Evaluation of the "Mobilising civil society for monitoring equality in the formal education system of Turkey" Project

- implemented by the Minority Rights Group in partnership with the History Foundation

Final Report

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PREFACE

This evaluation of the "Mobilising Civil Society for Monitoring Equality in the Formal Education System of Turkey" Project was commissioned by the Minority Rights Group (MRG).

Zeynep BaserKubiena, as an independent evaluator, undertook the evaluation betweenFebruary 2015 and April 2015. The fieldwork for the evaluation was conducted during March 2015, with the assistance ofHelinKutlan in organizational capacities.

This report was circulated in draft form to the Minority Rights Group (MRG) and History Foundation (HF) team and their comments have been addressed in this final report.

The evaluator would like to thank the MRG and HF Coordinators and all the respondents foropenly sharing their experiences and viewsduring the evaluation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

An independent evaluation of the project for "Mobilising civil society for monitoring equality in the formal education system of Turkey" (the project henceforth) **was conducted between February – April 2015.** The project was designed and implemented by the Minority Rights Group (MRG) in partnership with their local partner History Foundation (HF) during March 2014 and October 2015; with funding support from the delegation of the European Union to Turkey and the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The main purpose of the evaluation was to contribute to the organizational learning and future decision-making by MRG and HF with regards to similar future projects, both in terms of design and implementation.

Background & Context

Discrimination against minorities in education has been an evolving, long-standing problem of Turkey. In the last 10 years, there was some relative improvements in this area, particularly in the context of Turkey's EU accession process; nevertheless, despite some limited affirmative action, the core problems of discrimination in general and discrimination in education in particular have remained.

Between March 2014 and October 2015, MRG in partnership with HF implemented a project in Turkey to address this problem. The primary target groups of the project were the civil society organizations representing ethnic, linguistic and religious groups.

The objectives of the project were defined as follows:

Specific Objective: *Strengthen minority civil society's involvement in the monitoring of discrimination in the Turkish education system, and increase their capacity to advocate for changes in this area at local and national levels of the Project).*

Expected Outcome 1: *Strengthened capacity of and collaboration among minorities, civil society organizations, and activists to campaign on the issue of discrimination in education.*

Expected Outcome 2: *Increased quality and updated information available on discrimination and education, to support the work of civil society and to shape policies and practices.*

Expected Outcome 3: *Increased awareness amongst decision-makers at all levelsof discriminatory practices based on race, religion, ethnicity and language in the education system and stronger commitment for changes.*

The project was undertaken during a period of increasingly challenging socio-political context marked by 3 elections, deteriorating public security, increasing tensions in domestic and international politics, regression of democratization efforts, unpredictably changing political agendas and rising social and political tensions.

Observations & Conclusions

Overall, it was observed that the project was implemented and managed effectively to reach the expected outcomes, with adoptive and insightful approaches in face of those risks. MRG and HF have swiftly and effectively dealt with those challenges that are within their control, such as challenges faced during the monitoring process. Other factors that have promoted effective implementation have been: MRG's partnership with HF, which has a very strong and respectable public reputation; project coordinators' commitment, and competence in implementing the project; their ability to adopt to emerging challenges in a timely manner; and having a good selection of experts in the advisory board.

Nevertheless, some of the results intended by the project were limited by (a) the unfavorable socio-political context and unexpected developments beyond the project's control and (b) issues related to initial project design and project's theory of change.

- Expected outcome 1:

The project has been an important first step and has made some important contributions towards achieving grassroots mobilization for monitoring discrimination in formal education in the longer-term.

The project made important contributions to the capacity development of the network partner NGOs with regards to undertaking systematic monitoring; it was especially beneficial for those partner NGOs with more experience in monitoring and/or institutional capacity as well as those who participated in the project activities more actively. Action-based learning and coaching approaches to capacity building were important added values of the project. Capacity building of the partners in the area of advocacy was limited mainly due to unfavorable political context, which led to cancellation/postponement of project's major advocacy activities, as well as due to limited training in this area.

The monitoring network that was established with 17 partner NGOs representing minority groups was an important operational component of the project; it functioned well as a means to undertake the monitoring field and to build relationships among the participants. It also had the unintended positive consequences of overcoming stereotypes and facilitating collaboration among some of the partner NGOs in different areas. In

terms of sustainability, the network has relied mostly on the human and financial resources that were provided by the project; the network partners explained that they did not and do not have the institutional or financial capacities to sustain the network in the same format. The short duration of project funding also limited results in this area. Meanwhile some of the partner NGOs from the network explained that they will continue with their monitoring work individually and will be sharing the results with the other members; seen in this light the project contributed to sustainability of efforts by individual NGOs in monitoring discrimination in education.

