be said to have contributed to enhancing the freedom of expression in the MENA region?

Freedom of expression as set out in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is any act of seeking, receiving and imparting information or ideas, regardless of the medium used. It embraces cultural expression and the arts as much as political speech. Importantly, the exchange of opinions, ideas and information should be capable of being a public act, not something confined to private discourse. It is in this sense that freedom of expression underpins democratic freedoms such as the right to share political ideas. Freedom of expression is regarded as a foundation right: its existence helps guarantee other rights and freedoms.

Promoting, enhancing or supporting the realisation of any human right consists of two distinct actions:

- *strengthening* the accountability of duty-bearers; and
- *supporting* rights-holders in exercising and demanding their rights.¹⁸

Tamasi does not focus on the former – it does not aim to directly improve governance systems, change policies or legislation or even systematically advocate for this.¹⁹ Considering the small scale of Tamasi this is reasonable. Rather, **Tamasi aims to support rights-holders to exercise freedom of expression.** This activity is one of many building blocks that are necessary – but not sufficient – for freedom of expression to be realised in a society.

Improvement in freedom of expression in the Tamasi Programme countries at the national level during the Tamasi Programme period has been minimal and in some cases negative according to the widely respected Freedom House indicators. Therefore, we can conclude that Tamasi has not made a decisive contribution to freedom of expression at the national level. With an average annual budget of SEK 8 million spread out over four countries, it is not realistic to attribute impacts on freedom of expression at the macro level.

¹⁸ See for instance, Cecilia M. Ljungman “A Rights-Based Approach to Development” in Britha Mikkelsen *Methods for Development Work and Research – A New Guide for Practitioners* (Second edition). Sage, 2005; pp 205-208.

¹⁹ To some extent, through its drama education work some Tamasi partners can be regarded as supporting the accountability of duty-bearers (teachers, educators, schools, UNRWA and the Palestinian Authority) in Gaza and the West Bank.

However, realising human rights is essentially and necessarily the experience of exercising a right at the *individual level*. In a region where governmental and social forces significantly limit people's right to express themselves, the exercise of free expression is often a notable feat. For this reason this section concentrates on the impact of Tamasi in enhancing free expression at the micro level.

The following sections examine to what extent Tamasi members provide effective opportunities for exercising free expression. The section also discusses the impact of censorship and the Arab Spring on free expression among the Tamasi groups.

Box 8: Freedom House Indicators during the Tamasi Programme

Freedom House's annual assessment of civil liberties show little improvement and some deterioration between 2008 and 2012 for Tamasi's four programme countries. While the rating for Egypt has not changed, the 2012 report explains that the total aggregate score for Egypt improved as a result of the Arab Spring and that freedom of expression has gained some momentum.

	Egypt	Jordan	Lebanon	Palestine
2008	5	4	4	6
2009	5	5	4	6↓
2010	5↓	5	3↑	6↓
2011	5↑	5	3	5.5
2012	5		4	

↑: Positive trend during the year

↓: Negative trend during the year

(A score of 1-2.5 denotes a free society; 3-5 denotes a partly free society; 5.5 to 7 denotes a not free society)

4.1 PROMOTING FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

As discussed in the preceding chapter, in the programme period Tamasi partners:

- Undertook more than 5,000 performances and over 100 different productions between 2008 and 2011;
- Increased access to performing arts by promoting children's, young people's and women's participation in free expression and the creative processes of theatre, dance and music;
- Involved over 18,000 children in creative activities; and
- Trained over 800 young adults to enhance their performance and expression skills.

The impact of these results with regard to freedom of expression critically depends on the underlying intent and the guiding values. These results do not mean much for freedom of expression if the processes and methodologies applied are not underpinned by the commitment of promoting freedom of expression.

Through document review, observation and 130 interviews, the evaluation team has closely examined the extent to which the Tamasi partners are committed to and guided by freedom of expression and other human rights values. **The team concludes that without exception, all Tamasi partners are dedicated to freedom of expression, social justice and change.** After decades of political repression, they regard "liberat-

ing” expression as a main task – to find a space to do so, to begin a process and to give keys. The methodologies they use consistently promote voice and creativity.

Document review, site visits and interviews with primary and external stakeholders in all four countries provided widespread evidence of free expression and the promotion of it within Tamasi’s work. The stakeholders furthermore view independent theatre as playing a critical role for free expression by providing opportunities to express alternative views and pushing limits.

There is no doubt that **most expression on stages of the Tamasi members relates to topical political, societal and human rights** issues (see section 7.4 for an outline of topics covered). This reflects the groups’ activist agenda and the fact that the artists they attract have something to say about the current state of affairs. Tamasi stakeholders in Palestine were particularly insistent that for them the stage is a potent forum

As children of war, our generation has experienced a lot of trauma and pain and on a daily basis we struggle to heal the past through art therapy and self-expression. Dance is a natural healer as it not only connects the spirit with the essence of life but it also releases the anger, pain, hate and loss by evolving it into triumph, inner peace and political resistance. – Lebanese stakeholder.

Our objective is to fight against monologue. – I-Act.

Art is to motivate and break rules. – Egyptian stakeholder.

From my point of view TDP gives voice to the voiceless. They provide a space. They allow kids with different views to express themselves. – External stakeholder in Gaza.

We may not be free to move, but we can be free to move our minds. – Palestinian stakeholder.

for political expression, resistance and activism. Some of these views are reflected in the box below.

Independent) theatre is 100 percent connected with political activism. The human rights activists cannot do it alone. – External Palestinian stakeholder.

The only way to reach freedom is to make change. The theatre can contribute to this change by exercising freedom on the stage. – Jordanian stakeholder.

To dance on stage is a form of resistance. Weapons, writing and demonstrating are also forms of resistance, but maybe performing and to be heard are the strongest form of resistance. – Palestinian stakeholder.

We always want to look away from what we don't want to see and (independent) theatre always puts light on exactly that. – Palestinian stakeholder

The approach to providing rehearsal space illustrates a further dimension of Tamasi's commitment to free expression, but also the central human rights principles of equality and non-discrimination: according to stakeholders who use the spaces run by Al Balad and SEE, the spaces can be accessed by anyone. You do not need to know someone to have access and there is a transparent process in allocating use of the space. There is no interference with the creative process, questions are not asked about content and artists feel they can express anything in Tamasi spaces. Several interviews underlined how unique and important this approach is in Arab society where clans, nepotism and censorship are widespread.

Box 5: Traditional Family Structures and the Arab Spring

Discussions with stakeholders about topics they feel most in need of expressing pointed to the oppressive and rigid order of traditional family structures and roles. Women and girls express the pressure of "acceptable" behaviour while men and boys express the weight of responsibility and authority of the elders. Some of the productions reflect this theme. Informants explained that the Arab Spring is just as much about reacting to patriarchal authority at the family and clan level as to the political level. This even reverberated among children in Gaza who were reported stating – "Since we know about Mubarak and Khaddafi, we feel we can talk easier about our fathers when they are doing wrong things."

In a region where secret police, conservative and religious forces as well as traditional patriarchal family/tribal structures hamper free expression in different ways, a space where people feel safe and free to engage in dialogue and expression is crucial. It is not just a question of space to express voice, but **space to find one's voice**. Young interviewees connected to SEE, Warsha, El-Funoun, Al Harah, Al Balad, TDP, I-Act and SHAMS valued the spaces of these organisations as a kind of haven where they found

“the space to breathe” and speak openly and freely.²⁰ In Lebanon, stakeholders particularly emphasised the non-sectarian approach of SHAMS. The open dialogue and exchange with peers that were made possible was highly valued.

Our community is a patriarchal community. The girls in my family are not heard. I cannot say what I think, but on stage I can say what I want and they have to listen to me. No one can come to tell me to stop. It makes me stronger, by giving me the confidence to stand on stage and speak out everything I can't say in my real life in our society. Being on stage makes me stronger than people who are watching me because they are here to listen to what I say. – Female Al Harah Theatre trainee.

4.2 CENSORSHIP

Freedom of expression in the MENA region is limited by censorship and the threat of it. Before the change of regime, independent theatre in Egypt was closely watched. In Jordan, Al Balad Theatre is regularly visited by secret police who always attend contemporary dance performances. In Gaza, TDP is under constant scrutiny. How it teaches drama, what is said on stage and how it deals with gender relations is watched. Not only do performances now have to be segregated, women are not allowed to perform in public. TDP has worked around these prohibitions by arranging performance of women in “micro” spaces rather than in public spaces.

In Lebanon, which is often considered more “open,” SHAMS also faces censorship challenges. It is required to regularly present the theatre texts used in performances to the censorship officials. When Cairo’s Temple Theatre’s production *On the Importance of Being Arab* was to be staged at SHAMS’ Sunflower Theatre in 2011, the Lebanese authorities stopped it because of the way it talked about ministers in the Mubarak regime. Subsequently, SHAMS worked with a Lebanese group that campaigns against censorship. After exposure and pressure in the media, the ban was lifted in early 2012. The Gazan authorities have proven less flexible. A TDP play was banned because it mentioned “underwear.” TDP offered to change the script to “pyjama,” which the authorities agreed was acceptable. They refused to lift the ban, however, because “a decision cannot be reversed.”

²⁰ At the same time, parents of young people connected with the organisations that the team were in contact with, trusted the Tamasi members. They felt they were managed in a way that kept their children “safe”, which in at least some cases, seemed to refer to the danger of impropriety.

In addition to official censorship, Tamasi members face “religious” and social censure:

- When Al Balad Theatre invited a Palestinian woman to speak who had been part of the Gaza flotilla and who also happened to be an MP in the Knesset, the Muslim Brotherhood ran a campaign accusing Al Balad Theatre of promoting “normalisation” of relations with Israel.

I used to be a man without hope and a man without hope is a dangerous man. I was DANGEROUS. But now I am a different person. I have changed and I can change others. On stage I can be free. I can shout, cry, curse, laugh and I can even get naked on our stage. The theatre is my world no one can tell me here that this or that is forbidden or haram! I wish the world was a stage like ours where everything can be expressed freely. – Male stakeholder in Palestine

- After recent complaints from neighbourhood residents, El Warsha has started to pause music rehearsals or shows during the call to prayer.
- In Jordan Al Balad tries to time the call to prayer into intermission to avoid confrontation.
- In Palestine, El-Funoun has battled the conservative forces in society that disapprove of men and women dancing together on stage

Discussions with Tamasi members and external stakeholders reveal that while the content of Tamasi productions tend to raise sensitive and controversial issues such as oppression of women, religious restrictions, injustice, dictatorship, etc. (see Section 7.4.3); the groups are generally conscious of how far they can go without being closed down. Their strategy is generally to push limits as far as they can and venture just beyond of what could provoke the authorities to react. The groups do not explicitly challenge the authorities by expression that is considered extremely radical in the MENA context (e.g. partial nudity, certain religious topics, etc), which could be regarded as exercising self-censorship. On the other hand, the groups maintain that they have not wished to express themselves in this manner.

4.3 THE ARAB SPRING

The Arab Spring has affected the exercise of freedom of expression – what is being expressed and where - among the Tamasi stakeholders. In Egypt, most stakeholders interviewed who were part of or associated with the Tamasi partners in Cairo had protested at Tahrir Square; several had camped at the square throughout. Although stakeholders interviewed do not believe that the independent culture movement exercised a leading role in the revolution, they all agree that it played a contributing part. The independent culture scene demonstrated resistance for many years leading up to the protests

in Tahrir Square and artists and musicians were among those beaten, tortured and killed in connection with the Tahrir Square protests.²¹

During the days of protests, partners' of Tamasi groups organised a stage upon which El Warsha and El Mastaba troupes performed. The latter revived its old resistance songs, added some new lyrics and used music to express aspirations of liberty and dignity. The media consider that El Mastaba's group Tanbura helped "create the soundtrack of Egypt's revolution."²²

As discussed in Chapter 3, **the Egyptian partners have capitalised on the freedom that has ensued since the change in regime.** A number of outdoor performances were organised (outlined in Annex 8) and SEE broke new ground by launching the D-CAF festivals on Cairo's streets.

The Arab Spring also provided the opportunity for the Tamasi members to engage in political debate and advocacy in relation to freedom of expression. For instance, El Warsha has organised political discussions and debates under the heading "Freedom, Democracy and Theatre," which covered the new opportunities for artistic practices in Egypt and the need for policy reform.

As discussed in section 3.1.11, the Tamasi members in Egypt are part of the Coalition of Independent Cultural Institutions and Collectives and some individuals are actively involved.

When the revolution broke out in Egypt, there was an explosion of creative energy... The revolution and its call for freedom stimulated a tremendous urge among the people to express their own wishes and hopes using artistic means – words, music, gestures and images. Randa Shaath.¹

We discovered the energy of the street with the Revolution. Female Egyptian stakeholder
You cannot shut people up now!! Male Egyptian stakeholder.

²¹ E.g. Ahmed Bassiouni killed on January 28, 2011 and the renowned Ramy Essam was arrested and tortured March 10, 2011.

²² See, for instance, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/musicblog/2011/feb/27/arab-revolutions-protest-music> and Andy Morgan's *Soundtrack to the Arab Revolution: From Fear to Fury*, March 28, 2011; <http://thinkafricapress.com/egypt/el-tanbura-egyptian-revolution> Think Africa Press, article by Clyde MacFarlane, Aug 3 2011; <http://gondwanasound.com/events/2011/07/22/night-tahrir-square-el-tanbura-and-friends-soundtrack-egyptian-revolution>, Gondwana Sound, Article by Jill Turner, June 5, 2011.

The Arab Spring has also affected expression in the other Tamasi countries. For instance, El-Funoun responded by encouraging young dancers and choreographers from the troupe to work throughout the year with their own experiments. The resulting production, *El-Funoun Experiments*, reflects on the Arab Spring and will be performed during 2012.

4.4 SUMMARY

The Tamasi members show clear commitment to promoting freedom of expression in their processes, methodologies, activities and productions. They provide the physical

The Arab Spring has affected us....We feel a sense of nationalism and that it is important to engage in society to make a change. - Palestinian dancer.

We are feeding off the Arab Spring. We are all afraid that the extremist movements are going to gain ground. There is urgency now to collectively work to change things. We have gained a little more freedom to express ourselves since (the time of) King Hussein..... There is a sense that we need to mobilise ourselves as artists. I see my peers are more involved in issues and have more ideas of collaborating. The alternative movement is becoming established. - Jordanian stakeholder.

and mental space for free expression and stakeholders regard independent performing arts as a forum for political expression and activism. Official censorship and conservative censure set limitations for Tamasi members who in turn aim at consistently challenging these limits, a step at a time. The Arab Spring has concretely affected the exercise of free expression in Egypt, but also inspired Tamasi groups in other MENA countries to further promote and exercise freedom of expression.

5 Empowerment

The Terms of Reference do not contain questions that relate to empowerment as such, but they state that the evaluation “*shall contain an attempt to gauge the impact of the program.*” Impact, according to Sida’s definition can refer to both “short and medium term effects on the attitudes, skills, knowledge, or behavior of groups or individuals” or “the totality of effects produced by an intervention.”²³ In line with the Inception Report, this chapter is the Team’s attempt to gauge the impact of the programme by examining the potential contributions towards the empowerment of individual men, women, girls and boys.

Empowerment refers to the processes that result in people and communities gaining capabilities that allow them to have freedom of choice, take strategic decisions, undertake initiatives and exercise voice, thereby enabling them to better influence the course of their lives. A central goal of Swedish development co-operation is essentially to empower the poor²⁴.

Empowerment is often viewed as having three inter-related dimensions - *Agency*, *Resources* and realised *Achievements*. *Agency*, or the ability to define goals and act upon them, encompasses a range of purposeful actions – bargaining, negotiation, resistance and protest – that amount to *exercising voice*. It also includes cognitive processes of reflections and analysis.²⁵ Although agency can be considered at the heart of the process under which choices are made, *Resources* or enabling conditions of some kind are required for empowerment. Resources can be divided into three categories:

- *Human resources*, which encompasses, among others, knowledge, skills, creativity, imagination and a positive sense of being;
- *Social and political resources*, or social and political capital, which can be defined as the claims, obligations, influence and expectations that inhere in the relationships, networks, connections and institutional arrangements which prevail in different spheres of life; and,
- *Material or economic resources* including finances, property, land and equipment.

²³ Sida. *Looking Back Moving Forward. Sida Evaluation Manual*. Second Revised Edition. Sida 2007, p 34

²⁴ The Swedish Strategy for the MENA region underlines the importance of regarding poverty in the broad sense, including the lack of fulfilment of social, economic, cultural, civil and political human rights.

²⁵ Naila Kabeer. "Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment" in *Discussing Women's Empowerment - Theory and Practice*, Sida Studies no. 3, Sida 2002, page 21.

The third dimension of empowerment is realised *Achievements*. The outcomes achieved (such as economic, social, cultural, civic and/or political changes in society) through the combination of Resources and Agency can further empower individuals and communities.

This section assesses whether the Tamasi partners have contributed to empowering stakeholders. It is based on data gathered through a micro-level probing approach²⁶ in which data was gathered through interviews, focus groups and specially recorded discussions with young people from Gaza. Almost 60 informants were asked to tell the story of his/her life in relation to the performing arts. The Team applied elements of goal-free evaluations²⁷ and Most Significant Change methods in this data collection by deliberately disregarding the established goals and purposes of the programme to better appreciate the value and significance of Tamasi to those who are affected by it. Minimal prompting was used by the Team so that the responses were not biased by the questions.

Some of the stakeholders had benefitted from the support from Sida that predated the Tamasi programme. The evaluation team was not always able to distinguish between effects of pre-Tamasi Sida support and Tamasi support. The Team in any case chose to include effects resulting from earlier support since it allows for a unique long-term perspective of Sida's contributions. At the same time, it is possible that some empowerment processes were not detected by the Team because insufficient time has elapsed.

The Team was not in a position to independently test and verify the extent that involvement in performing arts actually contributed to the changes claimed by the sample group. The Team has therefore examined additional data from three separate studies and compared the findings. These studies include a survey conducted by El-Funoun; an evaluation conducted by Al Harah's partner BASR; and, the peer-reviewed international research project that TDP was a part of. The project, entitled DICE – Drama Improves key Competences in Education – was an EU-supported cross-cultural two-year research project investigating the effects of educational theatre and drama on eight key competences laid out by the European Council's "Lisbon Strategy." Several hundred professionals including scientists from 11 European countries worked on the project. Includ-

²⁶ Due to the small scale of funding, it was deemed meaningless to assess empowerment at an institutional or sectoral level. The approach used can be likened to the targeted boring of geological probes into the earth to determine the nature of the different layers to provide theories of the processes involved to create them. It means only a square decimetre here and there will be analysed, while large expanses of square kilometres would not be explored. While we may miss a gold deposit, we will obtain a general sense of the type of formations under the surface and whether it is possible for gold deposits to have been formed.

²⁷ As defined by Sida's Evaluation Manual, 2007, p 35.

ing the children involved in TDP's drama education in Gaza, a total of almost 5000 boys and girls were studied, which is a large sample size for educational research.²⁸

Findings from the qualitative data gathered are outlined below in relation to the each dimension of empowerment.

5.1 RESOURCES

This section examines the extent to which the data gathered provides evidence of:

- *human resources* having been strengthened including knowledge, skills, confidence, creativity, positive sense of being and change of consciousness.
- *social and political resources* having been strengthened – such as participation, group identity, networking, social capital.
- *material resources* having been strengthened.

Every stakeholder interviewed gave examples of human resources having been strengthened. At least half referred to social and political resources, while a small portion of stakeholders mentioned material resources. The findings are summarised in the following sub-sections.

5.1.1 Human Resources

The data gathered provides evidence of three main types of human resources important for the process of empowerment having been strengthened among Tamasi's stakeholders.

To begin with, the data suggest that a number of **skills** were gained. For instance, many stakeholders felt they had learnt **different skills to express themselves** on stage and some claimed that they had also learnt to express themselves better in writing. Many stakeholders also felt they had tapped into a newfound creativity and imagination.

Physical skills improved in some cases. For instance, the El Funoun survey found that dancers improved physically and gained knowledge about how to maintain good physical health. Meanwhile, the BASR evaluation established that children and youth with physical disabilities improved mobility of hands, fingers, muscles, and heads after drama training.

²⁸ Half of these children constituted the control group. The project examined over 100 different educational theatre and drama programmes, measured 1080 different variables. It has generated nearly 5 million cells of unique data. Analysis and publication of this work is still ongoing.

Some stakeholders mention that performing arts have improved their **skills of discipline, organisation and time-management**. All parents and a local politician commented to the Team how children and youngsters who were involved in the performing arts were more organised, responsible and focused.

Numerous participants, especially in Palestine, felt that they (or their child) had

gained useful social skills. This included trust, teamwork, “connecting”, “skills to deal with different people”, ability to interact naturally with people of the opposite sex and (unexpected by the Team) more caring of other people. Similarly, the DICE study established that children who receive drama education **are more empathetic** and are more aware of the negative effects of bullying.

Box 6: Gender Relations and Dance School

One Father explained that he had sent his son to El Funoun’s dance school to mix with girls so that he would not grow up to have the poor attitude towards women that he felt many of his own contemporaries had.

Second, some young stakeholders held that participating in Tamasi’s performing arts activities enhanced performance at school. Three young stakeholders (and two parents and a teacher) claimed that participating in performing arts had made them **academically more focused and successful**. This is supported by the DICE study which established that the children who participated in drama education – compared to the control group – were more highly assessed by their teachers in all aspects and felt more confident in reading and understanding tasks. Further, the study has established that educational drama and theatre has a significantly and objectively measurable impact on:

- communication in the mother tongue;
- learning to learn;
- interpersonal, intercultural and social competences;
- civic competences, and
- entrepreneurship.

The DICE study found that Palestine is the only country where improved grades in school because of drama were a statistically significant result. The BASR evaluation also established a correlation between drama and school performance - children with speech difficulty showed large improvement of their pronunciation and were able to express themselves and their needs better after drama education.

Success in school combined with drama skills may contribute to improved chances on the job market. Several of the recent graduates of the long-term training for young people at Al Harah received job offers – some without having applied for the jobs first – despite the depressed job market. The graduates believe that their ability to present and express themselves because of their theatre training was a contributing factor.

Third, many stakeholders, particularly in Palestine, expressed their belief that being involved in performing arts had been **a transformational experience**. Some have

stated that they are “no longer the same person.” **Confidence, self-knowledge, pride, a new mindset and a more positive feeling** of inner self were brought up as examples. In Palestine, more than half of the young stakeholders mention that they used to be very shy, depressed, introverted and/or aggressive; but through performing they had become happier and more balanced. Similarly, the evaluation undertaken by BASR found that young people with mental disabilities who received drama training became more confident, happier, more expressive, could concentrate more effectively and were able to express their emotions better.