- Expected outcome 2:

The monitoring report prepared and published within the scope of the project is detailed, up-to-date, and highly relevant for advocacy efforts to end discrimination, and therefore is a valuable resource contribution. The report combines the review of the legislative framework and the curriculum and school textbooks with an overview of the actual cases with regards to discrimination in formal education; it provides a set of recommendations. Having had a diverse group of minority NGOs within the monitoring network has helped ensure that the final monitoring report reflects the Turkish context comprehensively. The use of report for advocacy at the national or local levels has so far been limited, mainly due to the political context that led advocacy activities to be cancelled. Meanwhile there has been some important international advocacy achievements: some of the key points in the report were integrated into EU Turkey Progress Report for 2015 and UN CERD document on Turkey.

- Expected outcome 3:

Results towards project's advocacy objectives have been limited by issues related to initial project design and external political context. The expected outcome" of increasing the awareness of the decision makers at all levels" and ensuring their "stronger commitment for changes" has been overly ambitious for the given scope of the project; particularly considering the time, resource and other contextual limitations. Furthermore the unexpected political developments beyond the control of MRG and HF have hampered project's advocacy activities: due to November 1 re-elections and the consequent programmes and changing priorities of key figures, most of the advocacy meeting with key figures were cancelled/postponed. Nevertheless the launch activities and panels have been important to bring visibility to the report and its findings, and to reach to wider audiences via media.

Main Recommendations

- If possible, undertake a 2nd Phase for the project and resume working with the partner NGOs that were the most engaged in the project.

- While undertaking project design, despite funding limitations and challenges, try to plan in phases to cover a minimum of 5-6 year period so that the results (such as skills and knowledge) as well as motivation and mobilization achieved in the first phase will not be lost due to long pauses in between, and that MRG will be ready to apply for funding whenever an opportunity shows itself.

- Integrate measures of sustainability and multiplier effect into the project design. Involve the project partners in the process to ensure (a) that the approaches are relevant for their needs and (b) that the partners' own knowledge and capacities are utilized as part of the measures for maximum efficiency.

- Sustain action-based-learning approach to capacity building and combine it with more one-on-one coaching with partners.

- Set realistic objectives regarding advocacy; design an advocacy strategy for the project from the beginning with input from and participation of the partner NGOs

- Explore if and how engagement with relevant policy makers can be initiated from the earlier phases of the project onwards in a way that would promote progress towards results.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Purpose of Evaluation

The Terms of Reference (TOR) for this evaluation, prepared by the Minority Rights Group (MRG) and reproduced in Annex 2, call for an independent evaluation of the project for "Mobilising civil society for monitoring equality in the formal education system of Turkey." The project was supported by Delegation of the European Union to Turkey (EU Delegation) in the scope of European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) Country Based Support Scheme Turkey Programme. Additional financial support was given by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office through the UK Embassy in Ankara. It was implemented by the MRG in partnership with History Foundation (HF) during March 2014 and October 2015.[1]

The evaluation report provides an analysis and recommendations about the project to facilitate organization learning and future decision-making by MRG and partners with regards to similar projects in terms of design and implementation. Specifically, the TOR state that, "there is no pre-set format for this evaluation, although MRG and partners are particularly interested to learn from it, lessons that we can apply in designing and running work with similar objectives in the future." Accordingly, the main beneficiary of the evaluation is considered to be MRG and its project partner HF. The evaluation also fulfils MRG's commitment under the terms of the contract with the EU to commission a final external evaluation of the project.

1.2. Evaluation Criteria

In line with the evaluation aims stated above, the evaluation report adopts a formative and utilization-focused approach in order to facilitate organizational learning by MRG and its partner organization. The report primarily focuses on intended and unintended results (at the output and outcome levels) in accordance with the TOR. The observations regarding effectiveness and sustainability of the project have been shared in the sectionon progress towards results for the purpose of fluidity and logical reporting. In addition,

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1 Initially the final month of the Project was August 2015, however this date was extended in mutual agreement between MRG and EU Delegation until October 2015

observations with regards to the relevance of the project have also been included so as to provide a more holistic analysis of the project's achievements as well as the learning elements.