The gaining of new skills, voice and mindset led to a new passion that was not entirely positive for all stakeholders. A couple of young men struggled against negative perceptions of theatre at home, the need to gain an income and a newfound deep passion for the performing arts. In a similar negative vein, the DICE results showed that a significant number of boys in Palestine (though not in other study countries) did not experience a positive sense of being, but rather felt lonelier after three months of drama education.²⁹

5.1.2 Social resources

The interviews, discussions and reports reveal that stakeholders have gained social resources through the Sida support. To begin with, the bonds among the performers/trainees/ volunteers appear to be strong. Each group has a **clear sense of group identity, participation and support**. Yet, stakeholders from Al Balad, El-Funoun and El Warsha pointed out that the performers/trainees/volunteers come from mixed social backgrounds/neighbourhoods so many had not known each other before. Nevertheless, many stakeholders in Palestine, Jordan and some in Egypt described the group they are associated with as a tightly knit “second family.” For several young stakeholders in Palestine, the peers in the Tamasi groups have served as a strong **form of moral support**, encouraging them to study and helping them with difficulties at home. For a great many, being part of a team and a sense of belonging was very important. As one dancer put it, “we help each other out to get through the obstacles.”

These findings are echoed by the DICE study, which found that children who regularly do drama have a stronger feeling of belonging to the community than their non-drama peers.

I used to be one of the violent people. Before, my gun did the talking. Now theatre has given me another way to talk. Power is not all in your muscles. I can write, perform and I have power within myself. I don't have any problems to speak out. Before I did not know how to do so and I was afraid. I can now reach people with my messages. Theatre so clearly moves people on the inside and can make society better by teaching children to think, imagine and act. You are moving yourself and you can move and others. We teach children to express themselves to their teachers and families. We tell them: "Trust yourself. Don't worry! Be open. Don't be caught by your thoughts.

When I had a gun, I was afraid to die. Now I am not afraid because now I can touch people's hearts. –Male Palestinian Stakeholder

Meanwhile, the **benefit of networking** through the Tamasi partners was rarely mentioned directly by the stakeholders. However, other data reveals that several individuals – including some of those interviewed – have benefitted from the formal and informal networks of the Tamasi members. This included access to scholarships and residencies (through Al Harah, SEE, El Warsha and TDP – see section 3.2).

5.1.3 Material resources

The evidence suggests that the Sida support contributed to two main forms of material resources – physical space and financial income. First, as discussed in section 3.1.2, the **provision of space that the Tamasi programme has supported was considered of great importance – not only for artistic development and expression, but also as a meeting point and a place of dialogue and exchange.**

Second, some of the **stakeholders have gained an income from performing arts.** In a few cases, former trainees and actors have become employed by the Tamasi groups or other theatre groups. It was not possible for the team to establish an overall picture of how many Tamasi trained people receive an income through performances. Stable job opportunities in the performing arts sector are few in the region – like everywhere in the world. Only in some cases does it seem that theatre was a primary source of income, usually as one of the employees of the Tamasi members or its off-shoots. Nevertheless, it appears that some young dancers, musicians and actors supplement their income by providing training in performing arts.

5.2 AGENCY AND ACHIEVEMENT

The Team has uncovered evidence of agency among Egyptian, Palestinian and Jordanian stakeholders. A majority of the performers, trainees and volunteers interviewed have taken initiatives, engaged in dialogue, defined goals, acted upon them and/or exercised voice. There is also evidence that the actions of these performers, trainees and volunteers have led to achievements. In total, around a third of the stakeholders gave examples of achievements.

The ten examples below include **social and civic engagement, political activism, advocacy and imparting knowledge and skills to children.** They were specifically included here because of their reach beyond each stakeholder and potential to affect several other people. This is not the case for all examples of agency and achievement gathered by the Team, most of which were of a more personal nature. It is notable that at least half of the examples involve stakeholders from culturally underserved communities who in most cases have had to confront adverse family and social pressures.

1. One informant has started his own project of working with street children in Egypt using artistic expression.
2. Two actresses that teach in schools have on their own initiative incorporated drama and puppets into their classroom work with children. Their supervisors are very impressed with the effects it has had on the children.

3. Six informants in Palestine, male and female, explained that theatre had helped them change the dynamics in their families. By expressing their own needs and concerns, the families have become better at dialogue.
4. One man in Jordan, a former school dropout from an impoverished part of Amman, uses puppetry to encourage children and mothers to learn to read and write to express themselves. He is working on establishing his own theatre.
5. A Jordanian administrative employee of Al Balad Theatre with no drama experience, gradually became fascinated by the activities of her workplace. To avoid being on stage (which would upset her conservative family) she learnt shadow puppetry, joined a group and has set up productions that raise issues such as child labour and relations between men and women.
6. One Palestinian from a conservative family living in a refugee camp won an acting prize in Jordan. He became interested in all aspects of the theatre and (through Tamasi networks) received a scholarship to study scenography in Syria. He now trains other young people in scenography, works in theatre and earns an income as a professional visual artist.
7. One Palestinian woman from a conservative background has secured funding from TIPH for two sets of puppetry workshops for boys and girls from Hebron's conservative old town with the aim of building the children's confidence, creativity and ability to express themselves.
8. The people with disabilities who had received drama training with support from Al Harah, have now started their own drama group that has performed for large audiences. They have also organised a self-advocacy group to promote the rights of people with disabilities.
9. More than two dozen people interviewed (associated with Tamasi groups) participated in protests in the region related to the Arab Spring and some played an active or lead role.³⁰
10. One group of young Palestinians associated with Tamasi organised a demonstration that lasted many days at the Nativity Square in Bethlehem during the Tahrir Square protests in Egypt. They brought dance groups and music and started discussion circles. They negotiated with the local authorities to bring water and electricity to the square. Members of this group have organised other demonstrations that have received media attention, including one in 2012 to show support for the hunger strikers in Israeli prisons.

In most of the cases above, the contribution of the Tamasi partners is deemed to be relatively direct. In the latter two examples, however, the contribution is less apparent. Stakeholders had different opinions on the extent of the link between them being in-

³⁰ For protection reasons, details of the involvement will not be presented in this report.

volved in a Tamasi groups and being politically active. These ranged from considering the link to be strong to being non-existent. In most cases, the stakeholder perceived there to be a relationship of some kind. For example, one Egyptian stakeholder explained that **being involved in the arts raised his social consciousness and created a desire to make a difference**. This was echoed by several other stakeholders in Palestine and Jordan – who said that performing arts made them more active in their communities. Four stakeholders of an older generation in the West Bank said that it was their experience that young people who were involved in performing arts become more involved in many other areas too, were socially engaged and took more initiative.

These perspectives are supported by evidence uncovered by the DICE study that established that in all 11 study countries, children who had participated in drama and theatre education **were more active citizens and took a greater interest in participating in public issues** than children who had not had drama education.

5.3 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The vast majority of the informants who told their stories provided examples of strengthened resources through participation in Tamasi activities. Notably, this included acquiring several skills, improving school performance, experiencing personal transformation and attaining social capital through group participation and identity. The data on human and social resources gathered by the Team from the Tamasi stakeholders correlated with the findings of the three different studies that were used as sources for this analysis. The range of types of human, social and material resources gained by the performers, trainees and volunteers is impressive. The Team deems that in principle these resources gained have the potential to contribute to empowerment among the concerned stakeholders.

There is evidence of both agency and achievement among a large number of those Tamasi stakeholders who provided their stories to the Team. Around a quarter of the informants have taken initiatives that reach beyond themselves, potentially affecting other people. This includes social and civic engagement, political activism, advocacy and imparting knowledge and skills to children.

Tamasi partners have made some significant contributions to creating conditions that enable people to improve their lives. These findings indicate that Sida's support has contributed to a degree of both empowerment and impact³¹. However, causality cannot be established and while the Sida contribution appears significant in several of the cases examined, it is less clear in the case of political activism.

I nearly died during the first intifada. I lost two friends, one in front of my eyes with 55 bullets in his chest. I wanted to follow them. I asked myself why should I live? I seriously thought of killing myself. It was not a strange thing in those days. I started to go to the early morning mosque prayer. This is the prayer session most watched by the security forces, because it is the most (fervent) believers who go. I wanted to join Hamas. I wanted to be violent. Despite my desperate approaches, Hamas did not want to engage me!

*As a child I had always loved to act. I was always imitating and clowning around. It was a secret dream to become a television actor. When I by chance heard that TDP was selecting people to train in drama, I felt I **had** to go. It coincided with the family party celebrating the arrival of my second son. I told my wife she had to cover for me and she could tell any story she wanted to our relatives, but I **had** to be at that theatre meeting. I was there at five o'clock and I never left. – A Stakeholder who received training and worked in Sida-funded theatre activities since the 1990s. He now runs a new independent theatre that works with children and youth in a conservative part of Palestine.*

³¹In line with Sida's definition of "short and medium term effects on the attitudes, skills, knowledge, or behavior of groups or individuals".

6 Sustainability

This chapter draws conclusions about the sustainability of the Tamasi programme, examining three levels of sustainability: sustainable effects; sustainable organisations; and a sustainable sub-sector. It responds to the key questions set out in the Terms of Reference:

- 1) *B 1: Are the results accomplished by the program likely to be sustainable?*
- 2) *B 2: Has the Tamasi program contributed to the sustainability of the involved groups in general?*
- 3) *B 3: Has the Tamasi program contributed to the sustainability of performing arts in the countries involved/the MENA region?*
- 4) *B 4: Has the Tamasi network managed to ensure the development of permanent contacts, collaboration and a common vision between the members of the network?*

As shown in the preceding chapters, the MENA region today is characterised by instability. Therefore any discussion of sustainability must recognise that external events may have a strong negative impact as witnessed in Syria. Of course there is also the possibility of positive impacts as countries in the region move towards more democratic and representative governance structures.

6.1 SUSTAINABLE EFFECTS

An important effect of the Tamasi support has been the experience of free expression. The act of free expression and the experience of it can easily be dismissed as a fleeting moment in which the content of this expression is soon forgotten. It can therefore appear unsustainable. To find one's voice, however, is a powerful effect – a process that can be long lasting. The findings presented in the previous chapter suggest that at least some Tamasi stakeholders have found their voice and are exercising it. In this respect, Tamasi's achievements in promoting people's experience of free expression can be highly sustainable. Similarly the efforts that have contributed to confidence, self-knowledge, social skills, academic results and discipline are likely to be sustainable.

The **facilities, spaces and venues for performing arts** that have been acquired by the Tamasi members have a good potential of continuing to contribute to increased access to independent performing arts and larger audiences. All the groups have extensive experience in scheduling and programming which will contribute to maximising the use of the new space.

The **training provided** to Tamasi groups has led to a deepening of professional skills and capacities, in the many disciplines associated with performing arts, from technical expertise in lighting and scenography to playwriting, directing and drama educa-

tion. These professional skills are a critical element of sustainability as they promote **competitiveness** in the marketplace.

In regard to the sustainability of the internal network and contacts that the Tamasi Programme has established, **the linkages among the members have been considerably strengthened** during the period under review. This collaboration has been achieved by annual meetings, formation of a Steering Committee, frequent emails, Skype conversations, guidance from SADA etc. In the last years substantive discussions and consensus building have taken place as a prerequisite to the formalisation of the Tamasi collective. With the common vision and strategies that have been established so far, there is potential that this will be sustained. Among the challenges, as discussed in section 3.4, will be to bring in younger members of the organisations and support their cross linkages within the new collective. Tamasi members are aware of this and intend to address this issue during the next programme period in order to retain the integrity of Tamasi while being receptive to new talent.

The Open Fund opened the door to make new contacts in Morocco and Syria. Active contact in the latter country, with its rapidly deteriorating political situation, is now in abeyance, while some exchanges with Morocco are continuing (as for example a spin off group of ATTC). For the new programme period, it may be possible, depending on the political tides, to intensify these contacts.

6.2 SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATIONS

Organisational Sustainability of the Members

The long track record of the Tamasi organisations (some have been around for 20 to 30 years) indicates tenacity, which stems from management by committed individuals. The Tamasi programme has modestly **furthered the sustainability of the members by enhancing organisational capacity** over the programme period, and there is no counter indication that it will be dissipated. In fact, many of the groups have set a bold programme of new work which requires greater organisational skills to achieve, and which they feel confident in realising.

The Tamasi organisations tend to have a large number of engaged artists, associates and/or members that also contribute their tenacity. The organisations that have developed a volunteer base are among the most sustainable. There is considerable scope for some of the other organisations to consider developing volunteerism to enhance their sustainability. As discussed below, however, a critical factor for sustainability remains the ability to generate and raise funds.

Performing arts groups are often closely associated with their founder or leader, and Tamasi is no exception. This leaves the groups vulnerable when the founder departs. Nevertheless the groups generally have a core team, so in this sense they are much more than the founder/leader. **Succession planning is an important issue**, and will need further thought in the next years as the present leaders of the Tamasi groups move towards retirement age. In the case of TDP such plans are already underway.

Organisational Sustainability of the Collective

Consistent with longer term planning formulated in 2008, the support of SADA is currently being phased out of the Tamasi Programme. By 2013 a coordinator and accountant based in Cairo will undertake the programme management of the future Tamasi Collective. As discussed in section 3.4, Tamasi is working on becoming a formalised collective owned by the 11 member organisations. Since this process is ongoing, it is premature to assess progress regarding the exit strategy. Nevertheless, the steps and actions involved to establish the collective while phasing out SADA's involvement appear to be logical and well-planned. The eleven organisations, SADA and the new coordinator seem to be confident in the process, which is so far on track. The new Tamasi structure appears to be appropriate to the needs – provided necessary funding is secured. To benefit from SADA's 17 years of experience of the region and its networks in Sweden, the new Tamasi intends to make use of SADA as consultants as necessary.

Financial Sustainability

It is highly challenging for independent performing arts everywhere in the world to achieve financial independence – the majority rely on donations, subsidies or trust funds. The Tamasi organisations are no different. The Tamasi Programme annual reports do not provide the overall funding structure of the organisations or what amounts have been received from the different donors. Nor is there consolidated data on whether the organisations have increased their overall budgets since 2008, although it would seem that this is the case for at least some organisations. Nevertheless, the Tamasi Annual Reports indicate that **Sida's share in funding of the different Tamasi programme partners is estimated to range between 7 to 80 percent, with the majority of partners receiving about 40-50 percent of their budget from Sida.** Other donors that the members have secured funding from – often by leveraging the support from Sida – include the Ford Foundation; EU Culture Programme; European Cultural Foundation; the Anna Lindh Foundation; Cordaid; the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC); the Arab education Forum; Mawred; the Doen Foundation; Qattan Foundation; UNESCO, UNRWA and several embassies and institutes (Spanish, French, British, German, Dutch, American and Italian). It appears that some organisations also receive funds from other NGOs (e.g. El Warsha/CARE and Al Harah/World Vision). In a few cases members have also received in-kind contributions from local businesses.

Most Tamasi members also generate some revenue through their work, although the Team was not able to gather data on what proportion of operational costs are met by earned income. This includes tours, CDs, membership fees, rental of space, training, memberships and the sale of commissioned productions. The ability to generate income varies according to the country in which the Tamasi members operate. Al Balad, SEE and SHAMS are able to generate modest incomes through ticket sales (although ticket prices are quite low). In Lebanon, it is common practice to charge an entrance fee, while in Egypt it is still uncommon to charge admission for independent theatre. A significant barrier are the numerous and Kafkaesque taxation rules and laws that affect the industry which was experienced by SEE during the D-CAF festival.

Government funding is generally not an option in the MENA region, particularly without sacrificing independence and freedom of expression. Nevertheless, groups in three countries have received some government support. In West Bank, El-Funoun received a travel grant for its China tour and Al Harah has been granted a permanent space by the municipal government. In Egypt and Lebanon Tamasi members have received government travel grants for participation in a couple of international festivals.

Much of the additional funding secured by the members is *activity based*. **Thus the critical issue of great concern for the Tamasi members is how to secure core funding.** Discussions with the groups revealed that all were actively exploring other sources of support and collaboration although the extent to which the organisations have clear strategies in this area is unclear. SEE engaged a fund raising expert for its D-CAF festival. At the Beit Jala SIPA workshop, the group felt that their organisations needed to enhance their capacity to mobilise funds from diverse sources, but also to develop their competences to develop efficient reporting and communications to donors. Similar concerns were echoed at the Cairo workshop. For the future, more rigorous attention to business planning and the development of fundraising strategies (including corporate and private donors) will be needed.

In addition to securing individual funding, the new Tamasi collective will require human and financial resources. This includes funds for the secretariat, but there will be considerable transaction costs to maintain the collective. At the time of writing, the groups are hoping on future long-term Sida support for the collective secretariat, the cost of participating and for the individual groups themselves – much like the current Tamasi set-up. It is difficult to see that the new Tamasi can be launched without Sida's support as likelihood of receiving significant resources from other donors without Swedish commitment is relatively low.

6.3 SUSTAINABLE SUB-SECTOR

The independent performing arts sub-sector in the region is small and fragile and receives only limited external support. By contributing to sustainable effects and improved sustainability of independent performing arts groups in the region, the Tamasi support has contributed, in a modest way, to the overall performing arts sector in MENA.

First, virtually all Tamasi groups have **spawned several formal and informal offshoots** – music groups, children's theatres, contemporary dance groups, young theatre troupes, community dance groups, puppetry groups and community theatre groups are some examples. These often are comprised of younger members and are generally very active and well connected. Many are skilled at using social media. During the programme period, TDP, El Mastaba, ACCT and I-Act have successfully hived off new groups: TDP with two theatre groups; El Mastaba with two music groups; ACCT with at least one theatre group; and I-Act with more than two new theatre groups. Mastaba's Henna Group and its children's group are now part of the Simsimiya Lovers Association in Suez. Likewise, Yes Theatre in Hebron and Pocket

Theatre in East Jerusalem have both become independent from TDP and have their own funding sources.

Second, the Tamasi programme has provided training to over 700 people. Some of these people have themselves become trainers, typically of children. As a result, **Tamasi's capacity-building has a multiplier effect in the sub-sector.** Furthermore, the Tamasi capacity development effort does not face to the same degree the chronic problem that is encountered in capacity building of civil servants, namely that people who benefit from training often leave to pursue other more lucrative posts. In the case of Tamasi, capacity seems to be retained within the extended network and sector. Those who leave often become collaborators, or even set up their own performance groups. As noted in earlier sections, the performing arts in most parts of the world are quite fluid: performers may interrupt their theatre work with phases of work in more financially rewarding positions and then return to the theatre.

Nevertheless, with the reliance on local and/or international funding, the growth of conservative societal currents and the continued hold of repressive governments; MENA's independent performing arts sub-sector remains vulnerable and struggles to survive.

7 Relevance

This chapter assesses the relevance of Tamasi support in relation to their target groups, member organisations and Sida's policy priorities, responding to the ToR's questions:

C 1: Has the program been relevant to the needs of the beneficiary population?

C 2: Has the program been relevant to the participating groups/member of the network?

C 3: Has the program been relevant to Sida's goals in the region, particularly to "promoting human rights, particularly freedom of expression and women's rights"?

A 8: How do the activities and members in the Tamasi network relate and contribute to the current political transformations in the Arab world?

Drawing on the Team's analysis of written material, knowledge of the MENA region and extensive field interviews (which aimed at a representative group of stakeholders and sector experts), the sections that follow analyse the degree to which Tamasi activities meet the needs and/or priorities of the intended target groups, the participating members of the network and Sweden's development cooperation strategy for the MENA region.

7.1 RELEVANCE TO PRIMARY TARGET GROUPS

Tamasi defines its primary target groups as follows:

- A diverse audience: sex, age and social backgrounds
- Children and young people
- Audiences from marginalized and underserved areas
- Potential artists and practitioners of performing art
- Women of all ages
- People with special needs.

7.1.1 Perspectives of Tamasi Target Groups

The Team was able to interview a range of people from each of the target groups above. Not surprisingly, all informants were highly appreciative of the support and regarded it as very relevant to their needs, those of their communities and performing arts. For instance, they highlighted that:

- The productions raised issues that they as audiences found relevant to discuss and deliberate;
- The performances for children were entertaining, inspiring and educational;
- There is limited access to independent performing arts in the region and Tamasi partners helped address this need;
- Performing arts activities gave children and young people several useful skills and opportunities to express themselves; and

- Artists and practitioners were provided space and training that they otherwise did not have access to and opportunities to freely express themselves.

Furthermore, as seen in Section 5.2, several individuals interviewed had leveraged their skills and knowledge gained through Tamasi activities to become, in different ways, active community members or citizens, committed to social change.

Nevertheless, within the target groups in the region there are leaders of conservative communities who not only view Tamasi's support as irrelevant, but also inappropriate. When Tamasi members have gradually demonstrated the benefits of performing arts activities and performances, these detractors have often been won over. Examples include, for instance, El Funoun's work in Beit Illu and Bel'ien; Al Balad's, Al Harah's and TDP's efforts in refugee camps; El Mastaba's activities in Port Said and Al Warsha's youth work in Menia.

7.1.2 Macro Perspectives of Arab Social Scientists

It appears that target groups who have directly or indirectly benefitted from Tamasi activities perceive the support as relevant. Since this may indicate a bias among beneficiaries, it is pertinent to examine the perceived needs of the MENA region from a macro perspective.

The United Nations Arab Human Development Report (AHDR) published in 2002 by Arab social scientists provides an overview of the region's needs. It concluded that what ails the Arab world are *deficits of freedom, modern education and women's empowerment*. Although a decade has passed since its publication, the assessments of this report are considered by many regional analysts to be even more valid today, particularly in light of the recent political events.

A social scientist and community activist who was interviewed by the Team echoed the concerns of the AHDR and reflected on the role of art in this context in a way that is representative of the views held by the leadership of the Tamasi organisations:

"The state is not functioning... and the Muslim Brotherhood is creating dependency through ideological indoctrination. If they respected human rights, women's rights and free thinking it wouldn't be a problem. The problem is they don't. Right now is the battle between science, education and art on the one side; and fundamentalism on the other. It's a battle of pluralism, diversity and that of being obedient. Art can be the infrastructure that supports alternatives. Now is the time to empower cultural actors. Art can challenge people to see things in a new way – to analyze, be shocked, to think. It is so important for people to see for themselves. We're overfed with folklore. The current generation grew up so deprived and they are marginalized from access to art. We want contemporary art because it increases people's ability to reflect and to reason. We need more transformative art, now, to liberate individuals. If not we stay locked in an old belief system."

Given the region's deficits of freedom, support to independent performing arts can be considered especially relevant in this context for its proven ability to promote freedom of expression and cultural liberty, empowerment of women and progressive educational content as discussed in the previous chapters. It also appears that Tamasi has selected relevant target groups, given the MENA context outlined by AHRC. To begin with, the fact that the proportion of children and youth in the MENA region is very high (in Egypt some 33 percent of the population is under age 14), renders Tamasi's targeting of these segments as highly relevant. Tamasi's work with school children contributes to modernising education by enhancing creative and critical thinking. As discussed in Section 3.1.8, in terms of reach, this work is significant in Palestine, but less so in the other countries.

Tamasi's progress in reaching culturally underserved communities is significant and relevant in relation to the conclusions of the AHDR. Expanding this work further in the next programme period would enhance relevance.

Tamasi's targeting of women is relevant. This is discussed further in Section 7.4.2 below.