In the TOR MRG has identified and highlighted the questions that are of particular interest to the organization. For the purpose of logical reporting these questions posed in the TOR have been rephrased as follows.

1. Were all project activities completed in a timely manner with reasonably high quality? Why/Why not?

2. What was the effect of the external context on the plans and implementation?

3. To what extent expected outcomes (results) were achieved? Did the activities contribute to the planned results? Why/Why not?

4. What are the (positive or negative) unplanned/unintended results of the project?

5. *(For impact level assessment - To what extent the results achieved as a result of the project will contribute to the achievement of the specific objective of the project – see section on conclusion)*

6. What factors (contextual, institutional and methodological) have affected/limited progress toward results and the specific objective?

7. Were the project objectives and the project design realistic given the time frame and the context at the point that the programme was designed?

8. Is the project relevant with partners' needs and priorities and the country needs?

9. Were the selected activities and outputs (Publications, trainings, advocacy activities, etc.) of good quality and consistent with the overall aim of the project?

10. Has MRG been able to mitigate risks and adjust to contextual challenges (such as in political arena in Turkey) and new opportunities that have materialized?

11. In relation to the advocacy work, is there space for maneuver and how able are those who worked with this project to find this space?

It should be noted that assessment of the longer-term specific objective of the project proves challenging, since the project's duration has been short, and the timing of the evaluation has been too early for a rigorous and fair assessment. Nevertheless the evaluation has tried to address this question.

1.3. Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation has assumed a formative approach (which focuses on programme design and improvement) and a utilization-focus, and therefore has primarily employed qualitative inquiry methods, in addition to desk research.

Overall, the evaluation employed the following methods:

– Start-up meeting with the Project Coordinators to agree on the scope and the priority areas of focus for the evaluation, as well as to discuss potential methods; and to clarify and agree on the project's theory of change.
– Review of relevant documentation, including project reporting and documents, outputs of the programme (the monitoring guide and the final monitoring report), network partners' websites, complemented by internet research on the topic.
– In depth interviews with key informants, such as the project coordinators, members of the project advisory board, representatives from the select member organizations of the project network, the EU Turkey Delegation.[2]
– Focus group discussion with representatives from the selected member organizations of the project network.

The sampling criteria for the selection of informants were developed in consultation with the MRG and HF project coordinators, to best represent the project's most important contributions and lessons learned. During the selection process, priority was given to the level of engagement throughout the project and representation of different minority groups. (Please see Annex 1 for a full list of participants interviewed.) In all the interviews the evaluator sought to understand the socio-political context in which the project was implemented and how project activities have affected the interactions and spheres of influence of the minority NGOs which it targets.

To enable the highest level of objectivity and ensure an evidence-based approach, a method of triangulation of different approaches and instruments was applied throughout the analysis of evaluation findings.

Overall, the methods selected were appropriate given the scale of the project and the aims of and resources available for the evaluation.

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2 Interviews with stakeholders residing outside of Istanbul were conducted via telephone.

One limitation of the evaluation had been the lack of access and interviewing possibilities with government actors and policy makers about the advocacy component of the project. As a result of both document review and initial interviews with the project coordinators it was understood that due to the unexpected political developments most of the activities of the advocacy component of the project (particularly activities that would aim at relationship building with policy makers and briefing policy makers) were hindered; that the interaction with the policy makers has been limited and will be pursued fully after the end of the project period. Therefore no bureaucrats or policy makers have been interviewed as part of the evaluation. There has only been one exception: The evaluator has tried to contact the former Director of the Provincial National Education Unit for Istanbul, whom the coordinators have identified as the policy maker with a wider knowledge of the project; howeverhe could not be reached. Therefore with regards to measuring advocacy, the evaluation focuses mostly on the overall advocacy approach/theory and goals of MRG and the PR activities of the project, against the socio-political context.

2. OBJECT OF EVALUATION AND CONTEXT

2.1. Object of Evaluation

The object of the evaluation, as mentioned above, is the project for "**Mobilising civil society for monitoring equality in the formal education system of Turkey.**" The project has been implemented by the MRG in partnership with HF during March 2014 and October 2015.

As defined in the project proposal, the **overall objective** of the project (at the impact level) is to:

> *Contribute to the respect for the right to education of **ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities** in Turkey according to international standards and on equal footing and tackle the discrimination these communities face within the education system.*

The **specific objective** of the project is to:

> [a] *Strengthen minority civil society's involvement in the monitoring of discrimination in the Turkish education system, and* [b] *increase their capacity to advocate for changes in this area at local and national levels.*

In other words, the primary target group/beneficiary of the project is the networks partner CSOs from different minority groups.

The **expected outcomes** of the project are defined as follows:

1. *Strengthened capacity of and collaboration among minorities, civil society organizations, and activists to campaign on the issue of discrimination in education.*

2. *Increased quality and updated information available on discrimination and education, to support the work of civil society and to shape policies and practices.*

3. *Increased awareness amongst decision-makers at all levelsof discriminatory practices based on race, religion, ethnicity and language in the education system and stronger commitment for changes.[3]*

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[3]All objectives and outcomes were taken from the project proposal.

In order to achieve these expected outcomes, the project has envisioned a series of inter-related activities and outputs including:

- A training on international human and minority rights, discrimination in education and documenting discrimination for staff and activists of minority organisations in Turkey interested in working on discrimination in education.
- A Guide (booklet) for monitoring discrimination in education; for use by network partners during the project, as well as other CSOs willing to undertake similar monitoring activities.
- Semi-annual meetings of network partner organizations
- A final monitoring report, which compiles the data gathered by network partners from the monitoring exercises, and seeks to put forward a comprehensive account of the problems with regards to discrimination in the formal education system in Turkey during the 2014-15 academic year.
- Meetings with the government officials, by the network partners
- Interaction and communication with international organizations
- Public relations events (such as launch of the report)

MRG has been the formal body who applied for and managed the EU funding; meanwhile both in the design process and during implementation MRG and HF (and primarily the two project coordinators from each institution) shared planning, management and coordination responsibilities; with MRG coordinator taking a relatively more direct role in project management and reporting, and the HF coordinator taking a more direct role in interaction and management of relations with the network partners and other stakeholders.

2.2. Context

2.2.1. The Context of Discrimination in Education in Turkey

Turkey became a "candidate" country for European Union (EU) accession in 1999, and formal negotiations on EU membership began in 2005. These negotiations were accompanied by democratic and economic reform processes. It was within this context that the discrimination experienced by different minority groups in different issue areas became more visible in this period, and subsequent efforts emerged in Turkey to address also the human rights of these different groups.

Discrimination against minorities in education has been an evolving, long-standing problem of Turkey. In the last 10 years, there have been some relative improvements;[4] nevertheless, despite some affirmative action, the core problems of discrimination in general and discrimination in education in particular have remained, as underlined in the 2013, 2014 and 2015 EU Progress Reports. For example, religious minorities such as Alevis and non-Muslims continued to experience discriminatory practices in general and also in education; regional disparities across the country in accessing education remained, and the education in mother tongue (such as in Kurdish) continued to be contested.

In short, despite certain promising developments in the recent years, the affirmative actions have been limited in terms of issue areas and scope, and the situation of minority groups with regards to equality in education remains a concern.

In Turkey there are no specific CSOs that work specifically on the intersection of education and human rights; however CSOs that work in the areas of human rights, education or child rights have undertaken certain important projects with regards to equality in education. Among others, MRG and HF have been two of the few organizations to take the lead in working in the intersection of education and minority rights.[5] Other prominent organizations include Education Reform Initiative (ERG) and Bilgi University Center for Sociology and Education Studies (SEÇBİR).

Apart from these technical CSOs, the grassroots minority organizations themselves also undertake efforts to combat discrimination in education with regards to their own

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[4] For example in 2012 a legislative reform, which allowed for traditional languages (such as Kurdish and Circassian languages) to be taken as elective courses was adopted. The 2013 EU Progress Report mentioned that, "there were efforts to intensify dialogue with non-Muslim religious communities, with positive results. New religious education textbooks were more inclusive." The democratization package that was implemented and adopted in September 2013 enabled private education in languages and dialects other than Turkish that are used traditionally in daily life (EU Progress Report 2014.).

[5] 2006-2009 period, MRG implemented a project entitled 'Combating discrimination and promoting minority rights in Turkey.' The project was implemented with the involvement of several NGOs working on human/ education/ minority rights and involved a set of activities including roundtables, learning visits, advocacy initiatives/trips.[5] One of the end results of the project has been the report *Forgotten or Assimilated? Minorities in the Education System of Turkey.*

HF has been one of the few NGOs in Turkey to conduct consistent in-depth studies on education and human rights.[5] The primary projects the organization undertook in the past years have helped highlight certain key areas where discrimination with regards to education occur in Turkey. These are as follows:
- Promoting Human Rights in [Primary and Secondary School] Textbooks I and II (2002-2004; 2007-2009)
- Role of Education as a Means to Reconciliation in Societies Experiencing Social and Political Conflicts (2009-2010)
- Promoting Human Rights in [Primary and Secondary School] Textbooks III (2013-2014)
- Minority Schools From Past To Present: Problems and Solutions (2011-2013)

constituencies and geographic locations, however it is understood that these efforts are mostly not systematized but ad hoc and are also very limited in scope.