7.2 RELEVANCE TO POLITICAL TRANSFORMATIONS

"The 1960s were all about freedom. The hippie culture was amazing and super creative on the art level. In Egypt, there was a level of freedom that was unthinkable in comparison to today. Today you'll see a man walking with 4 women in niqab behind him. Where did this change come from? It's because of isolation, boundaries and separation of people and countries and the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood." - A young generation Tamasi staff member

J is a conservative and isolated community near Bethlehem. I remember how shocked the audience members were when they saw a play after which one of the actors removed a face mask –she was a girl! They need this kind of shock! One should not underestimate the impact one can have in a small community.- Palestinian Refugee Stakeholder

Since the Tahrir Square protest of 2011, the region has witnessed an enormous surge of free expression, particularly in the cultural sphere. In this new context, the **Tamasi partners have arguable increased their relevance to the target groups by seizing opportunities.** This includes increasing numbers of performances, particularly in culturally underserved areas; providing facilities for free expression; and bringing free expression to the streets, for instance, in the groundbreaking D-CAF festival. The Open Fund has been a useful and relevant tool in this context and has enabled Tamasi to efficiently provide support to topical projects.

7.3 RELEVANCE TO MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

In the programme period, the Tamasi programme has been able to address many of the central needs of the member organisations. As discussed in Chapter 3.3, the support has made headway in meeting needs related to organisational capacity, production, training, networking, facilities, exchanges and professional collaboration. Yet with each organisation receiving only an average of SEK 425,000 a year for their activities, it is clear that many needs remain.

The support has also brought a regional dimension and perspective to the members' work - a feat given the fractured condition of the MENA region; the prevailing mobility barriers that reinforce isolation; and the weak tradition of regional performing arts initiatives (with the exception of work supported by the Ford Foundation). The regional structure of Tamasi is also fundamental for strengthening the ties among the independent performing arts activists who advocate for freedom of expression, cultural liberty and other human rights.

Tamasi has, however, yet to reach its full regional potential: bonds could be further strengthened among the groups at all levels; there is scope for more regular project collaboration and audiences could be exposed to more performances from other parts of the region. Discussion with the Tamasi groups suggests that these aspects will receive greater attention in the years to come. At the same time, achievements will be bound by mobility constraints, political developments and availability of travel funds.

7.4 RELEVANCE TO SIDA'S POLICY PRIORITIES IN MENA

Sweden's goals have shifted somewhat during the programme period. The Tamasi Programme was designed during Sweden's 2006 to 2010 strategy period. Key objectives in this strategy included:

- Promotion of democracy and good governance, e.g., by taking steps to promote the emergence of a strong civil society.
- Promotion of respect for human rights, including equal rights, conditions and opportunities for women and girls, and encouragement of the development both of regional networks and of structures for dialogue on rights perspectives and basic universal values, etc.³²

³² Ministry of Foreign Affairs. *Swedish Strategy for Development Cooperation with the Middle East and North Africa*. (2006- Aug 2010).

Sweden's 2010-2015 Strategy defines democracy and human rights as one of three sectors. Within this sector Sweden wants to achieve "greater respect for human rights, especially the freedom of expression and women's rights."³³

The two strategies are similar in many ways. Both focus on human rights, democratisation and civil society. Both emphasise the importance of regional collaboration (although this is stronger in the former strategy) and women's rights. There are also some differences in the two strategies. The former strategy specified support to culture as a means of strengthening democracy; the current strategy does not explicitly mention culture as an area of support. Instead it emphasises freedom of expression. Yet for decades, the core of Swedish cultural development cooperation has been grounded in the concept of freedom of expression, as has Sweden's domestic approach to culture.³⁴

The 2010 – 2015 Strategy appears to show a shift. The earlier support to human rights was on a broader scale and involved grass-root populations with a longer-term perspective. The current strategy involves a stronger advocacy approach which supports civil society organisations that promote democratisation and human rights "by means of lobbying, opinion building, the organisation of grass-roots political parties, the monitoring of government undertakings."

The following three sections examine the extent to which the support to the Tamasi Programme is relevant to Sweden's goals of promoting freedom of expression, women's rights and other human rights in the MENA region.

7.4.1 Relevance to Freedom of Expression

The Tamasi organisations are not lobbyists or opinion makers and do not monitor government undertakings, which are activities that are prioritised in Sweden's most recent strategy for the MENA region. Instead, they support the *exercise of* freedom of expression at the grass-root level, an action that is vital to effect change in repressive societies and central to the realisation of human rights. The Tamasi groups are thereby on the front line – along with many other activists in other fields of work – of pushing the boundaries with regard to freedom of expression in social and political discourse. This exercise of freedom of expression represents an extremely important counterweight to the fundamentalist trends sweeping the region. It is this feature of the Tamasi Programme that makes it highly relevant to Sweden's priority of promoting freedom of expression.

³³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs. *Swedish Strategy for Development Cooperation with the Middle East and North Africa*. (Sept 2010-Dec 2015).

³⁴ See, for instance, Sida's Culture and Development policy from 2006 and the two preceding policies from 1998 and 1993.

Tamasi members are not geared towards advocacy with a capital "A" in which explicit messages are communicated and disseminated. Rather, Tamasi members raise human rights dimensions and issues in their productions and present them in ways that ordinary people can relate to. While Tamasi's music, dance and theatre performances are aimed to move people emotionally and intellectually, they are not prescriptive – audiences are left to interpret the messages, reflect on the content and draw their own conclusions. Although this constitutes a more subtle form of advocacy, its persuasive power and outreach potential is well recognised and is the reason why advocates and communications experts often turn to performing arts as a medium.

7.4.2 Relevance to Women's Rights

As highlighted by the AHDR, providing opportunities for girls and women in the Arab world is crucial as they are often hindered by social convention from playing an equal part in social change. Thus, from this perspective and in relation to Sweden's priorities, Tamasi's strong focus on girls and women is highly relevant. **Gender equality and women's empowerment** are embedded in the values, approaches and activities of each of the Tamasi members (see Section 0 and Annex 8).

Addressing gender inequalities effectively requires working with *both* boys/men and girls/women. Tamasi members are aware that promoting gender equality and gender consciousness among male youth is critical. Likewise, Tamasi groups know from experience that to work with girls or performing in a village will often require dialogue with several members of the community. In this light, older conservative men – who often play the central role in community decisions – can be the "deal breaker." While affecting changed mindsets among these men may involve considerable energy without results, these groups need to be kept in the peripheral vision of the Tamasi groups. It appears that Tamasi members are conscious of this. However, the different strategies and approaches towards the various stakeholders in communities (parents, children, men, women, community leaders, religious leaders, teachers, etc.) that Tamasi members apply when they develop outreach projects are not documented. Clarifying these would strengthen the future programme document.

7.4.3 Relevance to Promoting Other Human Rights

In addition to promoting freedom of expression, the Tamasi members have shown commitment to promoting the realisation of other human rights, a key priority of Swedish development assistance. First, human rights principles (to varying degrees) form part of the values and approaches of the Tamasi members (see Section 4.1). Second, several activities have in particular been relevant to children's and women's rights (see Sections 3.1.8, 0 and Annex 8).

Third, the **Tamasi partners have promoted human rights, democratic development and social change through the content of their artistic work.** The majority of Tamasi productions are works by writers from the groups themselves or the region, or are existing pieces that have been adapted to the local context. The list provided below represents 80 percent of the total productions from 2008 to 2011,³⁵ and the subject matter of most productions clearly centres on societal and political issues relevant to the MENA context. While many of the plays are multi-layered, a categorisation by issues allows the following grouping:

- **Freedom of expression, social justice and basic human rights and freedoms, political comment:** TDP – *Entanglement; The Game*; Al Balad – *Shadows*; Al Harah – *Discovery*; I-Act – *Lines from Egypt's Diaries - Explode or Die*; El Warsha – *The Wolf and the Dog*; *Nights of El Warsha*: various versions, *Troy*, *The dumb waiter*; *A night of stories for adults*; El Mastaba – *Workers songs*; SEE – *Exit does not exit*; Open fund/Egypt – *Waiting point*; Open fund/Syria – *Al mekhala wal merwad*, *The Last Tape*, *The Zoo Story*; I-act – *The auction*, *Fire branch*;
- **Women's rights, womanhood/girlhood in Arab society, virginity and oppression:** Al Balad – *Tamann Banat*, *In the Lost and Found: The Red Suitcase*, *The Lily-White*; El Warsha – *Waking Up*, *Arfa and the Girls*, *The lover*; SEE – *Galatea's Twilight*, *Entity*; Al Harah – *Girls are a Burden until their Death*; TDP – *Ping Pong (1 & 2)*, *The Station*; Open fund/Syria – *A woman alone*, *Love without Wings*, *Intimacy*; Open fund/Egypt – *Moments of a silent position*
- **Injustice, dictatorship and corruption:** El Warsha – *Daqahliya Governorate Stories*; *Shehadet Ahmed' Ahmed's Testimony*, *The Pigeon Flock*; *The Penal Colony*; *The Sinker*; I-Act – *The Triangle Sonata*; SEE – *Salty Sugar*; *Frenzy for two*; *Amédée or How to get rid of it*; I-Act – *Stories of a Revolutionary Sawsana from Hems*; Open fund/Syria: *Becket's dramaturgy*
- **The Arab Spring and Arab identity:** El-Funoun – *El-Funoun Experiments*; El Mastaba – *Patriotic and resistance songs*; *Revolution show*; El Warsha – *The Wound and the Joy*, *Shehadet Ahmed' Ahmed's Testimony*; Temple Theatre – *On the Importance of being an Arab*; *Lost or the idiot's guide to American TV series and Palestine*; I-Act – *Nostalgia*; El Warsha/I-act – *Tahrir Monologues*, I-Act – *Lines from Egypt's Diaries - Explode or Die*; **Children's rights, violence against children:** Al Harah – *The Trap*, *Throw the Stick*; TDP – *The Red, White, Blue and Black Play*; I-act – *The neglected doll*;
- **The water crisis:** Temple Theatre – *Hassan x 2 and the Magic Well*
- **Religion, religious restrictions:** I-Act – *The Faust Machine*; Al Balad – *Shadows*
- **HIV/AIDS:** Al Harah – *“Why?”*

³⁵ The list does **not** include: any productions from 2008; all of youth and children's productions, CD and documentary productions from 2009 to 2011.

- **The Palestinian struggle:** Al Balad – *Waiting Forbidden (co-production), Dhikra (Memories)*; Al Harah – *Al-Nabka, House of Yasmine, Confinement*; El-Funoun – *6 Seconds in Ramallah, Images remembered (adapt), Dance freedom (adapt)*; El Warsha - *Collage of “Mahmoud Darwish – Poet of Troy”*
- **War, the bombardment of Gaza:** Al Harah – *The Catastrophe*; TDP - *A Little Play, Picnic at the Battle Field*; El Warsha - *Nights on Gaza, The Gaza Monologues*

The themes noted above relate to several basic human rights – equality, women’s rights, children’s rights, freedom of expression, political freedom, freedom from violence and the right to physical security. Arguably, even the entertaining theatre productions performed for children in Gaza can be viewed as relevant to human rights – the Convention of the Rights of the Child stipulates the right to leisure, which is particularly important for children living in war-torn communities such as Gaza. Most of the children’s plays take this into account and weave in humour to promote relief and release.

Lastly, Tamasi members contribute to human rights promotion and social change through their **choice of partners and supporters**. While the evaluation team were unable to gather a full overview of all the civil society organisations and profiles with whom the Tamasi groups partner, El Warsha, Al Harah, Al Balad, TDP, I-Act and SHAMS work with organisations that promote specific rights or a rights based approach. These include, for instance, CARE, RUWWAD, UNRWA, BASR, the Palestinian Network for Children’s Rights, Defence for Children International and Peace-for-Jerusalem. The support from the Ford Foundation, Embassy of the Netherlands, and Pro Helvetia are other examples of like-minded supporters.

7.5 SUMMARY

The MENA region can be characterised by a deficit of freedom, a deficit of modern education and a deficit of women’s empowerment. Tamasi’s support to performing arts is highly relevant in this context since it directly enhances freedom of expression, cultural liberty, empowerment of women and educational content. The Tamasi partners have arguable increased their relevance to the target groups by seizing opportunities since the Tahrir Square protests of 2011 during which there has been a surge of free expression, particularly in the cultural sphere.

The Tamasi programme demonstrates strong relevance to the central needs of the member organisations – including organisational capacity, artistic production, training, networking, facilities, exchanges and professional collaboration. The support has brought a stronger regional dimension and perspective to their work that is very difficult to achieve in the MENA region which does not have a tradition of regional performing arts initiatives. This is critical given the fractured state of the MENA region where mobility barriers reinforce isolation.

In regard to Sweden’s strategy for the MENA region, the Tamasi Programme is relevant because it focuses on *exercising* freedom of expression at the grass-root level. This exercise of freedom of expression represents an extremely important counterweight to

the fundamentalist trends sweeping the region. Advocacy work is not a programme objective but is a more indirect outcome resulting from members raising human rights dimensions and issues in their productions.

Through their values, approaches, content of their artistic work and partnerships; Tamasi members have shown commitment to promoting other human rights – such as children’s rights, freedom from violence, political freedom, equality, non-discrimination, participation and, in particular, women’s rights. As a result, the Tamasi support can be considered relevant to Sweden’s sector area of Democracy and Human Rights.

A Woman’s Voice in Gaza

In my final graduation project I chose to investigate: “Is it possible that a girl can lead a revolution in society? Can she change the society? Can she be the key to change?”. Women in our society are basically non-existent. They are not able to take decisions, like a man, and they don’t ask themselves the question “could I make different rules for us to live by, different rules for the people that I interact with?” A woman’s freedom is limited...just this basic freedom of being able to walk the streets without having people comment on you is not even there. The lack of freedom for women creates fear.

My play is about two people in a house – a man and his wife. The conflict is about power... the man strictly controls the house and leaves no room for anyone to breathe... I recognize this from my own personal life. I live in a house with a lot of males – a house where I as a woman do not have full freedom or can experience my rights. Not even to say ‘no’ because ‘no’ means change, it is a ‘no’ to the status quo and life as it is, to reality!

In my play, it is the grandmother who says ‘no’. She wants to change herself and her personality. She wants to go out, talk to people, deal with them in a new way. She wants to create a new reality for herself. She ventures beyond her normal boundaries, norms, values, limits, occupation, her husband, the children, poverty and all the other boundaries that have shaped her life so far... All those issues make the woman stand in the corner and surrender.

Hopefully, my play will create a revolution for women – for the women that want to free themselves from the chains. This doesn’t mean that you should desert everything. It just means that we need a woman to be radical, to look further ahead. She needs to take charge of the stick, to change herself, her kids, her house, her society, and in our Arab world everyone is screaming for this!

If we find the key of change in our weakest spot, which is women – the simple human being that is the planters of seeds – we would have a huge advantage. It would give the man a reason to reflect well upon himself. The man thinks he is a human being that lives on a higher level. He will inherit the whole land and everything else. The woman, on the other hand, is like a doll, sorry for the expression, like a puppet in the hands of a man which he controls and directs just as he pleases. It’s hard to live this feeling and to live in a society that treats the woman like that. - A Theatre Graduate from Gaza.

8 Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter draws together the key findings from the evaluation, concentrating on providing a synthetic overview of Tamasi's record in attaining its goals for the programme period and presenting recommendations for its future development.

8.1 EFFECTIVENESS

Overall, the Tamasi Programme, with its funding of SEK 41 million over the five-year programme period, has made a notable contribution to strengthening independent performing arts in the MENA region. By mounting original theatre productions authored by regional playwrights, developing additional rehearsal and performing spaces, bringing performances to more varied groups in new places and by seizing opportunities that have emerged as a result of the Arab Spring, Tamasi has been effective in increasing access to performing arts.

An estimated 1,000,000 people (although some may be “repeats”) have seen performances by Tamasi partners during the programme period to date. In aggregate numeric terms, the increase in audiences reached is impressive – an increase of 62 percent in the last three years. The increase in numbers is due, however, in large part to the sizeable audiences reached in Gaza through TDP's project with UNRWA in contrast to some decrease in audience numbers of other Tamasi members as the budget allocations from 2010 onwards have dropped. Security and the political events in Egypt and Lebanon have in some cases had negative effects on audience levels, but the Tamasi performances in Tahrir Square reached a significant number of viewers.

Since the previous programme period, Tamasi groups have given greater focus to reaching underserved communities during the programme period, particularly since the Arab Spring. The initiatives to increase the access to and involvement in performing arts among children are important efforts in this regard. The promotion of girls' and women's participation has been achieved by the Tamasi members in a number of different ways: through the content of their performances; the promotion of women's and girl's expression on stage; training opportunities for women; employment of women; and female leadership.

Training initiatives by Tamasi partners help fill a gap in the provision of performing arts opportunities for learning in the MENA region where independent performing arts struggle to survive. The process of professionalisation by Tamasi performers and theatre technicians during the programme period progressed as a result of a variety of activities, especially training (formal and informal), exchanges and international appearances. There is evidence of increase in skills at the level of the individual artist and group, in artistic and technical areas.

The above achievements related to improved audience access and professionalism have reinforced the capacity of Tamasi members as performing arts organisations. The effort to improve the organisational capacity of the members has also shown results. Among the important areas that have been strengthened through the Tamasi Programme are proficiency in the Logical Framework Approach (LFA) and regional networking, although there is scope for sharing of outreach strategies and even greater interaction among the Tamasi members.

The group directors and their colleagues are dedicated to presenting quality performing arts and to exposing audiences to new and thoughtful theatre, music and dance. Performing arts, educational and social service actors in the region consider Tamasi members to be organisations of high professionalism. An indication of Tamasi's standing in the world of performing arts is their invitations to perform at international festivals or other venues and the awards and honours they have received.

Overall, **the networks established by the Tamasi members are expansive and multi-layered.** The efforts to expand the network to other MENA countries, however, have not yielded the desired results. The Programme directed its expansion to Syria and Morocco but the current deterioration in Syria has severely hampered Tamasi's results in enlarging its geographic outreach.

8.2 CONTRIBUTING TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Tamasi members support rights-holders to *exercise* freedom of expression. This activity is one of many building blocks that are fundamental – but by no means sufficient – for freedom of expression to be realised in a society. After decades of political repression, Tamasi members regard “liberating” expression as a main task. Thus, without exception, the Tamasi members show clear commitment to promoting freedom of expression in their processes, methodologies, activities and productions. They provide the physical and mental space for free expression and stakeholders regard independent performing arts as a forum for political expression and activism. **Most expression on stages of the Tamasi members relates to topical political, societal and human rights issues.** This reflects the groups' activist agenda and the fact that the artists they attract have something to say about the current state of affairs. Official censorship and conservative censure impose limits for Tamasi members who in turn aim at consistently challenging these limitations, one step at a time.

8.3 CONTRIBUTING TO EMPOWERMENT

The vast majority of the informants who told their stories provided examples of strengthened resources through participation in Tamasi activities. Notably, this included acquiring personal or social skills, improving school performance, experiencing personal transformation and developing social capital through group participation and identity. The data on human and social resources gathered by the Team from the Tamasi stakeholders correlated with the findings of three different studies that were used as sources for this analysis. The range of types of human, social and material resources

gained by the performers, trainees and volunteers is impressive. The Team deems that in principle these resources gained have the potential to contribute to empowerment among the concerned stakeholders.

There is evidence of both agency and achievement among a large number of those Tamasi stakeholders who provided their stories to the Team. Around a quarter of the informants have taken initiatives that reach beyond themselves, potentially affecting other people. This includes social and civic engagement, political activism, advocacy and imparting knowledge and skills to children.

Tamasi partners have made some significant contributions to creating conditions that enable people to improve their lives, albeit on a small scale commensurate with the scale of funding. These findings indicate that Sida's support has contributed to a degree of both empowerment and impact. However, causality cannot be established and while the Sida contribution appears significant in several of the cases examined, it is less clear in the case of political activism.

8.4 EFFICIENCY

The Programme and the Tamasi member organisations are managed with a serious regard for efficiency. The members have slim management structures and basic offices with modest equipment. The groups make good use of email and skype for communications. Meetings are well organised with a well conceived agenda. The volunteer base and the leveraging of funds from other donors have contributed to a better than expected relationship between results achieved and Sida's financial input. A noteworthy effort has been made during the last programme period to improve the results-based management. Systematically implementing the requirements of an LFA format, however, has left qualitative data a little aside. The presentation of information has been fragmented and the reports are therefore challenging to read.

8.5 SUSTAINABILITY

Some of the effects of the Tamasi Programme are likely to be sustained, provided that the region does not experience a higher degree of religious and social intolerance. When the results have led to people finding their voice, the sustainability is arguably high in terms of continued beneficial effects. While the Tamasi Programme has contributed to strengthening the member organisations in many respects, securing new funds remains a serious concern for all organisations. Some generate a modest income from ticket sales, commissioned productions and membership fees but others have realised very little earned income. The organisations with a volunteer base are likely to be the most sustainable and there is scope for the other organisations to consider developing volunteerism. The Tamasi Programme has also contributed modestly to the sustainability of the overall performing arts sector in the region by spawning several formal and informal off-shoots and building capacity that has resulted in some multiplier effects. Nevertheless, with the reliance on local and/or international funding, the growth of conservative societal currents and the continued hold of repressive governments; MENA's independent performing arts sub-sector remains vulnerable and struggles to survive.

8.6 RELEVANCE

The MENA region can be characterised by a deficit of freedom, a deficit of modern education and a deficit of women's empowerment. Tamasi's support to performing arts is highly relevant in this context since it directly enhances freedom of expression, cultural liberty, empowerment of women and educational content. The Tamasi partners have arguable increased their relevance to the target groups by seizing opportunities since the Tahrir Square protests of 2011 during which there has been a surge of free expression, particularly in the cultural sphere.

The Tamasi programme demonstrates strong relevance to the central needs of the member organisations – including organisational capacity, artistic production, training, networking, facilities, exchanges and professional collaboration. Yet with each organisation receiving only an average of SEK 425,000 a year for their activities, it is clear that many needs remain. The support has brought a regional dimension and perspective to their work that is very difficult to achieve in the MENA region which does not have a tradition of regional performing arts initiatives (with the exception of work supported by the Ford Foundation). This is critical given the fractured state of the MENA region where mobility barriers reinforce isolation. It is also fundamental for strengthening the ties among the independent performing arts activists who advocate for freedom of expression, cultural liberty and other human rights.

In regard to Sweden's strategy for the MENA region, the Tamasi programme appears to be highly relevant because it focuses on exercising freedom of expression at the grass-root level, an action that is both crucial to effect change in repressive societies and vital for realising human rights. The Tamasi groups are thereby on the front line – along with many other activists in other fields of work – of pushing the boundaries with regard to freedom of expression in social and political discourse. Their advocacy work is not a programme objective but is a more indirect outcome. Tamasi members raise human rights dimensions and issues in their productions, but leave audiences to interpret the messages, reflect on the content and draw their own conclusions. **This exercise of freedom of expression represents an extremely important counter-weight to the fundamentalist trends sweeping the region.**

Through their values, approaches, content of their artistic work and partnerships; Tamasi members have shown commitment to promoting other human rights – such as children's rights, freedom from violence, political freedom, equality, non-discrimination, participation and, in particular, women's rights. The Tamasi support can thus be considered relevant to Sweden's sector area of Democracy and Human Rights.

8.7 THE NEW TAMASI

The new Tamasi that will soon be formalised owes its existence to the solid process-oriented support from DI/SADA and the multi-year nature of the Tamasi Programme. Without the five-year time horizon of the last programme period, it is ques-

tionable whether the consolidation process would have reached its present level of maturity. It has taken time and guidance for the eleven Tamasi members – spread over four countries – to develop their current level of cohesion, understanding of the benefits of a network and common vision. They have formed a common identity, rooted in shared core values. While negotiations have not always been easy, the members have developed an important level of respect for each other and mutual trust. The Tamasi group have decided that **Tamasi will be a collective**. While the members will partner freely at national and regional levels with other groups, Tamasi will wait five years before it opens its doors to new members in order for the collective to consolidate itself.

The milestones achieved so far along the route of establishing the new Tamasi are significant. To succeed with the new Tamasi, however, the current level of cohesion, commitment and dedicated time needs to be maintained and probably increased. The new Tamasi collective will also require resources. In addition to funds for secretariat, there will be considerable transaction costs to maintain the collective. The likelihood of receiving significant resources from other donors without a commitment of Swedish funding is relatively low.

Furthermore, the following areas need to be addressed for the new Tamasi to attain its goals, relevance, serve its members and develop the sub-sector of independent performing arts:

First, Tamasi has **yet to reach its full regional potential**. There is a need to further strengthen bonds among the groups at all levels; engage in more project collaborations; and, document, share and reflect on each other's expertise, methodologies and good practice.

Second, even though Tamasi will be formalised as a collective, it will be crucial for the group to **build “bridges beyond Tamasi.”** This should involve partnerships with younger/smaller organisational groups and more projects/cooperation with other MENA countries.

Third, the Tamasi members need to **bring younger generations** into the central Tamasi fold and to promote leadership. In addition, the organisations recognise a need to ensure that younger colleagues will eventually be able to take over and continue with the collaboration within Tamasi.

Fourth, while the Tamasi members are not geared to undertaking systematic advocacy campaigns, Tamasi would do well to **develop strategic ties with effective advocates of free expression** and other human rights in the region. In the event that any of the members are pressured, threatened or closed down, the Tamasi collective could leverage the help of these organisations.

In addition to maintaining the current momentum within the collective, the prospects of accomplishing these goals in the upcoming years will be bound by mobility constraints, political developments and sufficient funds.

8.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Tamasi should insure that the new strategic plan:
 - a. Outlines why and how Tamasi intends to **promote increased project collaboration** among the members.
 - b. Discusses how Tamasi will further **strengthen bonds** among the groups at all levels. In particular, the Tamasi members should develop plans for how to **bring younger generations** into the Tamasi fold and establish productive working relationships at different levels. It should involve younger associates in this endeavour and encourage creative cost-effective options such as using social media.
 - c. Considers how **sharing, reflection and documentation** of each other's expertise, methodologies and good practice can be undertaken and disseminated to best serve the needs of the collective and performing arts sector. Priority areas for sharing and documentation could be strategies for effective and sustainable volunteerism, working with educational and social service organisations, fund-raising, and the monitoring effort of TDP.
 - d. Clearly defines how Tamasi intends to **build bridges beyond its members** and interact with others in the performing arts sector.

These priorities should be incorporated into working practices.

2. Tamasi should develop a **resource mobilisation plan** to diversify and expand its resource base, using their creative and imaginative talents to exploit possible funding sources including corporate sponsorship and local government. Tamasi should consider engaging professional expertise in this area as needed.
3. To decrease their reliance on donors, take full advantage of the changing political landscape in the region and enhance competitiveness; Tamasi members and the Tamasi collective will need to develop a road map of growth, next steps, and a review of current financing and projections for the next five year period. Each Tamasi member should **develop business plans**, with attention to local sponsors, willingness to pay of local audiences and diversification of income sources.
4. Linked to their ability to generate earned income, Tamasi groups and the collective should continue with the initial experiments in **analysing their audience**. They should carry out research into existing audiences (using sampling) and utilising the results, develop new strategies to improve current outreach. The research should investigate willingness to pay of audiences for performing arts. Again, it may be necessary to engage professional expertise in this area.
5. While Tamasi's comparative advantage is advocacy with a small "a", it should consider **developing strategic ties to experienced advocates of free expression and human rights** in the event that any of the members are pressured, threatened or closed down so that a joint, organised and effective campaign can be launched.
6. **The new Tamasi should develop its reporting** with the aim to provide more qualitative information and analysis; improve readability and; guide strategic planning more effectively. Better use of tables and annexes and quantification of qualitative data is needed to set out achievements and shortcomings.

7. In the next years, as some of the present leaders of the Tamasi groups move towards retirement age, the relevant Tamasi members should **consider developing succession plans**. The current succession plan being implemented in TDP can serve as a reference point.

Annex 1 – Terms of Reference

Evaluation of the Tamasi Network

Background:

The Tamasi network brings together eleven organisations (theatre groups, performing arts troupes, cultural centres, etc.) in four countries, in a network for stimulating and enhancing performing arts in the Middle East and North Africa. The 11 organisations are based in Egypt (5), Lebanon (2), Jordan (1) and Palestine (3). In addition, activities in Syria and Morocco have been supported as part of the program. The participating groups work through a variety of actions, including theatre productions, drama education, festivals, and maintaining independent spaces for cultural expression.

The Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts (SADA) has supported the network since its foundation, and has played an important role as coordinator and facilitator of the network and its activities. In addition, SADA has enabled exchange and contacts between the Tamasi network and actors and institutions in Sweden and elsewhere.

Through SADA, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) has funded the Tamasi network since its foundation. While its primary role is as a donor, Sida has also endeavoured to be an active partner in strategic discussions around the network.

The present phase of the network's development will end in December 2012. During the coming year, the Tamasi network will attempt to convert itself into a formal organisation able to develop and implement a new phase of support. Sida is interested in a possible continuation of its support. However, as Sida's possibilities in the region has narrowed down thematically, it must be assessed to what extent Tamasi is actually making a contribution towards Sida's present goal; strengthening human rights, particularly freedom of expression and women's rights.

Purpose of the evaluation:

The evaluation will be a key document both for Sida's assessment of the program, and for Tamasi's future internal development. It will thus serve a dual purpose of both taking stock of past experiences, and using these to formulate ways forward for the program.

More concretely, the evaluation shall generate information on the extent to which the Tamasi network has been successful in attaining the goals established during the previous phases of support. It shall also address the possibilities of Tamasi making a contribution to the general Swedish cooperation goal of promoting human rights, particularly freedom of expression in the MENA region in the future.

The evaluation should also give suggestions as to how such contributions can be reached or enhanced in the future, as well as how the networking aspect of the program

can be enhanced. To that end, the evaluation shall gather and document organisational, administrative and artistic experiences from the program that can be further developed in coming phases.

Stakeholders:

The primary stakeholders for the evaluation are the members of the Tamasi network, both as objects of evaluation and as implementers of possible recommendations.

Additionally, both SADA and Sida are stakeholders, as object of evaluation and as primary user of its conclusions, respectively. Sida and SADA will cooperate in the performance of the evaluation.

Evaluation questions:

The evaluation shall address questions related to the effectiveness, sustainability and relevance of the Tamasi program. In addition, it shall endeavour to formulate recommendations in order to enhance the program in the future.

With regard to effectiveness, the evaluation shall address the following questions:

A 1: Has the Tamasi program helped to strengthen the situation for performing arts in the MENA region?

A 2: Has the Tamasi program increased access to performing arts in the region?

A 3: Has the Tamasi program increased access to performing arts for women and youth in particular?

A 4: Has the Tamasi program enhanced the professionalism in the area of performing arts in the MENA region?

A 5: Has the Tamasi program managed to create strong and viable networks in the area of performing arts, both between the members of the program, and within broader circles of relevant groups?

A 6: Has the Tamasi program/Sida's funding contributed to strengthening the groups that are members of the network?

For all of the above questions, the evaluation team shall consider whether the program has been cost-efficient/sufficiently funded, i.e., the evaluation shall juxtapose results achieved with the amounts of Sida funding.

A 7: Can the Tamasi program be said to have contributed to enhancing the freedom of expression in the MENA region?

A 8: How do the activities and members in the Tamasi network relate and contribute to the current political transformations in the Arab world?

With regard to sustainability, the evaluation shall address the following questions:

B 1: Are the results accomplished by the program likely to be sustainable?

B 2: Has the Tamasi program contributed to the sustainability of the involved groups in general?

B 3: Has the Tamasi program contributed to the sustainability of performing arts in the countries involved/the MENA region?

B 4: Has the Tamasi network managed to ensure the development of permanent contacts, collaboration and a common vision between the members of the network?

With regard to relevance, the following questions shall be addressed:

C 1: Has the program been relevant to the needs of the beneficiary population?

C 2: Has the program been relevant to the participating groups/member of the network?

C 3: Has the program been relevant to Sida's goals in the region, particularly to "promoting human rights, particularly freedom of expression and women's rights"?

Methods:

The evaluation shall depart from an overview of the contexts in which the Tamasi program operates, with a particular focus on the relationship between performing arts and the prevailing politics, social and cultural practices in the region. In particular, aspects of the political situation such as occupation and military conflict, official and unofficial forms of censorship, limitations to the freedom of expression and to the right of public gathering, as well as the financial restraints caused by government policies, need to be taken into account. Such an overview shall form the basis for subsequently addressing the relevance and effectiveness of the program and its activities.

In the second place, the evaluation shall consider the needs and priorities of the intended beneficiary population for the program, particularly people living in conditions of poverty, and youth and children. In order to address this issue, the evaluation may undertake interviews, focus group studies, and/or repeat visits.

In the third place, the evaluation shall contain an attempt to gauge the impact of the program, both on the participating members of the network, on the cultural practices in the region in general, and on the beneficiary population. For this purpose, interviews shall be conducted with key informants inside and outside of the Tamasi network. With regard to the effects on the beneficiary population, the evaluation may again use focus group interviews. Additionally, the reports generated by the Tamasi program contain much information on its outputs.

In addressing the question of impact, focus should be kept on general effects, rather than on details of individual activities. Also, care should be taken to avoid the negative effects of having to rely on one-time visits to the program members; either through repeat visits or by trying to include additional information (e.g., through informant interviews and the Tamasi reports) that give a broader temporal picture.

Effects and impacts should both be addressed in relation to the concrete goals of the Tamasi network, and in relation to the overall influence that the Tamasi network has had on its environment (an element of 'goal-free evaluation').

More in particular, the evaluation shall – by drawing on the above sources of information as well as material of a more general character – make an informed judgement on the extent to which the program may have had an impact on the broader area of human rights, particularly freedom of expression, in the MENA. Such a judgement shall be clearly and thoroughly argued, and contain a critical discussion of both arguments for and against believing that such an impact has taken place. That discussion will take into account and relate the Tamasi program and its activities to the political transformation which is currently taking place in the Arab world.

Throughout the evaluation, particular emphasis should be placed on meeting with all members of the Tamasi network, and to gauge how they consider that their work strengthens freedom of expression in their respective contexts. Additionally, the consultants are required to spend sufficient time with the member groups to take into account the contexts in which they operate, and to meet part of their intended audience. Such visits to the members of the networks shall ideally not be shorter than two-three days.

In describing the results, sustainability and relevance of the Tamasi network, examples may be used both for illustration and for proof. However, if they choose to use such material, the consultants shall also present a view on how representative such examples are of the program in general.

The main activities in the Tamasi network have taken place in Lebanon, Egypt, the occupied Palestinian territories, and Jordan. It is therefore suggested that the evaluation limit itself to these four countries. The evaluators may also suggest particular emphasis on a selection of these countries, if such an approach could benefit the evaluation.

Evaluation team:

The evaluation team shall be composed of 2-4 persons. Between them, they shall possess the following competences:

- Good knowledge about performing arts and independent cultural expression.
- Thorough knowledge about the Middle East and North Africa in general, and on the cultural situation in the region in particular.
- Thorough knowledge about and capacity to analyse the political context in which the Tamasi network operates.
- Knowledge about evaluation methods and techniques.
- Experience in working/evaluating networks and networking processes.
- Fluency in both Arabic and English.
- Experience of working in the cultural sector.
- Experience in performing evaluations in the MENA region.
- Experience of evaluations in the sector of democracy and human rights.

One person shall be designed to be the team-leader, and shall be responsible for all contacts with SADA and Sida. This person must have knowledge about evaluation methods, and of working in the sector of democracy and human rights.

SADA, the members of the Tamasi network, and Sida will name one representative each for the follow-up of the evaluation, and they will be jointly responsible for the contacts with the consultant.

In total, the estimated time for the present assignment ascends to 15-19 man-weeks, with an tentative distribution as follows:

- Accessing existing accounts of the context, going through Tamasi documentation: 2 weeks.
- Inception report: One week.
- Field visits, centred around the member organisations of the program: 9 – 13 weeks.
- Reporting: 3 weeks.

The start date of the evaluation shall be March 15, 2012, and it is expected to be concluded by mid-July at the latest.

Reporting:

The consultants shall present an inception report no later than April 1, 2012. This report shall present initial impressions of the program, suggest possible changes to the evaluation questions and the methods proposed here, and present a detailed workplan for the assignment. Sida and SADA both need to approve the inception report before field visits can begin. Sida and SADA may also request additional information to be included in the inception report if need be.

The consultants shall present a draft evaluation report no later than June 1, 2012. This report shall present the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation. Sida, SADA and the members of the Tamasi network may suggest changes and/or additions in their response to the draft report.

No later than 30 days after receiving comments, the consultants shall deliver a final report. If there is a need to correct factual mistakes, both Sida and SADA may suggest revisions to the document.

During all reporting stages, with the exception of the workplan for the assignment and possible additions in response to the draft report, the consultants do not have to follow Sida's or SADA's suggestions, as these are merely recommendations rather than anything else.

Annex 2 – List of Informants

	Name	Position	Type of stake ³⁶
1	Aboudoma, Mahmoud	Director, I-Act	X
2	Abouzeid, Amany	Future Tamasi Coordinator	X
3	Adel, Nadet	Actor/ director	T
4	Al Attar, Ahmad	General Manager, Studio Emad Eddin/Temple Independent Theatre	X
5	Amin, Ahmad	Theatre director	T
6	Anis, Roger	Photographer, El Warsha Trainee, pre-Tamasi period	
7	Azzam, Sayd	Mastaba Musician	T
8	Bakhoun, Dina	Aga Khan Trust for Culture	
9	Bakry, Osama	Mastaba Musician	T
10	Bargamon, Hassan	Mastaba Musician	T
11	Bongoz, Yasser	Mastaba Musician	T
12	Eddin, Emad	Stage manager	X
13	El Batraoui, Menha	Theatre Critic	
14	El Fadaly, Latifa	ATG	T
15	El Hagrasy, Mohammed	Actor	T
16	El Harawi, Sara	ATG	T
17	El Husseiny, Basma	Mawred Executive Director	
18	el Kady, Mamdoh	Mastaba staff	X
19	El Raiys, Abd Elaal	Mastaba Musician	T
20	El-Guindy, Dalia	Theatre student	T
21	Emile, Nadine	Choreographer & dancer	T
22	Fathy, Diea	Mastaba Musician	T
23	Geretly, Hassan	Director, El Warsha	X
24	Gorgui, Margo	Coordinator, I-Act	X
25	Hassan, Gamal	Mastaba Musician	T
26	Helmy, Ossama	ATG	T
27	Hourani, Laila	Ford Foundation consultant	

³⁶ The symbol X refers to informants who have a high stake in the evaluation and in the continuation of support from Sida. The letter "T" refers to stakeholders who belong to one of the target groups specified in the Tamasi Programme. Unmarked informants include external informants, potentially indirect stakeholders and stakeholders of the performing arts sector as a whole.

28	Hussein, Amira	Care Egypt, Initiatives Manager	
29	Ibiary, Nevine	Director of Workshop Programs & Residencies, Studio Emad Eddin	X
30	Ibrahim, Zakaria	Director, El Mastaba	X
31	Kreidli, Hassan	Actor	T
32	Magdy Asham	Jesuit Brothers, Menia	
33	Makram, Adel	Jesuit brothers, Menia	
34	Nagy, Ahmad	Accountant, Studio Emad Eddin	X
35	Ouf, Ali	Mastaba Musician	T
36	Papini, Brita	Tamasi Coordinator	X
37	Rehan, Hassan	Mastaba Musician	T
38	Sami, Basem	Mastaba staff	X
39	Seoudi, Marwa	Coordinator, El Warsha	X
40	Shabayek, Sondos	Writer and director, Tahrir Monologues	T
41	Shafiq, Mohammad	Dance trainer and performer	T
42	Shukri, Ahmad	Actor	T
43	Suleiman, Maged	Trainer in singing and music, El Warsha	X
44	Van de Put, Anja	Policy Officer for Culture & Development, Embassy of the Netherlands	
45	Wahab, Mamdouh	Mastaba Musician	T
46	Wells, William	Townhouse Gallery	
47-51	4 Tahrir Monologue actors	Actors	T

Jordan

1	Al Azzeh, Faisal Zaid	Volunteer / part-time employee /technician	X
2	Al Baroudi, Abdelrahman	Volunteer, Al Balad Theatre	T
3	Asfour, Raed	Artistic Director, Al Balad Theatre and ATTC Board Member	X
4	Bashir, Fadi	Volunteer, Al Balad Theatre	T
5	Dudin, Samar	Regional Director of Ruwwad, board member of Al Balad	X
6	Huleileh, Serene	Arab Education Forum, Al Balad Board Member	X
7	Khaweja, Mourad	Volunteer, Al Balad Theatre	T
8	Mbaideen, Razan	Administrative Assistant, Al Balad	X
9	Nasser, Lana	Aat Network, Dancer, Director and Actress	T

Lebanon

1	?	Agonistik	T
2	?	Agonistik	T
3	?	Agonistik	T
4	?	Agonistik	T
5	Assaf, Roger	Director, SHAMS/Sunflower Theatre	X
6	Daccache, Zeina	ATTC	X

ANNEX 2 – LIST OF INFORMANTS

7	Dakroub, Karim	Khayal Association	
8	Hassan, Kinda	EKAA	
9	Kayed, Hisham	Al-Jana	T
10	Knio, Mona	Founding Member, ATTC	X
11	Nasser, Kholoud	Actor	T
12	Nawar, Abdo	Director, SHAMS/Sunflower Theatre	X
13	Polikivitch, Alexandre	Dancer/choreographer	T
14	Sahab, Ghassan	Musicologist	
15	Souraty, Nagy	ATTC/Agonistik	T
16	Yamine, Fouad	Playwright/director/actor	T
17	Zbib, Maya	Collectif Zoukaki	T
18	Zouki, Aurelian	Playwright /Collectif Kahraba	T

Palestine

1	Aamar, Hussein	Dance trainer, El Funoun Popular Dance Troupe	T
2	Abdelsalam, Waleed	Director of Arts Department at Ministry of Culture	
3	Abu Maria, Hashem	Defense for Children International, Palestine Branch	
4	Abu Rahmeh, Ahmad	Manager of Al Hadaf Cultural Centre in Beli'ein village	
5	Wafa	Beit Illu Youth Club	
6	Abu Rahmeh, Thaeer	Al Hadag Cultural Centre in Beli'ein village	
7	Abu Sa'a, Alaa	Dar Qindeel, TDP trainee pre-Tamasi period	
8	Al Aydeh, Rafat	TDP's Gaza Region Artistic Director, TDP trainee pre-Tamasi period	X
9	Al Aydi, Mohammad	Director Gaza strip south region, UNRWA Relief & Social Services Dpt.	
10	Al-Ayaseh, Leila	Actor/former trainee	T
11	Al-Ayaseh, Lina	Actor/former trainee	T
12	Andoni, Ragheda	Swiss Development Cooperation	
13	Asmari, Nathalie	Actor/former trainee	T
14	Awad, Muawiah	Head of Educational Guidance & Special Education, Ministry of Education	
15	Barghouti, Farai	Parent of former Bara'em member	
16	Barham, Marina	Director, Al Harah Theatre	X
17	Canawati, Rima	Bethlehem Arab Society for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled	
18	Habash, Nadia	Parent of former Bara'em member	
19	Haddad, Jamal	Board member, El Funoun Popular Dance Troupe	X
20	Hamuda, Raghda	School principle, Gaza	
21	Hmouz, Zeina	Dance trainer, El Funoun Popular Dance Troupe	T
22	Hodali, Christine	Actor/former trainee	T
23	Karakra, Majdi	Dancer and trainer of dabke group	T
24	Katamesh, Khaled	Director, El Funoun Popular Dance Troupe	X

ANNEX 2 – LIST OF INFORMANTS

25	Kawamleh, Fayez	Coordinator, Dance School at Popular Art Centre	
26	Khattab, Atta	Trainer, dancer & employee, El Funoun Popular Dance Troupe	X
27	Khattab, Nadia	Dance trainer, El Funoun Popular Dance Troupe	X
28	Lubeck, Jackie	Theatre Writer, TDP	X
29	Marzouka, Firas	Actor/former trainee	T
30	Massou, Abeer	Bethlehem Arab Society for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled	
31	Matar, George	Employee, trainer and actor, Al Harah Theatre	X
32	Moorhead Al-Ayaseh, Jennifer	Parent of former trainee	
33	Mukarker, Firas	Photographer	
34	Nasser, Hind	Actor/former trainee	T
35	Natour, Samira	Parent of former Bara'em member	
36	Odah, Naji	Director of Al-Phoenix Association	T
37	Odeh, Huda	Board member, El Funoun Popular Dance Troupe	X
38	Rishmawi, Jumana	World Vision	
39	Rizqallah, Georgette	Actor/former trainee	T
40	Sakhleh, Mirna	Employee, trainer and actress, Al Harah Theatre	X
41	Salfiti, Fadya	Swedish Consulate in Jerusalem	
42	Samarh, Waleed	Al Hadag Cultural Centre in Beli'ein village	
43	Schiro, Giulia	Peace for Jerusalem	
44	Shyoukhi, Raed	Yes Theatre, Hebron, former TDP trainee pre-Tamasi period	
45	Sulqan, Maram	Dance trainer, El Funoun Popular Dance Troupe	T
46	Talbishi, Heyam	Actor, Drama Trainer, former Al Harah trainee pre-Tamasi period	
47	Titi, Mohammed	Yes Theatre, Hebron, former TDP trainee pre-Tamasi period	
48	Willems, Jan	Artistic Director, RDP	X
49	Zaghmouri, Ruba	Trainer and dancer, El Funoun Popular Dance Troupe	X
50	Zeidan, Raji	Mayor of Beit Jala Municipality	
51	Zeidan, Salim	Family member of trainee	
52	Zeidan, Sari	Family member of Al Harah Trainee	
53	Zubeidy, Yazan	YMCA Youth Coordinator & actor, trainee from pre Tamasi period	
56-76	20 Children	Children from Beli'ein village	T
77-86	Youth trainees	film clip with TDP trainees in Gaza (4 women and 5 men)	T

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- Ruwwad Association: <http://www.ruwwad.jo/about-ruwwad>

- AAT Network: <http://www.arabwomantalking.com/aat.html>
- Arab Education Forum: <http://almoultaqa.com/defaulten.aspx>

Lebanon

- Shams: <http://www.shamslb.org/> (webpage is currently down)
- Khayal: <http://www.khayalart.org/en/about/>
- International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People: <http://www.assitej-international.org/>

Palestine

- Al Harah Theatre: http://alharah.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5&Itemid=121
- El Funoun Palestinian Popular Dance Troupe: <http://www.el-funoun.org/about/about.html>
- Theatre Day Productions: http://www.theatreday.org/ayyam/present_faq.php
- The Freedom Theatre: <http://www.thefreedomtheatre.org/>
- Yes Theatre: <http://www.yestheatre.org/pages/1>
- Crossing the border at Rafah: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/30/world/middleeast/a-walk-through-a-tunnel-at-the-rafah-crossing-into-gaza.html>
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Videos

- Al Harah video of the theatre performance ‘Born in Bethlehem’
- TDP video with interviews of trainees in Gaza
- Al Funoun video of performances
- Documentary about El Tanboura (Mastaba)
- ‘The Game’, a film about TDP youth theatre in the Gaza strip.

Annex 4 – SIPA Workshops

1. Background

SIPA-Analysis Workshop is a participatory tool, used for the systematic assessment of **Strengths, Improvement Points, Possibilities and Attention Points** of Sida's work with the performing arts sector. SIPA Analysis was developed on the basis of the classical SWOT Analysis, which is a tool to obtain an overview of an organisation's **internal** strengths and weaknesses and the **external** opportunities and threats affecting it. The SIPA Analysis includes an Appreciative Inquiry Approach, focusing on building on positive aspects of what already exists and finding improvements.

As part of the Evaluation of Sida's Support to the Tamasi Programme, the evaluation team brought together stakeholders to discuss the strengths, improvement points, possibilities and attention points of the Tamasi Programme. SIPA workshops were held on May 7, in Cairo with the Egyptian Tamasi members (El Warsha Theatre, Studio Emad Eddin, El Mastaba, I-Act, and Temple Independent Theatre) and on May 11, 2012 with the Palestinian and Jordanian Tamasi members (Al Harah Theatre, Theatre Day Productions, El Funoun Popular Dance Troupe, Al Balad Theatre and Arab Theatre Training Centre).

The SIPA elements were defined as follows:

- **Strengths** are those internal organisational aspects within the Tamasi programme and its member organisations that work well and contribute to its high performance and the achievement of results in relation to the end goal described above.
- **Improvement Points** are those internal organisational aspects, of the Tamasi programme that could be more effective and improved to achieve the desired results and improve the programme.
- **Possibilities** are factors in the external environment of the Tamasi Programme (outside the organisations' direct control), that are supportive of the programme activities or could contribute to further improve the programme and its results.
- **Attention Points** are factors in the external environment of the Tamasi Programme (outside the organisations' direct control) that constrain the implementation of Tamasi's activities – factors which thus affect the achievement of results and needs to be paid attention to.

The SIPA analysis was conducted by first requesting the individual participants to undertake an initial silent brainstorming and note down on the cards at least three thoughts (ideas, observations, opinions) on each of the four elements. A separate card was used for each idea. The cards were subsequently fixed to stands and walls and arranged in clusters. Facilitated by the evaluators, the participants analysed, compared and contrasted the ideas presented. The following report present the thoughts and clusters established during the workshop, as well as an account of the workshop discussions.

While some views and opinions expressed on the cards were contradictory, there was no active disagreement among participants during the discussion period. Rather, the group expressed a fair amount of agreement to the issues raised with some tensions as noted below.

The participants of the SIPA workshop on May 7 were:

1. Khaled Katamesh, Al Funoun Popular Dance Troupe
2. Ruba Zaghmouri, Al Funoun Popular Dance Troupe
3. Atta Khattab, Al Funoun Popular Dance Troupe
4. Marina Barham, Al Harah Theatre
5. Mirna Sakhleh, Al Harah Theatre
6. George Matar, Al Harah Theatre
7. Raed Asfour, Al Balad Theatre, Arab Theatre Training Centre
8. Serene Huleileh, Al Balad Theatre
9. Jackie Lubeck, Theatre Day Productions
10. Jan Willems, Theatre Day Productions

The participants of the SIPA workshop on May 7 were:

11. Brita Papini, Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts
12. Amany Abouzeid, Tamasi Programme
13. Hassan Geretly, El Warsha Theatre
14. Ahmad el Attar, Studio Emad Eddin
15. Nevine el Ibiary, Studio Emad Eddin
16. Ahmad Nagy, Studio Emad Eddin
17. Marwa Seoudi, Tamasi Programme, El Warsha Theatre
18. Zakaria Ibrahim, El Mastaba
19. Margo Gourgi, I-Act

2. Cairo Workshop

Strengths

The workshop participants created five clusters to define Tamasi's most important strengths. The largest clusters were *Richness of Diversity* (8) and *Success – Local and Regional* (8).

The Egyptian Tamasi members see its diversity as a clear strength. Diversity was understood in regard to human resources and intellectual diversity, diversity of activities and artistic viewpoints, and diversity of spaces. Further elements of diversity were contacts and networks. The varied target groups was cited as an element of diversity and related to a wide view on poverty in the region. An openness to work with organisations and young artists outside the network was also a contributor to diversity. There was some overlap with the category *Together We Can* in the comments on working in a complementary fashion.

Tamasi's *Ability to Work Locally and Regionally* was regarded as another a principal strength. Participants signalled that they see their work as having an impact at a regional level, on culture and other issues. Participants made mention of regional cohesion across different organisations. They indicated that their regional experience places them in a unique situation. At the same time, members wanted to highlight the work undertaken on the ground locally in communities.

The cluster *Values and Visions* contained four cards, two of which were linked to the theory of change. There was an implicit agreement about values – particularly related to freedom of expression and social change. The discussion affirmed the shared values of art having the power to empower and change society, and of “art as a morale virtue”. It was felt that these common values created a foundation for a common theory of change that all members subscribed to.

The cluster *Together We Can* amounted to six cards. The discussion mentioned the long-term relations between the organisations, the goodwill and respect among them, and the strength achieved in working together. Two cards specifically referred to that the Tamasi members were “strong organisations”.

Establishing Joint Structures, which counted six cards, can be seen as a subset of *Together We Can*. Participants noted the benefits of: meeting twice a year as Tamasi as well as meeting as local clusters; becoming a registered network; and having a coordinator and Board. Working as ‘one’ organisation while being individual organisations, and realising concrete steps towards the network status via “the Bridge Proposal” were felt to be elements of strength.

The participants gave the cluster the additional ironic title of ‘The Beast.’ On another occasion the word ‘monster’ was also mentioned, illustrating how Tamasi went from being ‘pushed into the arms of each other to have a collaborative group’ into thinking that ‘we might as well create a relationship’. One of the participants also remarked, “We were chosen in an organic way and then we chose each other because we learnt to appreciate what working together could bring.” The participants explained that in the Arab world it is hard to work together, thus the participants see Tamasi as a beast where they are actually succeeding in working together despite of the diversity in the group.

Common Long-Term Funding included two cards that referred to the benefit of having a common funder and long-term funding relations.

Table 6: Strength cards and their distribution in thematic clusters

Cluster	No. of Cards	Major points or issues on cards
Common Values & Visions	4	a) Strong <u>common values</u> – base for some kind of theory of change b) Shared Values c) Coherent/Viable theory of change d) Clearer vision putting self expression at the centre of development
Richness of Diversity	8	a) Diversity (artistic & experience) b) Diversity c) Diversity not only of activities but also in human resources, spaces, contacts and networks etc. d) Intellectual Diversity e) Working in common complementarity f) Very varied target groups – a wide view on what is “poverty” in the region g) Experience and self realisation of each organisation h) Open to work with organisations and young artists outside the network

Establishing joint organisation structures – “the beast”	5	a) Meeting twice a year as Tamasi + Meeting more as local clusters b) Becoming a registered network c) Having a coordinator + board d) Working as ‘one’ organisation while being individual organisations e) Realising concrete steps towards the network status “the Bridge Proposal” + hiring coordinator + electing board members etc. before end 2012 (Sida phase out)
Success – Local & Regional	8	a) Working locally and regionally b) Strong impact on culture & other issues in the region c) Well-established cultural associations in the Arab countries (regional program) d) Great experience of the region – unique situation e) Regional cohesion across different organisations f) Realising impact in the countries we work in g) Regional impact h) Regional
Common Long-term Funding	2	a) Having on common funder b) Having long-term funding relations
Together we can	6	a) Long-term relations & Funding b) History of working together c) Collaboration d) Strong organisations still trying to manage to work together – but actually succeeding to do so e) Very strong organisations: flexibility, respect of others f) Strength in numbers (collective – mutual support – policy influencing)

Improvement Points

Improvement points were clustered into four categories. Overall there was marked consensus on areas for improvement, namely organisational capacity, cooperation and diversifying the sources of funding. The cluster *More Internal Bridges* contained the most cards (9 cards), followed by *Organisational Capacity to Engage* with 8 cards, and *Network Vitality and Sustainability* with 8 cards.

Under the theme of *More Internal Bridges* points of improvement focused on the need for more communication, face-to-face interaction, joint meetings, common activities, collaborations and exchanges. The participants felt that over time they had discovered that there were several areas where it was possible to work jointly. The desire to collaborate appeared to be strong.

A key issue of concern under *Network Vitality (Sustainability and “Defying Death”)* was funding – including strong dependence on one source (Sida) and the need to secure new funding for the network. In all, four cards focused on financial sustainability.

Institutional sustainability was also grouped under this heading. An area of concern to enhance this was the need for greater reflection during meetings about artistic development, improvements, and possibilities as well as documenting the work. In addition, two cards reflected on the need to consolidate a shared vision and find a common ground amidst diversity.

Organisational capacity was a major theme. This included concerns about insufficient management capacity, coordination and leadership skills, the availability of administrative and management skills, the internal capacity of the organisations and management resources. It was mentioned that in the next phase, when financial reporting will be re-

quired, the organisations will need more capacity. Dependence on the coordinator was a further concern.

Four participants raised the issue of *Building Bridges Beyond Tamasi*. Specific improvements were: addition of new members; inclusion and opening up to others; involving younger/smaller organisational groups (expansion); and more projects/cooperation with other Arab countries (Syria /Morocco /Tunisia). The ensuing discussion revealed tensions about the sustainability of Tamasi and the possibility of its enlargement. A fear of becoming a club was voiced by one of the participants. The discussion addressed the generational dimension and the need to eventually bring in younger generations into the fold. The need for “new blood” and a healthy “blood circulation” was advocated for by some participants.

Other participants advocated for more networking with other like-minded organisations and undertaking projects with them without bringing them into Tamasi as members. It was felt that Tamasi still needs to consolidate itself first. The collective decision to not include new members during the next five years was referred to.

Table 7: Improvement Point cards and their distribution in thematic clusters

Cluster	No. of Cards	Major points or issues on cards
Organisational Capacity to engage	8	a) Insufficient management capacity b) Internal capacity of organisation c) Admin & management skills availability d) Management resources e) Improving coordination and leadership skills f) Depending heavily on the coordinator g) Building & strengthening the network h) Matrix proposal – donor requirements
Network vitality & Sustainability – “Defying death”	9	a) Depending on one source of funding (Sida) b) New funding for the network c) Sustainability d) Working on diversifying funding sources e) More reflections during meetings about our work, improvement ways + possibilities f) Reflection on our work: to also document it g) Consolidating a shared vision h) Weaving strong relationships with the media i) Diversity/finding common ground
More Internal bridges	9	a) Still not all organisations can visit each other to see the work more closely b) More common activities c) Regional cooperation d) Few joint meetings e) More collaborations f) More Exchange g) Travel h) Cooperation is there but to a limited extent i) Lack of frequent communication

Building bridge beyond Tamasi core	4	a) Addition of new members b) Inclusion: opening up to others c) Involving younger/smaller organisational groups (expansion) d) More projects/cooperation with other Arab countries (Syria/Morocco/Tunisia)
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Possibilities

By far the most important cluster with regard to **Possibilities** in terms of number of cards was *Fruits of Arab Spring* with 11 cards. On the eve of the Egyptian election Tamasi members saw the following as major possibilities resulting from the Arab Spring: expanding the boundaries of activities; more collaborations possible with partners and for audience building; and possibilities of networking. One participant remarked on the renewed interest of the world in the MENA region. Other participants noted the opportunities for new generations, more liberal parties, the creation of more spaces, and increased/innovative space for advocacy. Echoing the earlier discussion under **Strengths**, one participant referred to a realisation of the need for solidarity/collective work (not necessarily artistically). Overall there was a positive sense of possibilities – to collaborate, to form new partnerships, to claim new space (physical and intellectual), to establish new dialogue, to use new communication tools, and to strengthen solidarity within the region and globally.

The cluster related to *Money Matters* (referring to both “money affairs” and “money is important”) was populated by 8 cards, which echoed many of the cards in the Improvement Points cluster *Network Vitality*. All these cards related to funding. Half of the cards related to the possibility of obtaining new funds, by for instance, approach new donors and supporters. There was also an aspiration for a change in donor environment.

A further cluster, *New Partnerships*, contained cards that partly related to the Improvement Point cluster *Building Bridges Beyond Tamasi*. Five participants commented on: hope for a revival of Sida’s cultural policy; support from the government to the cultural sector; the possibility of influencing the governmental culture; building new partnerships; and cooperation with other organisations.

Table 8: Possibilities cards and their distribution in thematic clusters

Cluster	No. of Cards	Major points or issues on cards
Money matters	8	a) New funds for continuation of Tamasi b) Extension of the Sida fund c) A common fund for common activity once a year d) New funding possibilities e) The possibility of new funds f) (Aspire) better sustainability g) (Aspire) Change in donor environment h) Approaching new donors & supporters
New Partnerships	5	a) Hope for Sida’s cultural policy b) Support from the governmental cultural sector c) Possibility of influencing the governmental culture d) New partners e) Cooperation with other organisations
Fruits of the Arab	11	a) Solidarity b) Realisation of the need for solidarity/collective work (not

Spring		necessarily artistically) c) Expanding the boundaries of activities by benefitting from the Arab Spring d) Hope for Sida's cultural policy e) Support from the governmental cultural sector f) Possibility of influencing the governmental culture g) New partners h) Cooperation with other organisations
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Attention Points

The group presented 12 **Attention Points** cards related to the *Socio-Political Context*, with an emphasis on political and religious change in the region and the outlook for arts and freedom of expression. They are essentially the obverse of the **Possibilities** raised. They centre on disquiet related to: the political and economic situation and instability; politics going the wrong way – repression, governmental control, mobility problems; failure of the revolution; the reaction of the old guard; and, fundamentalism. Concerns were voiced about increasing conservatism across MENA; Islamic movements; and the growth of Islamic current and its effect on free creativity. A further area of unease related to limitations placed on individual cultural activities within anti-civil society campaigns.

External financial issues constituted another large cluster (*Culture Forever Poor!*). Seven cards referred to the precarious position of culture: the danger of financial discontinuity and irregularity of funding; insufficient funds; changes in the donor environment; and the economic crisis in which donors are cutting down or not available for support to art organisations. Participants noted that the culture of corporate giving is not developed in Egypt.

Angst /Anxiety was a small cluster of Attention Points that covered fear of internal disagreement (malfunction) and fear of withdrawal of one of the organisations (2 cards). It was mentioned that a potential Tamasi partner left the fold several years ago after death and other circumstances led to the organisation being disbanded. Another participant expressed the view that although Tamasi is a diverse group, there is also a lot of ground that brings the organisations together, something, which can consolidate and support joint collaboration further, like in e.g. the storytelling festival 'Hakaya'.

The cluster of *External Expectations and Misunderstandings* (3 cards) led to a discussion of Sida's previously progressive cultural policy which participants felt had fallen to the wayside. Four participants pointed out the tendency of donors to push art organisations towards becoming human rights organisations to suit their policy needs. The participants commented on the importance of the artistic process and the danger of having to justify art in the dialogue with donors. Some stated art is looked upon too narrowly and its impact is killed when it becomes propaganda. Another participant expressed the idea that the strength of art is in its professionalism and quality and its ambiguous, provocative nature which can have a much stronger impact long-term than awareness-raising or propaganda.

Finally, a couple of participants expressed that there were both negative and positive misconceptions held by external actors with regard to the Arab region. They often failed to

understand the realities in the region and had misconceived ideas that created unrealistic expectations or prejudices.

Table 9: Attention Point cards and their distribution in thematic clusters

Cluster	No. of Cards	Major points or issues on cards
Anxiety / Angst	2	a) Fear of internal disagreement (malfunction) b) Fear of withdrawal of one of the organisations
External Expectation/Misunderstanding	3	a) Sida's cultural policy falling to the wayside b) Changed donor policies: instrumentalisation of art trying to make art organisations to human rights organisations c) External to region have prejudice (against us/for us), pre-conceptions, false images, mirrors that deform
Culture forever poor!	7	a) Danger of financial discontinuity b) Insufficient funds c) Insufficiency of funds d) Unsustainability of performing arts e) Change in donor environment f) Financial dependency – Irregularity of funding (fashions) g) Economic crisis/donors cutting down or not available for support to art organisations working with a broad perspective on freedom of expression and democratic development/empowerment
Socio-political context	12	a) Political situation b) Political situation + instability c) Political threat d) Unstable political + economic situation e) Politics going the wrong way: repression, governmental control, mobility problems f) Failure of the revolution – reaction (army), old guard, fundamentalism g) Increasing conservatism across MENA (plus & minus) h) Travel Barriers i) Islamic movements j) The situation in the Arab world k) The limitations placed on individual cultural activities within anti-civil society campaigns l) The growth of Islamic current + effect on free creativity m) Political and religious change in the regions & their outlook to arts & freedom of expression

3. Beit Jala Workshop

Strengths

The Palestinian and Jordanian Tamasi members created seven clusters to describe the strengths of the programme. The largest cluster was *Diversity* with seven cards. The Tamasi members agreed that its main strength lies in diversity in the sense of the contexts in which they work in, the experience they have and their varied artistic expressions. This diversity allows the organisations to complement each other, rather than directly compete.

Four cards related to the strength of *Transforming Competition to Collaboration*. Tamasi members emphasised that the performing arts sector is characterized by a high level of competition. Several participants remarked that it is a great achievement that the organisations are working together even in Palestine, let alone at a regional level. The Tamasi programme has provided a valuable opportunity for the organisations to ‘think together’ and cooperate. One participant pointed out that in the early years of the programme, it was not clear to the organisations what the added value of being grouped together was, more than facilitating funding processes for the donor. However, the group agreed that DI’s vision with the programme only became clear to many members after a couple of years of collaborating in this new way.

The collaborative approach that had evolved during the four years of the programme can be explained by the cluster named *Energetic Patience*. Although only two cards make up for this cluster, the topic inspired considerable discussion amongst the members. The long-term perspective of the Tamasi support (and the support that preceded it) provided the time necessary to build trust and foster a common understanding. The organisations had known each other before, but as one of the cards illustrate, the support provided allowed the time for their preconceived notions of each other to change for the better. The discussion revealed how much emphasis the programme has put on process. It was mentioned that the Tamasi coordinator does not rush things but allows the process to take its due course. The participants felt that “patience” was a key attribute needed to solidify the partnerships, but the word itself was too passive. The group therefore qualified it by adding “energetic” to illustrate their willingness to engage.

Another area of strength that was identified was *Open-Mindedness*, represented by three cards. The Palestinian/Jordanian Tamasi members believe that the dialogue, discussion and exchange of experience among the members are possible because of the level of openness towards each other and the willingness to work out any differences.

The discussion on strengths also revolved around Tamasi’s role in relation to social change, which was represented by three different clusters. First, the Jordanian and Palestinian Tamasi members regard its ability to *Balance Quality of Arts & Social Engagement* as a clear strength. The members felt they engage in free expression of high artistic quality while at the same time being committed to engaging in social discourse through performing arts. They did not feel that the latter commitment sacrificed quality or artistic integrity. One of the participants stressed that art cannot be divorced from society. The high yearly output of productions as well as the artistic quality was mentioned as points of strength.

The cluster *Having a Vision* was represented with two cards. The discussion centred on the shared common vision of contributing to social change and creating an impact in communities through their work.

The final cluster, *Advocacy*, contained four cards. It addressed the role the programme plays in raising cultural awareness, challenging the existing situation and advocating for support to the cultural sector. Tamasi members do this in part by networking with different organisations.

Table 10: Strength cards and their distribution in thematic clusters

Cluster	No. of Cards	Major points or issues on cards
Diversity	7	a) Variety in artistic and cultural views b) Different experiences c) Different visions of freedom of expression d) Diverse organisations that complement each other e) Diversity in cultural arts f) Diversity
Transforming Competition to Collaboration	4	a) Easier to work in the region through the network organisations b) Tamasi is a great collective with history of building trust and solving problems c) Strong cultural alliance d) Wide geographical network of regional organisations e) Preconceived notions of each other as people of organisations changed for the better
Energetic patience	2	a) Process oriented – gives time necessary to reach a common understanding b) That we exist.
Open-mindedness	3	a) Exchange of experience b) Dialogue and discussion c) Open to dialogue and working out differences
Balancing quality of arts & social engagement	4	a) Developing culture in the Middle East b) Ability to talk and discuss social issues using performing arts c) Quality and number of artistic productions per year d) Artistic quality of members
Having a vision	2	a) Individual members and their artistic visions b) Enlightened progressive vision
Advocacy	4	a) Networking between different cultural organisations b) Community acceptance and raising their cultural awareness c) Platform for challenging d) Strong advocacy for culture and arts

Improvement Points

Improvement Points were clustered into seven categories, which could be divided into internally focused and externally focused improvement points. The clusters with most cards both focused on “jointness”: The cluster *Joint Projects*, which contained nine cards, concerned the collective wish to work more closely together on productions and other activities. It was felt that in the last five years, not enough collaboration had taken place at the activity level. This was partly because it had not been clear how they could join forces when not enough was known about each other’s projects. It was also because each group was too focused on their own plans and activities. The cooperation in Tamasi has resulted in members identifying several possible ways to join forces. There was eagerness and hope that the next five years would provide the opportunity for more practical collaboration.

Five other cards that related to working jointly within Tamasi were clustered under the heading *Joint Reflection & Articulation on Methodologies & Approaches*. It was explained that the meetings and discussions organised under the Tamasi umbrella made many of the members realise they had much to share with and learn from the other members. The group believed that important benefits can be gained from sharing each other's expertise and reflecting on methodologies and good practices. Examples included volunteerism, outreach work, drama education, etc. This, however, required having more time/space to reflect upon and document methodologies and approaches, since none of this existed in written format. The members wished specifically to understand how other members do things and why. It was also mentioned that the annual meeting needed to give more room to discuss artistic/cultural dialogue to enhance the work of the members.

While the discussion on Tamasi's strengths mentioned that there was a collaborative spirit in Tamasi that was built on trust. There were, however, three cards that suggested that more work was needed to deepen trust and relations. They were clustered under the title *Building Resilience*. One card raised the issue of the "controlling" role of the donor which so far protected them and helped the organisations cooperate. Because of this, it was expressed that there may be unknown Improvement Points that will show themselves once Tamasi becomes its own organisation. A debate regarding the independence, identity and ownership of the programme ensued, with some concern among some members for future cooperation, especially considering that they were not self-selected.

Four clusters focused on Tamasi's relations to its external environment. First, a cluster was entitled *Need More Capacity to Diversify Funding & Manage Diverse Funds* (2). The group felt that organisations needed to enhance their capacity to mobilise funds from diverse sources, but also to develop their competences to develop efficient reporting and communications to donors.

Second, there was a cluster consisting of only one card relating to the *Need for Clarity on PR for Tamasi*. The discussion that ensued focused on whether and to what extent Tamasi members should promote Tamasi. Could Tamasi engage in active PR if it is a collective, not open to new members in the foreseeable years to come? How much should Tamasi make itself known? What gains/losses would this entail? Another participant agreed that a clear strategy would be needed to define the extent and form of Tamasi's future public relations effort.

Third, while the earlier discussion on strengths highlighted that advocacy was one of Tamasi's and its members' strong points, the topic also came up as an area in need of improvement. Two cards were sorted into the cluster *Need to Improve Advocacy Effort*. It was suggested that Tamasi needed to enhance its role as an advocate by pressuring governments to support culture and engaging in debates and advocacy at the regional level.

Finally, the group briefly talked about *Reaching out to New Audiences*. They stated that new areas should be reached where there are no cultural organisations, especially reaching conservative areas where people are often deprived of cultural experiences and arts. Some members expressed that important achievements had been made in this area. The successes achieved demonstrated that much more was possible. One card also stated the desire to bring in young and new artists into Tamasi as members.

Table 11: Improvement Point cards and their distribution in thematic clusters

Cluster	No. of Cards	Major points or issues on cards
Joint Projects	9	a) Artistic exchange improve the skills of our artists, capacity building b) Collaborative projects c) Workshop and joint production/work d) More cooperation between members e) More collaborations f) Joint project between the organisations in the network g) Make joint projects h) Exchanging more experiences i) More cooperation between Tamasi members
Joint reflection & articulation on methodologies & approaches	5	a) See each other's work up close & personal (artistic) b) To benefit from each other's expertise more c) Beside our annual meeting to discuss proposal, we should open cultural artistic dialogue d) More artistic reflection in discussion e) In-depth analysis of methodologies used
Building Resilience	3	f) Bridge & trust g) Better relation between organisations h) Must wait until Sida (SADA) stops controlling in order to answer!
Need more Capacity to diversify funding & manage diverse funds	2	a) Management capacity of each organisation b) More diverse funding
Need for clarity on PR for Tamasi	1	a) PR or not
Need to improve advocacy effort	2	a) Regional debates/advocacy organised by Tamasi b) Put pressure on governments to support culture
Reaching out to new audiences & artists	3	a) To include new & young generations of artists as members b) Reaching new areas where there is no cultural organisations c) Geographical distribution is important working in conservative places more & reaching more people who need to benefit from arts

Possibilities

The largest cluster with regard to **Possibilities** was *Strong and Committed Members* and *Arab Rebellion* - both with six cards in each and *Networking and Mobility* with five cards.

The debate concerning the cluster *Strong and Committed Members* echoed the discussions under **Strengths** and highlighted the possibilities that arise from the mutual trust and commitment of the members. Opportunities and collaborate and achieve goals jointly was mentioned.

The *Arab Rebellion* (members of the group decided that “Spring” was a less accurate term for the recent political transformation) was identified as a cluster and also contained six cards. The opinion was that the Arab Spring has provided increased opportunities to discuss social issues through arts. With societies changing in the region, there are opportunities for Tamasi's members to influence this process through their work. The political transformation process has brought increased international attention and sparked more

donor interest - which was identified as another opportunity. One participant mentioned the emerging opportunities for Tamasi to advocate for change of cultural policies in newly established governments (a point related to the discussion under Improvement Points – *Need to Improve Advocacy Effort*).

The cluster entitled *Networking and Mobility* received five cards. The Tamasi members saw possibilities to network internationally as partners, undertake joint appearances in festivals organised by partners, as well as engage in exchanges within and outside the region. The group felt that this could contribute to building bridges within the Arab region and with the rest of the world. Members also acknowledge that there are some signs of improved mobility opportunities in the region.

The cluster *Realisation of the Power of Culture* contained four cards. The related discussion asserted that culture and the arts have gained greater recognition in the region as fundamental aspects of human society – particularly in its ability to empower. Furthermore, it was felt that there is slightly more social acceptance of the performing arts in communities. In addition, it was noted that more people in the region are becoming educated in the arts with the opening of more schools and academies, which in turn increased public interest for the arts and enhances the audience base.

Finally, while only receiving two cards, the participants discussed the possibility of obtaining more funding from different and new donors who are interested in cultural/art networks.

Table 12: Possibilities cards and their distribution in thematic clusters

Cluster	No. of Cards	Major points or issues on cards
Strong and committed members	6	a) Trust between members b) Seriousness of organisations c) Cooperation between partners which help achieve more goals with less costs d) To organise more initiatives in the region e) Our needs to communicate f) Must continue or to continue or continuity (don't know the grammar)
Arab rebellion	6	a) To benefit more from political changes in the Arab world b) Arab spring! c) After Arab spring – there is more acceptance to discuss social issues through arts d) Changing societies moving towards our vision & work e) To change cultural policies in newly established governments and influence decisions f) For funding: interest in Arab culture because of Arab spring
Networking and mobility	5	a) International networking with partners b) Joint appearances in festivals organised by partners c) Small exchanges (beware of the diversity & geography) d) Improved mobility opportunities in the region e) Cultural bridges between the Arab world and the world
Realisation of the	4	a) Good relations between the societal centres & organisations b) Culture & art recognised as crucial for all aspects of life c) Using art to empower human rights in the society

power of culture		d) Social acceptance and more arts academies & schools open, which help gain more audience
Funding	2	a) To get more funding from other donors who are interested in networking/networks b) Oh yeah, funding!

Attention Points

The largest cluster under **Attention Points** was *Religious, Political and Traditional Forces*, comprising of 14 cards. This cluster contained several subgroups of cards that related to legal barriers to restrict free expression, religious fundamentalism, societal conservatism, political instability and political oppression. However, it was felt that the underlying causes for the threats were interrelated and could not be easily separated.

One card stated ‘Islamic Winter’ as a negative side-effect of the Arab Spring, capturing the fear expressed in several other cards that related to the increased fundamentalism and conservatism spreading in the region. The group felt that it is unclear whether the current societal transformations will provide more artistic freedom in the long term. While the Arab Spring may have provided increased opportunity for people to express themselves at the moment, the political instability may ultimately give rise to oppressive movements that restrict freedom of expression further.

When discussing the cluster entitled *Stability of Funding* members pointed out that independent culture and art receive virtually no public or governmental support in the Arab world, making them dependent on foreign donors. The discussion focused on the financial insecurity created by changing priorities and funding policies of donors. Obtaining core funding is particularly challenging for cultural organisations. It was furthermore noted that the private sector does not give significant support to the cultural/art sector.

The cluster *Regional Imprisonment* covered the problems regarding mobility in the region. Members felt that the lack of freedom of movement poses great challenges to the Tamasi programme since not all members can visit each other. For many members it is easier to go to Europe than to a neighbouring Arab country. Especially, in the case of Gaza, opportunities of cooperation and mobility are restricted due to the siege. Even between the other countries, border and visa problems are a considerable constraint for the Tamasi members.

Professional Quality had only one card but raised several perspectives during the discussion: people were entering the performing arts and giving it a bad name by undertaking poor performance with base humour; NGOs were introducing theatre into their programmes without ensuring quality of the art; and the supply of professional performing artists was considered insufficient.

Infringement on Art, with one card, concerned the issue that performing arts are often hijacked by the development community as a means to convey messages. It becomes a means as opposed to an end in itself. The importance of culture as a right and a fundamental element of society thereby falls to the wayside.

A final cluster concerned the topic of *Succession*. It was pointed out that the leaders of the Tamasi organisations were mostly of an older generation. The organisations need to ensure that there are younger colleagues with adequate capacity who can eventually take over and continue with the collaboration within Tamasi.

Table 13: Attention Point cards and their distribution in thematic clusters

Cluster	No. of Cards	Major points or issues on cards
Religious, political & traditional forces	14	a) Islamic winter b) Arab spring! c) Instability of political situation d) Laws drafted in the name of protecting national interests only to control freedom/liberties and culture e) To be aware of new laws that are being issued in the name of national & religious control on freedom of expression & culture f) Internal security services g) Politicizing our work vs. not politicizing our work balance?? h) Oppression & being closed (introvert) i) The policies of blackmail by governments & religious movements j) Forces aiming at alienating & marginalising successful cultural initiatives k) More conservative & religious governments l) Conservative society m) Areas that are very conservative are hard to reach n) Fundamentalism
Stability of funding	6	a) No core funding for cultural organisations b) Funding c) Changing policies of funders d) Culture & art are still individual efforts (independent) there's no public & governmental support e) There is no financial support from private sector & business companies f) Sida
Regional Imprisonment	4	a) Gaza b) Border problems, visa problems, travel problems c) Difficult mobility d) Borders between the countries in the region
Professional quality	1	a) Members of GOOD ARTS practitioners are limited, and many not qualified people entering the field
Infringement on art	1	a) New/old development discourse that “abuses” culture & art
Succession	1	a) Getting old

Annex 5 – Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation questions from ToR	Indicators
Effectiveness	
A 1: Has the Tamasi program helped to strengthen the situation for performing arts in the MENA region?	1. Evidence of a sustainable, viable, diverse and vibrant performing arts life in the societies where the members operate within the region – (Indicators for A1-7 and B1-4 below) 2. Evidence of synergetic effects
A 2: Has the Tamasi program increased access to performing arts in the region? A 3: Has the Tamasi program increased access to performing arts for women and youth in particular?	1. Number (and increase) of: • Productions ○ (range of) production categories ○ performances/events ○ audiences/beneficiaries by sex & age • Audience ○ (range of) audience/ beneficiary categories ○ performances for rural/marginalised audience groups by sex & age ○ local collaborators ○ children & youth participating in creative activities by sex • Facilities ○ spaces for performing arts created and/or developed ○ newly formed groups in performing arts as a result of Tamasi support • Media coverage 2. The extent to which the network has involved: • Children's teachers, parents and families • Schools, institutions and authorities/official bodies • Organisations, institutions or groups of special interest for audience building/outreach and/or income generating activities • Patrons of arts 3. The extent to which the Arab Spring has affected access to audiences
A 4: Has the Tamasi program enhanced the professionalism in the area of performing arts in the MENA region?	1. Number of: • Training sessions • Types of training sessions • Member artists trained (female/male) • New artists joined (male/female) • Regional and international tours • Festival participation • Exchanges and co-production • Number of people trained in organisational skills (leadership, advocacy, fund raising etc.) 2. Data on range, quality and content of training activities

	- Evidence of improved quality and range of performances - Evidence of artists, managers and trainers gaining better/more skills - Evidence of improved leadership and management of member groups - Increase in invitations to external festivals, exchanges and tours
A 5: Has the Tamasi program managed to create strong and viable networks in the area of performing arts, both between the members of the program, and within broader circles of relevant groups?	- Nature and frequency of contacts among members (emails, meetings, phone calls) - Number and nature of joint initiatives among members - Nature and frequency of contacts and initiatives with <i>other</i> relevant partners and organisations, including in Syria and Morocco - Extent of information-sharing and artistic exchanges - Extent of development and status of Tamasi's formalised structure - Evidence of strengthened network identity - Evidence of strategic vision for network developed
A 6: Has the Tamasi program/Sida's funding contributed to strengthening the groups that are members of the network?	- Evidence of strengthened artistic and organisational professionalism in the member groups (indicators for A4 above) - Evidence of strengthened networks of member groups (indicators for A5 above) - Evidence of new donors - Evidence of improved facilities - Evidence of strengthened organisational identity and ownership - Evidence of strategic vision for member organisations developed
Impact	
A 7: Can the Tamasi program be said to have contributed to enhancing the freedom of expression in the MENA region?	- The extent to which the products/activities has incorporated concepts of cultural liberty and human rights in training, outreach, artistic expression and processes - The extent to which production content has promoted reflection and social debate on human rights, gender equality and freedom of expression issues - The extent to which there is evidence of human resources (creativity, knowledge, positive sense of being, change of consciousness) having been strengthened - The extent to which there is evidence of social and political resources (participation, social debate, social capital) having been strengthened - The extent to which there is evidence indicating empowerment (resources, agency and outcome) at individual and organisational level - The extent to which groups and network have engaged in advocacy/lobbying to influence policy environments
A 8: How do the activities and members in the Tamasi network relate and contribute to the current political transformations in the Arab world?	- The extent to which the performance content reflected issues related to the current political transformation - The extent to which specific activities have been organised in view of the political situation - The extent to which opportunities were seized - The extent to which activities were adapted to new environ-

	ment 5. The extent to which the transformations restricted activities by e.g. security concerns
Cost-effectiveness	
For questions A1-A6, has the programme been efficient/sufficiently funded, i.e. the evaluation shall juxtapose results achieved with the amounts of Sida funding.	The extent to which funds have been sufficient/efficiently used to achieve the programmes 4 expected results including: • The extent to which the programme has been managed with reasonable regard for efficiency • The extent to which the same results could have been achieved with less resources • The extent to which resources have been adequate to achieve the desired results
Sustainability	
B 1: Are the results accomplished by the program likely to be sustainable ?	1. The extent to which capacity built will be retained within the network 2. The extent to which the organisational structures are sustainable after the end of the Sida support 3. The probability of the network continuing to collaborate at least at the same level once the funding has been phased out. 4. The quality and relevance of the exit strategy 5. The extent to which the network has the financial capacity to maintain benefits achieved 6. The extent to which the support is integrated into the cultural context 7. The extent to which the support is technologically appropriate
B 2: Has the Tamasi program contributed to the sustainability of the involved groups in general?	1. The extent to which support from other donors has been secured 2. Diversity of funding (over time) 3. The extent to which the groups can generate income 4. The extent to which capacity built will be retained 5. The extent to which the groups are more than the founder/leader
B 3: Has the Tamasi program contributed to <i>enhancing the sustainability of performing arts</i> in the countries involved?	1. The extent to which the support has strengthened the performing arts sector at an institutional level. 2. Evidence of multiplier effects
B 4: Has the Tamasi network managed to ensure the development of permanent contacts, collaboration and a common vision between the members of the network?	1. The frequency, depth and breadth of relations established between member organisations
Relevance	
C 1: Has the program been relevant to the needs of the beneficiary population ?	1. The extent to which the support addressed the following needs: • Community participation, gender equality, freedom of expression, cultural participation, training, information, entertainment • The extent to which the support addressed needs stemming from the political transformation

	2. The extent to which these needs were/are not being met by other organizations or programmes
C 2: Has the program been relevant to the participating groups/member of the network?	1. The extent to which the support as addressed needs such as: • Improving organisational capacity • Production and artistic training needs • Networking needs • Equipment and facility needs • Financial needs • Outreach/public relations needs • Freedom of expression • Cultural liberty • Exchanges and collaboration
C 3: Has the program been relevant to Sida's goals in the region, particularly to “promoting human rights, particularly freedom of expression and women’s rights”?	1. The extent and form in which women’s rights, gender equality and gender parity have been promoted 2. The extent and form to which freedom of expression has been directly and indirectly promoted 3. The extent to which human rights principles have been promoted during the implementation process • Participation and inclusion • Equality and non-discrimination • Accountability • The rule of law

Annex 6 – Overview of the Tamasi Partners

Egypt

El Warsha Theatre Company: When El Warsha was created in 1987; it was the first independent theatre troupe in Egypt. El Warsha gives theatre performances throughout Egypt and in their theatre venue in downtown Cairo. Besides working throughout Egypt, El Warsha has engaged in many international exchanges and is a partner in various festivals and international projects. Its plays combine traditional theatrical forms with more modern expressions. Many actors in Egypt have come from El Warsha, where they have received training in drama, dance and music. Youth are part of the theatre, attending rehearsals and workshops and forming part of the daily activities. El Warsha performed during the revolution in the Tahrir Square.

Studio Emad Eddin: Supported by Sida since its beginning in 2004, SEE is currently one of the only providers of unrestricted rehearsal space for young people engaging in performing arts in Cairo. SEE is a membership-based organisation with 2500 members, 65 per cent of which are under the age of 25. It currently offers two rehearsal facilities and is about to open two large theatres in downtown Cairo for performances and festivals. Besides serving as a meeting point for art and culture in Egypt, SEE provides services and programs designed to support and develop young performing artists. SEE functions as a facilitator, linking artists, exposing people to alternative artistic visions, and offering residencies. With regard to training, SEE holds workshops in various technical aspects of the theatre (lighting, stage management, play-writing, set-design etc.); it also offers a multi-year contemporary dance training with international and regional teachers. The productions that come out of the workshops and trainings feed into the festivals and labs that SEE organises each year, where many of the SEE members contribute as employed staff.

Temple Independent Theatre: Temple Independent is the only Tamasi organisation that concentrates solely on artistic productions. It was initially created in 1998, but subsequently dissolved until it received new funding in 2000. The main goal of the theatre is to create contemporary and absurd theatre that mirrors and is sensitive to present societal issues and topics. It is a production company that presents experimental theatre to both the Egyptian as well as international scene, bringing together local, regional and international artists in its productions. One of the productions of Temple Independent is a children's play, *Hassan x 2 and the Magic Well*, using theatre to shed light on the water crisis in Egypt and the world. The project also produced a photography exhibition, a comic book as well as a series of workshops.

El Mastaba Center: With its strong foundation in folkloric musical traditions, El Mastaba has worked to promote freedom of expression, social resistance and storytelling in various locations in Egypt since 2000. El Mastaba supports performing music groups that represent different musical traditions of Egypt; organises weekly concerts in areas of Port Said, Ismailiah, and Suez; carries out research and records musical traditions; runs two local music schools for children; and performs on television, in international festivals as well as during the revolutions in Tahrir Square. In Cairo, El Mastaba runs the *Tanboursa Hall*, where different music groups present weekly concerts.

The Mastaba groups represent different historical and geographical areas: *Rango* has its roots in Sudan ; The *Bedouin Jerry Can Band* is a collective of semi-nomadic musicians, poets, story-tellers and coffee grinders from the Egyptian Sinai desert; and *Nubanour* represents the Nubian desert culture . The Tanbura and Henna groups are now independent.

I-Act: In 1990 the Alternative Theatre Group was established as the first independent theatre in Alexandria. I-Act was subsequently created in 1998 and has since then strived at supporting and strengthening the role of the theatre as a tool of social and cultural development. I-Act organises various important independent regional festivals. From 2004-2010 I-Act ran the annual international *Creative Forum* for independent theatre groups (Europe-Mediterranean), which took place in Alexandria encompassing diverse theatre performances, publications and dialogue programs in addition to training and capacity building workshops for youth and artists. Since 2011, I-Act is the organiser of the Reveil Festival that has replaced the Forum. Now I-act has opened a new space in Downtown Alexandria, called *Teatro Alexandria*, a multi-purpose complex and a social hub gathering people, e.g. in the new annual international gathering, the *Back Street festival*. Other principal activities of I-Act are projects run for children and youth such as the Classroom Theatre, workshops for theatre teachers, and a programme of publications of Arab writers (women playwrights, Arab writers living in exile).

Lebanon

The Sunflower Theatre (SHAMS):

SHAMS was founded in January 1999 in Beirut, as an independent cultural association whose aim is to organise and produce artistic activities. SHAMS works actively to support youth in engaging in cultural activities in theatre, dance, music, multi-media and audio-visual arts. They give priority to young artists to present their work to the public. In 2005, “Duwar El Shams”, the Sunflower Cultural Centre, was opened to provide a space for young theatre makers, offering modern technical resources and a place for exchange. It is located in a former warzone of Beirut, where Palestinian, Shiite and Christian enclaves intersect. A branch for children’s theatre in co-operation with local partners is active in the centre. Sunflower/SHAMS encourages student volunteers to participate in its theatre works.

Arab Theatre Training Centre (ATTC): Supported by Sida since its foundation in 1999, ATTC is based in both Beirut and Amman. ATTC’s aim is to foster the development of technical, artistic and managerial capacities of youth active in the field of performing arts through professional trainings and workshops. The workshops and trainings are organised and offered through collaborations with a variety of artistic organisations and trainers both within the Arab world and internationally. ATTC’s workshops cover a broad range of areas: storytelling, acting, voice technique, improvisation, contemporary dance, and scenography. Besides offering workshops, ATTC offers more long-term training such as coordinating a 3-year curriculum for teachers in how to include drama in formal education. As a regional organisation ATTC aims to foster and facilitate increased cooperation in the performing arts sector in the Arab region.

Jordan

Al Balad Theatre: In 2005 Sida contributed funds to convert an old cinema house in downtown Amman into a multi-purpose artistic and community space.

Al Balad functions as an independent space for music, theatre, dance, film, visual art and for guest performances from the region. The theatre is open for exhibitions, productions and rehearsals. It collaborates with local groups, institutions and cultural centres; as well as developing links to its downtown Amman neighbourhood through a children's library project. Through its links with NGOs and other organisations Al Balad works performs in marginalised communities around Jordan, relying on a base of 70 volunteers who assist in managing the theatre, carrying out the activities, and contributing to the plans of the theatre. The Hakaya Storytelling Festival is an annual event of Al Balad Theatre that brings stories from the region and the world. Al Balad seeks to create a space to promote new Jordanian and regional art and culture and provide a rehearsal space for young artists.

Palestine

Al Harah Theatre:

Al Harah was established in 2005 as a community-based, non-profit organisation, and was funded by Sida since its very beginning. Al Harah is based in Beit Jala, but works all over the West Bank, promoting access to theatre through performances and training workshops. Al Harah is active in a wide network of civil society organisations and performs for large numbers of audiences, especially in disadvantaged areas. The group organizes drama workshops, training in schools and refugee camps, as well as tours in and outside Palestine. A main focus for Al Harah is children's rights, and it works actively at integrating the use of drama in education. The main vision of Al Harah is using theatre arts in Palestine to assist in building and maintaining a civil society that promotes human rights, democracy and freedom of expression. Al Harah functions as a space for a group of active volunteer youth engaging in workshops, performances, festivals and even a local carnival in Beit Jala.

Theatre Day Productions (TDP): TDP has been working since 1994 in Gaza. Sida started funding TDP in 1996. TDP is a large and well-established theatre training organization with performances and drama activities for children and youth. It conducts a 3-year professional drama education curriculum with the aim of producing professional performers. TDP furthermore works with teacher training to integrate drama as part of the formal educational system. TDP has worked with video animation training for young women to include them in the theatre as well as encourage them to be on stage. TDP also works with free expression workshops in schools (drama and animation programme) and a programme of making plays with kids for kids. In collaboration with UNRWA, TDP has organised theatre performances with workshops as part of Summer Games reaching more than 100 local schools in Gaza (180,000 people).

El-Funoun Popular Dance Troupe: The oldest and most famous dance troupe in Palestine, El-Funoun started in 1979, and has since the late 1990s received funding from Sida. The troupe aims at developing and promoting Palestinian dance through reviving Palestinian folklore and developing it and mixing it with new contemporary dance styles. The organisation is volunteer-driven and currently has 120 volunteer members. Its main dance group, El-Funoun, consists of around 30 core volunteer dancers who perform at festivals in Palestine and abroad. It also has a children's dance group (12 to 18 years) called 'Bara'em El-Funoun'. Through its outreach programmes El-Funoun volunteers teach girls and boys in underserved areas and help create new dance groups.

Annex 7 – Inception Report

Note: The Inception Report has been condensed and annexes which have been included in the final report have been removed.

1. Introduction

This Inception Report aims to further elaborate on the approach set out in the proposal for the Evaluation of the Tamasi Network. It discusses the scope of the evaluation and reflects on past evaluations; assesses evaluability; provides comments on evaluation criteria; and informs about specifics of the participatory approach and methodology. It includes an evaluation framework that conforms to the evaluation questions presented in the ToR. The final section contains a proposed work plan for the team and discusses the option of including a visit to Gaza. The report has been prepared based on preliminary discussions with Sida and the Tamasi Network Coordinator and an initial document review.

2. Scope of the evaluation

In mid 2008 Sida approved MSEK 41.5 for the Tamasi Network Programme, a cultural cooperation programme in the field of performing arts in the MENA region for the period 2008 to 2012. The Network consists of 11 performing arts groups in Egypt, West Bank/Gaza, Jordan and Lebanon that are supported and coordinated by the Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts (SADA). In 2011, the Network applied for an additional SEK 1 022 700 to cover a 15 month period to formalise the Network, including creating structures, systems and procedures.

The Tamasi Network Evaluation will cover both grants and work conducted from 2008 until May 2012. It will cover activities in Egypt, the Occupied Palestine Territories, Lebanon and Jordan. It will also examine Tamasi's activities in Syria and Morocco from a desk perspective.

The purpose of the evaluation is to serve as both an input to Sida's assessment of the programme and to provide the Network with recommendations on how it could move forward.

As stated by the ToR, the primary stakeholders of the evaluation are the members of the Tamasi Network, SADA and Sida. The initial discussions with the primary stakeholders reveal a consensus regarding the desired outcome of the evaluation: the evaluation should document and provide evidence to assess the extent to which the programme is contributing to human rights, democratic development and freedom of expression.

The evaluation shall serve to determine the extent to which Tamasi can further enhance its *effectiveness, relevance* and *sustainability* and consolidate itself as a formal network and become a sustainable organisation, to better contribute to the Swedish cooperation goal of promoting human rights, particularly freedom of expression and women's rights, in the MENA region.

The ToR specifies three main criteria to be assessed: *effectiveness, relevance, and sustainability*. However, as discussed below, some evaluation questions also could be interpreted as relating to efficiency and impact.

Past Evaluations

There are two evaluations/reviews that address DI/SADA/the Tamasi members. First, in 2006, the precursor programme to the Tamasi Network – coordinated by the Dramatic Institute (DI) and funded by Sida – was evaluated. The current programme was significantly guided by the conclusions and recommendations of that evaluation. Some one third of the 2006 evaluation report is dedicated to presenting findings in the areas of effectiveness, sustainability and relevance. The rest of the document discusses the role of performing arts in the development of democracy and in increasing the respect for human rights and its potential role in reducing poverty from a multi-dimensional perspective. Second, in 2010 a review of Sweden’s MENA strategy (2006-2010) was conducted. The performing arts activities are mentioned and analysed to some extent, but since they constitute only a very small part of the overall strategy, the coverage is correspondingly limited.

We would like to elucidate how this evaluation will complement and differ from the 2006 evaluation. First, the initial discussions and ToR indicate that this evaluation should be more results focused, with emphasis on gathering and documenting data on positive and negative effects. Second, while the evaluation will be situated in the Middle Eastern context as specified by the ToR (it is critical that the evaluation is context relevant), we do not see a need for the report to provide a separate analytic account of the situation of performing arts in the region since this has been aptly provided in Tamasi’s reports, Sida’s analyses and the 2006 evaluation. Instead, the present evaluation will focus on how Tamasi’s members *relate* to the context and the ongoing transformations during the programme period. In other words, this evaluation will examine the dynamics of how the Tamasi partners are affected by and respond to the prevailing socio-political context.

3. Evaluability of evaluation questions

Overall Evaluability

While the evaluation questions are generally clear, the challenge for this evaluation is to gather the range and depth of data needed to respond to the evaluation questions given the limited time and resources. The team intends to address this by applying a sampling approach that will, to the extent possible, be representative of the types of activities, objectives, and Network organisations. In the weeks leading up to the mission, different alternatives presented by the stakeholders will inform the sampling process.

Preliminary findings suggest **a reasonable level of evaluability**:

- There appears to be a relatively clear design and logical goal hierarchy in the programme document and a plausible theory of change. Tamasi has undertaken LFA workshops and conducted regular monitoring meetings.
- The Terms of Reference do not call for an assessment of the extent to which Tamasi’s overall goal which concerns building “immunity against social disintegration” through promoting cultural dialogue and cultural diversity. Instead, at the development objective level, the ToR is concerned with contributions towards enhancing freedom of expression. This focus is useful and comparatively more conducive to evaluation than “immunity against social

disintegration”³⁷ (The assessment of enhancing freedom of expression is discussed further in section 3.4).

- The target populations of the programme are relatively well-defined, but in some cases quite broad (women of all ages may be more than half the population).
- It appears that Tamasi has made an effort during the programme period to improve its monitoring work over the course of the programme period. It has held a handful of meetings aimed at improving its monitoring work and has systematically gathered quantitative annual data for pre-defined indicators *since 2009*.
- While the collection of qualitative data has been less evident and systematic, some qualitative data has also been gathered by the Network.

The foremost challenge to evaluability will be gathering enough and reliable qualitative data. This will be particularly tricky in relation to one of Tamasi’s most important target groups, namely audiences. These are by nature impermanent and even audiences that are assembled at performances during our visit might be difficult to gather perspectives from. The Tamasi partners are aware of this and we are discussing with them ways to address this to the extent possible.

The evaluation team has examined the extent to which the 2006 evaluation can provide **baseline** information. While a competent evaluation, it does not cover all Tamasi countries and lacks the data details that would make comparisons easy. However, when relevant, the team will refer to data from the earlier report.

Box 1: Tamasi’s target groups

Primary target groups:

- Diverse audience: gender, age and social backgrounds
- Children and young people
- Audiences from marginalised, decentralised & unprivileged areas
- Potential artists & practitioners of performing art
- Women of all ages
- People with special needs

Secondary target groups:

- People and/or organisations directly involved or whose support will be sought in implementing the program:
- The implementing organisations themselves
- Independent groups benefiting from activities, programming, events, forums, meetings, dialogue, local networking etc.
- Trainers
- Children’s teachers and trainers; parents and families.
- Organisations, institutions or groups of special interest for audience building/outreach and/or income generating activities.
- Schools, institutions and authorities/official bodies involved in collaborations.
- Patrons of the arts

³⁷ This goal seems to relate to Durkheim’s and later Galtung’s theories of modernisation that society declines or disintegrate over time due to the lapse or breakdown of traditional social support systems. This author has reservations about this view and Galtung’s argument that “the advance of secular faith in reason has undermined religious belief without replacing it to an adequate extent with other, clearly binding ethical commitments” since this overlooks the fact that despite our imperfect world, more human rights are realised for more people today than 50 years ago.

Evaluation criteria

The evaluation questions in the ToR are organised according to effectiveness, relevance and sustainability:

- The questions on **effectiveness** are to a large extent related to Tamasi's objectives. We note however that Tamasi's aims of strengthening local ownership and organisational identity are not made explicit in the evaluation questions. We have however, included these aspects in the evaluation framework (section 4 below).
- The questions on **relevance** focus on three areas – the needs of the member organisations; the needs of target populations and Sida's policy goals related to human rights – in particular freedom of expression and women's rights. (Evaluability issues related to relevance are discussed below in the following section.)
- The questions on **sustainability** seem to imply an emphasis on institutional sustainability as opposed to financial sustainability. This is suitable since studies show that the latter is difficult to achieve in the culture sector – even in developed countries the arts are heavily subsidised in different ways.

A few of the evaluation questions in the ToR could be categorised differently:

- One question under effectiveness refers to **technical efficiency**: ("the evaluation team shall consider whether the program has been cost-efficient/sufficiently funded, i.e., the evaluation shall juxtapose results achieved with the amounts of Sida funding.")
- Another question under the effectiveness set could be considered as a question pertaining to **impact** – depending on how we define impact: ("A 7: Can the Tamasi program be said to have contributed to enhancing the freedom of expression in the MENA region?")
- Question A 8 under the effectiveness section could relate to several evaluation criteria. The question ("How do the activities and members in the Tamasi network relate and contribute to the current political transformations in the Arab world?") could be considered in part a question of **relevance** – the extent to which the programme has maintained relevance to the prevailing context. It could also relate to **organisational efficiency/effectiveness** in as much as the Tamasi Network has had the organisational and programmatic dexterity to respond to changing conditions. Furthermore, there is an element of **impact** assessment to the extent that the political transformations may have created unexpected effects. Like question A7, this question could be interpreted as concerning impacts at a regional level. This issues is discussed in Section 3.4.

The evaluation framework in Section 4 has taken these alternative categorisations into account.

Assessing relevance

The methods section in the ToR also discusses the importance of considering the **needs and priorities** of "beneficiary populations." People living in poverty, women, youth and children have many needs and priorities. Needs are likely to differ among sub-groups and individuals depending on their situations, locations, and aspirations. Some needs may be articulated, while

other needs may not be recognised as needs by target groups until an experience has revealed it to them.

Engaging in or with performing arts may not be recognised by some as a priority or need, as would, for instance, healthcare or the ability to feed oneself and family. However, freedom of expression and cultural liberty as human rights are considered as important as all other rights to live and full and meaningful life.³⁸

An appropriate approach to assessing needs and priorities of target groups would be to incorporate a rights-based perspective. Thus, the team would consider the extent to which target groups are able to claim and exercise their right to culture and freedom of expression.

Relevance is also to be examined in relation to **Sida's goals in the region**. These goals have changed somewhat during the programme period. The Tamasi Programme was designed during Sweden's 2006 to 2010 strategy period. Key objectives in this strategy included:

- to promote democracy and good governance, e.g., by taking steps to promote the emergence of a strong civil society.
- to promote respect for human rights, including equal rights, conditions and opportunities for women and girls, and to encourage the development both of regional networks and of structures for dialogue on rights perspectives and basic universal values, etc.³⁹

The 2010-2015 Strategy defines democracy and human rights as one of three sectors. Within this sector Sweden wants to achieve “greater respect for human rights, especially the freedom of expression and women's rights.”⁴⁰

The strategies are similar in many ways. Both focus on human rights, democratisation and civil society. Both emphasise the importance of regional collaboration (although this is stronger in the former strategy) and women's rights.

There are also some distinctions. The former strategy specified support to culture as a means of strengthening democracy. Meanwhile, the current strategy does not mention culture as an area of support. Instead it emphasises freedom of expression. Yet for decades, the core of Swedish cultural development cooperation has been grounded in the concept of freedom of expression as has Sweden's domestic approach to culture.⁴¹

³⁸ The enjoyment of one right is indivisibly interrelated to the enjoyment of other rights because all rights are inter-dependent (see for instance Cecilia Ljungman's “A Rights-Based Approach to Development” in Mikkel-sen's *Methods for Development Work and Research*, Sage 2005. See also Amartya Sen's *Development as Freedom* and UNDP's Human Development Report from 2004 *Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World*.

³⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs. *Swedish Strategy for Development Cooperation with the Middle East and North Africa*. (2006- Aug 2010).

⁴⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs. *Swedish Strategy for Development Cooperation with the Middle East and North Africa*. (Sept 2010-Dec 2015).

⁴¹ See, for instance, Sida's Culture and Development policy from 2006 and the two proceeding policies from 1998 and 1993.

Analysis suggests that there has been a strategy change from supporting human rights on a broader scale involving grass-root populations with a longer-term perspective towards adopting in a more activist approach in which civil society organisations that promote democratisation and human rights “by means of lobbying, opinion building, the organisation of grass-roots political parties, the monitoring of government undertakings” are supported. The evaluation team will discuss the current Swedish strategy and the changes it involves with the Swedish Embassy in Cairo.

Assessing contributions to freedom of expression, human rights, and democratic development

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, freedom of expression is the right of every individual to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. Arguably the most challenging assessment for this evaluation is to provide evidence that Tamasi is/is not contributing to freedom of expression.

Democratic development and the improved realisation of human rights is a complex systemic process. A myriad of ever-changing factors (e.g., the structure, strength, and transparency of government institutions; demography; civil society; geography; the economy; global markets democracy promotion by other nations; the influence of non-democratic nations, the press; etc.) come into play and each factor affects another in a complicated algorithm that often defies replication. The process will be unique in every country. There are no lynchpins for democratic development – at least social scientists have not discovered one yet.

There is general consensus that for democratic development to occur, nations must have both the *intention* to create democracy and the *capacity* to do so. The 2002 UNDP *Human Development Report* underlined that democratic development “requires a deeper process of political development to embed democratic values and culture in all parts of society—a process never formally completed.”⁴² Freedom of expression is a key human right that needs to be exercised in this context. Societies in which civil groups are given the freedom and space to organise and in which healthy debate and opposition to government policies is tolerated and encouraged are said to pass the “town square test.”⁴³ If a person can go into the town square, express his or her views, and not be punished, civil society will flourish and democracy will be allowed to deepen. Before this can happen in autocratic societies, there at least needs to be improved governance systems, legislative reform and a vibrant civil society. This is of course highly relevant in the MENA region, in light of the events of Tahrir Square, Damascus and elsewhere.

⁴² UNDP. *Human Development Report 2002*. UNDP 2002.

⁴³ Dermer, Ron (2006), *The Case for Democracy: The Power of Freedom to Overcome Tyranny and Terror*, Balfour Books, pp. 40–41,

The Tamasi Programme of roughly MSEK 5 a year is a small contribution to the overall support to freedom of expression in the cultural sphere in the MENA region. It does so not by explicitly improving governance systems, working to change policies or legislation or even advocating for this. It aims to do this by promoting members of civil society to exercise freedom of expression in the cultural sphere. It is thus one of many building blocks that are necessary – but no means sufficient – for freedom of expression to be realised in a society. As one of probably hundreds of initiatives aiming to contribute to freedom of expression, it is reasonable to assume that Tamasi's activities have had miniscule (if any) effect on freedom of expression at the *national* levels – let alone regional levels. This is further supported by Box 2 which shows that freedom of expression has not changed significantly at national levels in four countries in the region between 2008 and 2012.

However, to use a botanical analogy, a few well placed drops can make a seedling grow. Alternatively, years of support may result in continual drops in a bucket but no visible change at the overall level. Then one day one single drop may cause the bucket to spill over, creating formidable results. In other words, it is possible that Tamasi's effort, though small, can be a significant and strategic contribution towards achieving greater freedom of expression in the region.

Empowerment

Since Tamasi's potential to improve freedom of expression at the national level in any direct sense is very limited, and since concrete improvements at this level have

been relatively minimal according to Freedom House, indications of contributions to freedom of expression would need to be sought at the micro level, with a specific focus on individual and group capabilities to promote and exercise freedom of expression. Central to exercising freedom of expression is the process of empowerment– i.e., people and communities have more capabilities that allow them to have freedom of choice, take strategic decisions, undertake initiatives and exercise voice; which enables them to better influence the course of their lives. Empowerment can be seen as having three dimensions - *Agency*, *Resources* and realised *Achievements*.

Agency, or the ability to define goals and act upon them, is a key dimension of empowerment. Agency encompasses a range of purposeful actions - bargaining, negotiation, resistance and pro-

Box 2: Freedom House Indicators for the Region during the Tamasi Programme

Freedom House's annual assessment of civil liberties measured the extent to which freedom of expression and other civil liberties have changed every year. The data shows little improvement and some deterioration between 2008 and 2012 for Tamasi's 4 programme countries. While the rating for Egypt has not changed in light of ongoing repression, Freedom House's 2012 report explains that the total aggregate score improved as a result of the Arab Spring and that freedom of expression has gained some momentum.

	Egypt	Jordan	Lebanon	Palestine
2008	5	4	4	6
2009	5	5	4	6↓
2010	5↓	5	3↑	6↓
2011	5↑	5	3	5.5
2012	5		4	

↑: Positive trend during the year

↓: Negative trend during the year

(A score of 1-2.5 denotes a free society; 3-5 denotes a

test - that amount to exercising voice. It also includes *cognitive processes of reflections and analysis*.⁴⁴

Although agency can be considered at the heart of the process under which choices are made, *Resources* and/or enabling conditions of some kind are required for empowerment. Resources are thus the second dimension of empowerment and can be divided into three categories:

- *Human resources*, which encompasses, among others, knowledge, skills, creativity, imagination and a positive sense of being;
- *Social and political resources*, or social and political capital, which can be defined as the claims, obligations, influence and expectations that inhere in the relationships, networks, connections and institutional arrangements which prevail in different spheres of life; and,
- *Material or economic resources* including finances, property, land and equipment.

The third dimension of empowerment is realised *Achievements*. The outcomes achieved (such as economic, social, cultural, civic and/or political changes in society) through the combination of Resources and Agency can further empower individuals and communities. This conceptualisation of empowerment with its three different dimensions is illustrated in the figure below:

Figure 1: Dimensions of Empowerment



Implications for the Evaluation

In determining the extent to which the support may be contributing to freedom of expression, a micro-level approach can be applied that gathers data to determine the extent to which capabilities are being strengthened to exercise this right and the extent to which the dimensions of empowerment are being addressed. Qualitative data can be gathered on the following:

⁴⁴ Naila Kabeer. "Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment" in *Discussing Women's Empowerment - Theory and Practice*, Sida Studies no. 3, Sida 2002, page 21.

Agency

- The extent to which production content and methods has promoted reflection and social debate on human rights, gender equality and freedom of expression issues.
- Extent to which groups and the Network have engaged in advocacy/lobbying to influence policy environments in regard to freedom of expression and cultural liberty.

Resources

- The extent to which *human resources* have been strengthened at the individual/organisational/ community levels– creativity, knowledge, positive sense of being, change of consciousness, understanding of concepts of cultural liberty and human rights.
- The extent to which *social and political resources* have been strengthened at the individual/organisational/ community levels – participation, social debate, democratic organisation, social capital.
- The extent to which *financial resources* have been strengthened at the organisational/ community levels.

Achievements

- The extent to which any outcomes related to freedom of expression and cultural liberty have been achieved through the combination of Resources and Agency.

Having reviewed some of the documentation, it is quite likely that the team will be able to uncover some results that relate to the different dimensions of empowerment. These may in turn provide an *indication* that the Sida support is contributing to freedom of expression. However, it is important to bear in mind that:

- Evidence at the individual, organisational and community is challenging to gather in a short timeframe.
- Some processes cannot be detected because not enough time has elapsed – for instance, the support may have the effect that an organisation or community find its voice next year which in turn produces outcomes in 3 years.
- Determining causation is a great challenge – the role of the Tamasi support in producing effects can be both under-valued or over-valued because there are typically many different factors that contribute to effects and many different organisations at work.

In summary, at this stage of the evaluation process, it is unlikely that the evaluation would be able to provide compelling evidence that the Tamasi support has contributed to a change in freedom of expression at the *national or regional levels* in the region. Second, the team may be able to uncover only a small part of potential evidence that supports the notion that Tamasi has enhanced capabilities and empowered individual and groups. However, our approach can be likened to the targeted boring of geological probes into the earth to determine the nature of the different layers to provide theories of the processes involved to create them. It means only a square decimetre here and there will be analysed, while large expanses of square kilometres would not be explored. While we may miss a gold deposit, we will obtain a general sense of the type of geological formations under the top soil and whether it is possible for gold deposits to have been formed. This approach will, in effect, test the theory of change embedded in the Tamasi programme.

4. Proposed approach and methodology

Focus on effects

Given the importance placed by the stakeholders on examining the extent to which the Tamasi Network has contributed to enhancing freedom of expression, the team will devote comparatively more time and resources on gathering evidence to be able to assess this. The emphasis on freedom of expression will entail gathering and triangulating *qualitative* data on potential effects. Conducting interviews and focus groups with samples from Tamasi target populations will be crucial. We have already started a dialogue with the partners in each of the countries who are working on presenting options that are illustrative, practical, logistically possible and which take advantage of ongoing processes and performances.

Participation

The evaluation will be as inclusive as possible within the given limitations of the assignment. Participation and open dialogue tend to enhance the accuracy and usefulness of evaluations. It also increased the likelihood that the evaluation process *itself* is an asset to the programme by providing insights, inspiring ideas and/or stimulating learning. We will handle information confidentially and statements from individuals will be kept anonymous in the reports.

We will kick off the visits in Egypt and the West Bank by conducting participatory SIPA (Strengths, Improvement points, Possibilities and Attention points) workshops with the member organisations. We will provide the framework for the groups to identify what they each regard as the most important strengths of the Network; areas which they feel could use improvements; possible opportunities ahead for the Network and potential challenges that may lie in the way. Apart from a good way of getting to know each other, these workshops will immerse the team directly into Tamasi's reality from the start, which will allow us to work more effectively when we later meet with the organisations and partners. Initial planning with the partners for these workshops is already underway.

Sources of Information

The sources of information for the evaluation are:

- **Thorough analysis of existing documentation** – the programme document, workshop reports, annual reports, monitoring reports, matrix reports, training reports, studies, the web-sites of the member organisations, assessments etc.
- **Semi-structured interviews** with the Tamasi coordinator(s); the Tamasi members, Tamasi partners, audience groups, other target groups, Swedish embassies, external informants – including other donors.
- **Focus group discussions** with target groups and member organisations.
- **Site visits** to the member organisations and their performing facilities.
- **Relevant contextual information** about performing arts in the region and other active organisations.

Sampling

The Annual reports reveal that the activities of the Tamasi network are numerous and involve large number of people. The data in the Tamasi reports reveals the following:

- The Tamasi Network has undertaken an average of around 40 productions per year since 2009.

- An estimated 800,000 people (although some may be “repeats”) have seen performances by Tamasi partners during the programme period to date.
- Since 2009, Tamasi members work with at least 400 different partners a year.
- Over 550 performing artists have been trained since 2009.
- Every year since 2009, the Tamasi partners have engaged in 10 to 18 joint undertaking within the Network.
- Nearly 6000 children have participated each year in training workshops.
- Some of Tamasi’s activities have taken place in countries other than one ones we will be visiting (notably Morocco and Syria, but also tours in Europe, China and Canada).

Clearly, the evaluation team will need to focus the assessment scope by sampling a certain number of activities. Sampling will be determined so that the following mix is achieved:

- Activities representing the 4 result areas and 8 strategy areas
- Activities directed at children and youths
- Activities aimed at developing and expanding the quantity and diversity of audiences
- Representation of diversified performance media and content
- Representation of long-term/short-term and professional/amateur training activities
- Activities that have come about as a result of the ongoing transformation in the region
- Activities that involve collaboration within the network
- Representation of each member organisation’s activities
- Organisational/management development activities
- Network development activities
- Activities concerning improving facilities
- Activities concerning public information, public relations and media coverage

Logistics, data availability and practically will influence the activities selected for assessment. Obviously, there is likely to be a slight bias in the sampling towards activities that are currently being undertaken or that have recently been completed. The team is working with the Tamasi Network to establish a practical sample that is sufficiently representative.

Evaluation Framework

To guide the evaluation process, the team has developed an evaluation framework (Table 1 below), which includes the evaluation questions from the ToR that are categorised by evaluation criteria. A set of indicators has been established for each evaluation question. The framework will constitute the methodological backbone of the evaluation. Questions for interviews and issues for focus groups will be derived from the framework.

The framework contains a relatively comprehensive list of indicators. Through experience we have found that aiming to gather data in a range of areas is like throwing out a net – it widens the data gathering perspective and tends to generate more findings and thus more useful evaluation. However, it is important to recognise that in some cases, we may not succeed in obtaining sufficient data for all indicators. There are a number of quantitative indicators in the framework. They have been derived from Tamasi’s own indicators that the team has uncovered in the initial review of Tamasi’s reporting.

Please find the evaluation framework included in Annex 5.

Work Plan

The following page includes an updated work plan. It has been prepared in dialogue with the Tamasi Network. The team proposes to arrive in Cairo on May 5. On May 10, Cecilia Ljungman and Nadia Masri-Pedersen would travel to the West Bank. They would visit Amman on May 15 through May 17. June Taboroff would travel to Alexandria on May 11 and then to Lebanon on May 13. A draft report will be prepared by June 13. The stakeholders will be invited to provide comments during a three week period. By July 19, the final report will be submitted.

The team has carefully considered the possibility of travelling to Gaza, which currently is not included in the work plan outlined in the table below. This decision was based on several important factors. First, the official Swedish position is that Swedish nationals should avoid travelling to Gaza. Second, the team members would be travelling *at their own risk*, which would have negative insurance consequences. Third, the time that the team has in the region for gathering data is comparatively brief, given the type of qualitative data it is hoping to gather. Already without squeezing in a trip to Gaza, meeting a reasonable selection of stakeholders and gathering a variety of reliable qualitative data will be highly challenging. Fourth, the time need for administration, planning, logistics, waiting at the checkpoints, etc. for a Gaza visit would be significant – particularly since one of our team members is of Palestinian origin.

Initial review of documents reveals that the work undertaken in Gaza seems very interesting and relevant. Thus, despite the official Swedish position on Gaza's security, the team members are prepared to travel to Gaza if the administration and logistics are minimised and if the time available for data collection is not compromised. Given this willingness, the Consortium proposes that a trip to Gaza is included in a new work plan, but would need the following conditions to be met:

- A meeting with the Swedish Consulate in Jerusalem is undertaken at the beginning of the mission to oPt to assess the situation in Gaza and whether travel is possible.
- A representative and car from Swedish Consulate accompany the team across to Gaza and back again.
- A total of four additional days are approved by Sida for travel to Gaza for 2 consultants (2 days each) as well as corresponding funds for travel expenses.

Should such an arrangement not be possible, the team would cover the work of Theatre Day Productions (TDP) by document review, phone interviews and face-to-face interviews with its staff based in the West Bank. TDP would also participate in the SIPA workshop with the other Palestinian Tamasi members.

Table 14: Work Plan

					April				May					June				July			
	cml	jt	nmp	nn	w14	w15	w16	w17	w18w	w19w	w20	w21	w22	w23	w24	w25	w26	w27	w28	w29	W30
Inception Phase	6	3	2																		
Inception work																					
Inception Note submitted					2/4		20/5														
Feedback/no objection on Inception Note								x													
Field Mission Phase										x	x										
Mission to Egypt	5	8	5	3						x	x										
Mission to Lebanon		3									x										
Mission to OPT	5		5	2						x	x										
Mission to Jordan	4		4								x										
Analysis and validation phase																					
Verification, analysis, synthesis and report writing	9	5	4									x	x	x							
Submission of Draft Report															13/6						
Feedback from stakeholders on draft report																		5/7			
Finalization of the report	3	1	1																	19/7	
Submission of Final Report																					
Total days	32	18	21	5																	

Annex 8 – Supplementary Information to Chapter 3

This Annex contains supplementary data on increasing access to performing arts that is relevant to the findings outlined in Chapter 3. It covers the following areas:

1. **Provision of Physical Space**
2. **Outdoor Performances**
3. **Festivals Organised by Tamasi Partners**
4. **Impact of insecurity**
5. **Promoting Access to Performing Arts among Children and Youth**
6. **Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Access**

Provision of Physical Space

Physical space for performing arts is provided by the following Tamasi members:

Studio Emad Eddin (SEE), Cairo: SEE is a leading player in the Tamasi Programme. It runs four equipped rehearsal spaces that are offered on a first-come-first-serve basis for a small fee per person. SEE also provides office equipment, internet access, sound systems, and television screens free of charge and rents out lighting and video equipment. According to SEE's data, the occupation rate of the space was around 17,000 hours per year in 2008, increasing to 22,000 hours per year in 2011. During the same period, its membership has more than doubled to total of 2500. With funds from the Ford Foundation (but with core funding support from Sida funding), SEE is opening four new rehearsal spaces in 2012 as well as a multimedia room.

In addition, SEE has acquired the use of two additional theatres: it signed a contract with the American University in Cairo to take over the management of the well-equipped Falaki Theatre (seats 230) in the old university compound in 2011.; and it signed a contract in 2012 with a real estate company for the exclusive and free use of an old downtown cinema with two halls seating 800 people each.

Al Balad Theatre, Jordan: Al Balad maintains two spaces for performing arts – a small stage that seats a maximum of 90 and a larger space that can seat 120. Al Balad also networks with a couple of larger government spaces which it uses when it hosts festivals or when it brings shows to Amman that attract large audiences. On average Al Balad hosts 120 events a year, including workshops, drama, dance and music performances; film screenings; exhibitions; and seminars.

SHAMS, Beirut: SHAM run the Sunflower Theatre. The Sunflower Theatre has a capacity of some 320 seats and runs an active programme that in 2012 amounted to 70 events – including concerts, theatre, dance and multimedia performances. It also offers space for rehearsals, workshops and meetings. A youth centre space with a library is also managed by SHAMS.

Teatro Eskendria, Alexandria: I-Act established this theatre that was inaugurated in Spring 2012 (funded by a number of other donors) and functions as a multi-purpose cultural centre. The Teatro includes small performance spaces (capacity less than 100 for each) a book and crafts shop, a restaurant, and a café. I-Act's intention is to make the place a cultural hub and meeting point for young people in Alexandria.

El Warsha, Cairo: With the support of the funds from the Tamasi Programme, El Warsha created a small stage with room for a maximum audience of 70 in Cairo. This space is mainly used by El Warsha itself, but it can be borrowed free of charge by young independent performing arts groups.

Al Mastaba, Cairo: Though not using Sida funding directly, Al Mastaba upgraded an old coffee shop in downtown Cairo to become a small theatre space, particularly suited for music performances. It seats 100 people and is apparently used on average once a week, mostly by the Mastaba groups or groups associated with its musicians.

The Palestinian members of Tamasi are not involved in managing spaces for independent performing arts. While **TDP** has its own theatre in Gaza, it is mainly used by TDP and its groups. However, to be able to reach its audiences, TDP has developed mobile materials and equipment to be able to create performing arts spaces, in particular in schools. In 2009, TDP created 72 temporary spaces. This increased to 146 and 168 spaces in 2010 and 2011 respectively.

Meanwhile, **Al Harah** and **El-Funoun** have access to rehearsal and performance spaces but do not manage one of their own. The Beit Jala Municipality has decided that Al Harah will be granted free use of a renovated community building from 2012 onwards. Al Harah plans to run a training centre there (including set, light, sound, costume, theatre technique, script writing/dramaturgy, etc.) which would be the first of its kind in Palestine.

Outdoor Performances

During and since the fall of the Mubarak regime, the Tamasi groups in Egypt and their associates have accessed new audiences by performing in public places:

- El Warsha's stick dancing troupe were bussed in from Mallawi to perform at Tahrir Square;
- El Mastaba's music groups Henna, Waziry and Tanboursa groups performed at Tahrir Square;
- El Mastaba's groups also performed in eight squares in popular neighbourhoods in Cairo, Suez and Doumyat.
- I-Act's Alternative Theatre Group (ATG) adapted the play *Nostalgia* for non-traditional spaces and gave five performances during 2011 (Report 2011 and 2010) although they encountered problems with the security police.
- I-Act's *Back Street Festival* was designed to "be close to people on the street" and thereby "discovered the energy of the street" which under the previous regime had not been possible.
- SEE was one of the principle organisers of the new Downtown Contemporary Arts Festival

- (DE-CAF), Egypt's first major international multidisciplinary festival since the fall of the Mubarak regime. It broke new ground by arranging performances on streets, storefronts and rooftops in downtown Cairo.
- Associates of SEE and El Warsha have been active in the El Fan Medan (Art in the Square) movement which takes place the first Saturday of each month in a number of squares around the country with the aim of getting people to reclaim public space, feel ownership of it and inviting amateurs to express their thoughts and opinions art. Families, children, activists, cultural practitioners turn up and engage in music, performances and exhibitions. This initiative has been organised by the Coalition of Independent Cultural Institutions and Collectives that formed during the Tahrir Square protests. All the work is voluntarily. According to informants, the squares are always packed.

In contrast to Egypt, performing outdoors in the **West Bank** has been comparatively easy. During the programme period, El-Funoun has performed about 8 times a year outdoors in 14 different towns, each time reaching, on average, 1600 people. Meanwhile, Al Harah organised the first street festival in Beit Jala in 2011. It intends to organise the festival annually from now on (see section **Fel! Hittar inte referenskälla.**).

While SHAMS has not itself used non-traditional spaces in **Lebanon**, a number of its affiliates, regularly give performances in villages throughout Lebanon such as the Khayal Association which organised a tour in Beirut and villages as part of its Caravan Festival.

In **Jordan**, Al Balad Theatre organised a performance in the streets with the Clowns without Borders from Sweden, in Jabal al Natheef. Initially it resulted in great resistance from the local religious men in the community who locked the performers in for two hours in their costume changing space. After police intervention, it was agreed that the performers would cover up and not hold hands. After the performances the children touched the clowns to see if they were real.

Festivals Organised by Tamasi Partners

All of the Tamasi partners are involved in organising at least one festival. Almost all of the festivals are reoccurring. The main festivals include the following:

- **Spring Festival** – Sunflower Cultural Center and SHAMS. This biennial festival brings performing arts from throughout the MENA region. Offering music, singing, theatre, shadow puppets, dance and workshops, the festival featured performers from countries around the world.
- **Hakaya Storytelling festival** – Organised annual since 2006, by the Arab Education Forum, the festival aims to reclaim the centrality of stories in art, education and life by bringing together artists, performers, storytellers, oral historians, educators and researchers from the Mediterranean to learn and exchange with local Jordanian audiences. Al Balad Theatre and El Warsha are core partners of this project.
- **Creative Forum for Independent Theatre Groups** – Held in Alexandria and organized by I-Act the Forum aimed an interdisciplinary approach in which creativity, education, dialogue, knowledge, publications, translation and building joint projects are

blended together, thus shedding light on the importance of cultural diversity and knowledge exchange. Due to the political unrest in Egypt in 2011, the Creative Forum was cancelled. I-Act has therefore developed a new vehicle called **Reveil** that took place in 2011 and 2012. In each year Reveil offered 6 performances reflecting the Arab Spring and situation in the region and received around 1000 spectators.

In addition to Reveil, eight other new festivals have been developed and organised by Tamasi partners during the Programme period:

- **Yalla Yalla** – In 2011 Al Harah organised this street festival in the town of Beit Jala. It involved more than 350 performers and around 6000 people attended the festival.
- **2B Continued** – Started in 2008, 2B Continued is a lab and festival inviting young theatre makers to attend a two-month training, leading to the production of short performances and a three-day festival.
- **D-CAF** – The first major international contemporary multidisciplinary art and cultural event to take place since the events at Tahrir Square, D-CAF presented music, theatre and dance performances as well as visual arts exhibitions over a period of two weeks in downtown Cairo in the old financial district.
- **Injaz Music Festival:** Started in 2011 by Al Balad theatre and supported by the Spanish Embassy and the Cervantes Institute.
- **Drama Festival:** Each year TDP chooses a village, camp or neighbourhood where a series of 12-15 drama and video animation workshops are carried out during a two-month period for children aged 10-14. The resulting plays are performed for the whole community and are followed by open debates about the role of theatre and arts for cultural expression.
- **El Mastaba** organised two festivals in 2011, which each drew about 2000 people.
- **SHAMS** at the Sunflower Theatre has in 2011 organised a festival event called *50 days, 50 years* in which young artists had the possibility to present and discuss their work to renowned artists from older generations.
- **Al Balad** Theatre co-produced the International Women's Day Festival with the Aat Network in 2010 and 2011, which brought female artists and audiences to the theatre. (See section **Fel! Hittar inte referenskälla.**)

Impact of insecurity

The security situation in the region has hampered the ability of Tamasi members to promote access to performing arts in a number of ways:

- **Temple Theatre's** multimedia children's play *Hassan and the Magic Well* was first delayed by the long negotiations concerning access to the Al Falaki theatre, and then the insecurity created by the political events caused schools to cancel visits. Temple hopes to regularly perform the play at Al Falaki to school audiences during the second half of 2012.
- The **Mastaba Center's** Tanboura Hall often had to close during the protest as it was situated close to Tahrir Square.
- **SEE's** 2be Continued Festival lost audiences when the Falaki Theatre had to close for part of 2011.

- **I-Act** was unable to hold the Creative Forum for two consecutive years due to the political situation, which in turn reduced audience numbers. Instead they launched the Reveil Arab Theatre Gathering, hosted by the French Cultural Centre, which had a smaller audience capacity.
- The **Sunflower Theatre** experienced a decrease in attendance, which they attribute to renewed security concerns associated with the violence in Syria.

Promoting Access to Performing Arts among Children and Youth

The Tamasi members promote access to performing arts activities among children and youth in a number of ways. These are summarised below:

Al Harah undertakes some drama classes for children in the new community space in Beit Jala built by the Italian NGO, Peace for Jerusalem, but focuses mainly on training teenagers and young adults with a view to “open professional space for the young generation.” Al Harah’s long term engagement in training young people in culturally underserved places such as Deheishe refugee camp, Tulkarem and Bettula has led to the formation of theatre groups in these locations.

Second, Al Harah has targeted teachers. In partnership with World Vision, Al Harah has worked in 22 schools in 11 villages to train drama teachers. To begin with, this required agreement from the Ministry of Education, the headmasters and teachers. They were initially difficult to convince – staff in the schools were uninterested in additional work. However, the results of the training and the positive effects on the children have changed these attitudes and have become very supportive. World Vision assessed that the inputs from Al Harah is contributing to a better quality of education for the children.

Third, Al Harah has partnered with Bethlehem Arab Society for the Rehabilitation (BASR) to train staff who work with children and young adults with disabilities. BASR is the national referral and resource centre for people with physical and mental disabilities. Al Harah trained a staff member at BASR who became the drama coordinator. She in turn trained colleagues, with backstopping support from Al Harah, including bringing clown trainers from Scotland for a three-day workshop. BASR’s evaluation of the results of the training is discussed in Chapter 5.

With support from Sida, **El-Funoun** has trained children and young people in culturally underserved villages. Among these are the Beit Illu (girls group established 2007), Beit Reema Village (girls group established 2008), Saffa Village (mixed group established in 2006) and in Beli’ ein (one boy group from 2009 and one mixed group from 2011). The first three groups have become established enough to have sourced their own funding. In 2011, El-Funoun for first time managed to train young people in East Jerusalem. While East Jerusalem may not be culturally underserved in the same way as the villages, working with some young people here can be challenging – there is apathy, drug issues and a loss of feeling connected to Palestinian heritage.

In addition, many of the El-Funoun dancers provide training for children that are financed through partner organisations, parents or communities. Some of them teach up to 9 times a week.

El-Funoun also runs a youth troupe, Bara'em (or "buds") that consists of 42 children aged 9 to 18. In 2009, Bara'em participated at the "Palestine in Copenhagen" Culture Festival in Denmark. Over time Bara'em feeds new dancers into the adult El-Funoun troupe.

Similarly, **El Mastaba** runs two traditional music schools, which provide a potential source of new musicians for the adult Tamboura and Henna groups. These are Young Tamboura (Port Said). School in Sinai and the Young Henna (Suez), which became its own school in 2012, the "Simsimiya Lovers Association". The children in the schools meet to practice for two hours twice a week, with a break during holidays and exam periods.

Al Balad has undertaken modest efforts to reach out to children through a library with story-telling events. More significantly, Al Balad has engaged 70 young people, as members of the Al Balad Theatre Club, who meet regularly. The members come from all over the city and range in age from 17 to 35. They are actively involved in the theatre's programme and are encouraged to work as apprentices with visiting theatre professionals (actors, musicians and lighting experts) to learn new skills.

TDP has a "Kids4Kids" programme in which children are supported in performing for other children. The children have produced 3 to 4 productions a year since 2008. In 2011, the four plays produced were performed 52 times. The plays are based on improvisations by the acting children, or are adaptations of a modern Arab classic or fairy tale. TDP has also trained over 220 UNRWA school teachers since 2009; 30 mental healthcare workers, 35 NGO educators, 38 kindergarten teachers and 12 teacher graduates and other educators have also received drama training. Training for young adults in theatre is provided every year through its one-year and three-year curriculum programmes, which is further discussed in section 3.2.2.

In 2011, **SHAMS** made a special effort to bring younger generations into its work. Its festival "50 Days, 50 Years", spread out over the year was by and for youth and featured music, dance, photography, drawing, theatre and other forms of arts. The festival also included discussions, exhibitions and encounters about theatre experiences of the past 50 years. Eighty-eight young artists participated in the festival project.

A new collaboration between **El Warsha** and Care is underway in Minya and Beni Suef provinces, aimed at children and especially girls from 6-15 years of age. It offers theatre activities inside the schools, and attempts to increase parent participations. The project draws on Care's relationships and good reputation with the Ministry of Education and local schools. Among the activities are songs and short stories in order to "provoke and stimulate the thinking of children." The storytelling is seen as an indirect way to improve reading and writing skills while the presence of one of El Warsha female performers provided a positive image of unveiled Muslim women.

Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Access

The Tamasi members have worked to increase access to performing arts activities among women and girls and promote gender equality in a number of ways. These are summarised below:

Al Balad Theatre co-produced the International Women's Day Festival in 2011 with the Aat Network, a Jordanian women's network. After completing a workshop in their community on empowerment through storytelling and mask-making, women and girls from Iraqi and Palestinian refugee camps performed their stories to an all women audience at Al Balad Theatre, Amman. The programme also included a motivational talk by the first woman Governor in the Arab world. Girls from camps performed on stage. Al Balad also hosted the performance, *The Meaning and Idiosyncrasy of being a Woman* and the play *The Lily-White*, that addresses the issue of virginity in the Arab world. The play toured different three cities where it was seen by around 200 people. Through collaboration with civil society organisations the play also toured a few villages in Jordan.

Since **El-Funoun** was formed in 1979, women have always formed an equal part of the group. Dabke was traditionally a men's dance and El-Funoun has pioneered bringing women into this dance form. Nevertheless, five years ago, there were no female Dabke trainers within the troupe. Today there are 9 (and 12 male trainers). Its audiences tend to have slightly more women than men.

Both **Al Harah's** director and creative producer are women and its team of core staff and actors is mixed. It generally trains more women than men in drama training within the school system, but trains about an equal number boys and girls. Among its trainees, is the first female drama trainer in Hebron. Al Harah's play *Girls are a Burden until their Death* – which was the result of a workshop in 'Theatre of the Oppressed' – focuses on women issues in the Palestinian community, especially issues of sexual abuse and rape.

TDP consisted almost exclusively of men when it was formed in the 1990s. In 2011, female staff outnumbered male staff. A key to this transformation was to the training of unemployed older girls and women in video-animation, which would not expose them physically to the stage, but indirectly bring them into the environment of the theatre. The 5 workshops a year in 2009 had increased to 25. The women became involved in drama training and performing. In 2006, the women produced and toured a theatre show for women and their families. When in 2008 Hamas imposed limits of male actors performing in front of girls and overruled the mixed drama training for schoolteachers, TDP decided to have all female teacher training. The problem of women performing publicly was circumvented by having women act in micro-scale theatres, which could not be considered public.

Several of **El Warsha's** productions have addressed gender relations and women's empowerment. In 2010, El Warsha produced a special *Nights of El Warsha* for the Women's Rights Network. It included a mix of stories, poetry and songs representing a "free space" in the Egyptian society: identity, everyday life stories from streets to theatre, with classic literature as reference point.

At the 2012 Sunflower Festival organised by **SHAMS**, the dance performance *Tajwal* challenged the cultural and societal belief that the traditional Baladi dance (“belly dancing”) is a style of movement only for women. Although not well known, it was not uncommon for men to perform this type of movement in the past. The choreographer aimed to create new spaces of reflection surrounding Baladi dance and to emphasize how the technique of the movement “nourishes the body and the soul” rather than the gender. Because of the domination of men within traditional music, **El Mastaba**’s groups and management are made up of mostly men. Likewise, its performances draw about twice as many men as women. Nevertheless, during the programme period El Mastaba has showcased the only female *simsimiya* player in the world. Furthermore, it has promoted girls to attend its music classes with relative success.

Box 7: Beit Illu Youth Club

”In the conservative village of Beit Illu, El-Funoun tried to introduce dance training for girls in 2008. Initially the idea was refused. But the girls in the village were so motivated that they would come to the youth centre and ask us to please talk to their parents to convince them to let them join the dance classes. I went to see many families about the matter. When it was agreed that the girls would be trained by a woman, the go ahead was given by the community leaders.

It was soon clear to the parents that attending these classes was beneficial for the girls. It enhanced their ability to work in teams. The teachers at the school also noticed the positive impact that dancing brought. Eventually the families agreed that the girls could perform for their families. Some of the girls were very talented and the families appreciated the shows so much they asked if the group could perform in front of the village. After that the girls performed for hundreds of people in Ramallah. The following year, the village *asked* if the girls could be part of a street festival in Nablus where they performed for thousands of people! With El-Funoun, the youth club is now starting its fourth dabke dance group for girls. Performing in front of a mixed public audience is no longer an issue.” –

Community member, Beit Illu.



Uncovering the Power of Performing Arts: An Evaluation of the Tamasi Programme

The Tamasi Programme aims to promote a more sustainable, viable, diverse and vibrant performing arts life in the societies of the MENA region. Sida has supported the programme with MSEK 41 over five years through the Swedish Academy of Dramatic Arts. The evaluation provides evidence that Tamasi has made a notable contribution to strengthening independent performing arts in the MENA region. An estimated one million people have seen performances by Tamasi partners during the programme period to date and nearly 800 women, men and children have been trained in performing arts.

The Tamasi programme appears to be highly relevant to Sweden's strategy for the MENA region because it focuses on exercising freedom of expression at the grassroots level, an action that is both crucial to effect change in repressive societies and vital for realising human rights. The Tamasi groups are therefore on the front line – along with many other activists in other fields of work – of pushing boundaries of freedom of expression in social and political discourse.

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