During the project period Turkey still did not have a comprehensive framework law (anti-discrimination law) on combating discrimination in line with international and European standards.[6]

The statistics suggest that the existing mechanisms for referral of rights violations, namely the Human Rights Institution of Turkey, and the Provincial and Sub-Provincial Human Rights Boards are hardly used by the people, and lack of further disaggregated data makes it difficult to analyze the existing statistics (please see table below).[7] Lack of trust in state mechanisms to deliver solutions, and fear of stigmatization of children, as well as lack of awareness with regards to these institutions are thought to be behind the low application numbers.[8] In general, lack of statistical data with regards to discrimination in education seems to be a problem, as also confirmed by experts interviewed. Furthermore, regardless of legislative reforms, enforcement mechanisms in the field remains weak, due to reasons such as lack of awareness, lack of political will, and lack of monitoring and enforcement.[9]

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[6]EU Progress Reports 2014, 2015.

The legislation that includes an anti-discrimination law and the establishment of a human rights and equality body that was drafted by the government was finally adopted by the Parliament during April 2016. However the law has been criticized severely by many Human Rights institutions, including the MRG, for failing to meet international and European criteria on human rights. (Also see Box 1 for more details on this matter)

Please see MRG Press Release, March 2016, "Minority Rights Group International (MRG) urges the government of Turkey to amend the draft law on the future Human Rights and Equality Body", IHOP view on the law "TürkiyeİnsanHaklarıveEşitlikKurumuKanunuTasarısıHakkındakiGörüşlerimiz", Joint view of 19 CSOs on the law, İnsanHakları Bu Kanunile Korunmaz: SivilToplumÖrgütlerininOrtakÇağrısı.

[7]For example during 2014, the total number of applications filed with the Human Rights Institution of Turkey on the violation of rights to education was 28 (3.11% of the total applications); on the violation of prohibition of discrimination, the number was 26 (2.89 % of the total applications). The percentages were even lower with regards to Provincial and Sub-Provincial Human Rights Boards: 1.55 % (42 applications) and 0.29% (8 applications), respectively. Human Rights Institution of Turkey, Annual Report 2014, available at tihk.gov.tr (The report for 2015 has not yet been published).

The statistics of the Ombudsman and individual applications to the Constitutional Court were also examined, but no relevant disaggregated data that could be matched with respect to violations of equality principle in education were found.

[8]Expert interviews

[9]Interview with experts.

BOX 2.A: Anti-discrimination law and the establishment of a human rights and equality body within the context of MRG's work

MRG has advocated for the adoption of a comprehensive anti-discrimination law and establishment of an equality body since 2006, and over the years has underlined its importance for ensuring equality in education in its reports, as well as in its interactions with the government actors.

The 2009 report on minorities and education, published by the organization was calling for the adoption of an anti-discrimination law: "There is a clear need to bring the legal standards in line with international ones. For this purpose, a comprehensive anti-discrimination law is needed to provide effective remedies." Similarly the 2015 MRG report (published within the scope of the evaluated project) also underlined this need, and highlighted why this was an essential component of combatting discrimination in education:

> *The fact that Turkey has no legislation prohibiting discrimination in the enjoyment of various rights, including the right to education, and that no equality commission has yet been established in the country, creates serious problems in the fight against discrimination. Furthermore, the interviews carried out and the observations shared by NGOs reveal the lack of trust in the justice mechanism and the widespread fear of victimization. Many discriminatory practices are not reported to school administrations, and such cases are not even shared with NGOs. For this reason it is extremely difficult to reveal the full extent of discrimination that exists within the education system. One of the steps that urgently needs to be taken in this field is the establishment of the necessary anti-discrimination mechanisms and the building of trust that is essential in order for victims of discrimination to be able to demand their rights.*

The legislation, which was drafted by the government and which includes an anti-discrimination law and the establishment of a human rights and equality body, was finally adopted by the Parliament, during the evaluation period, in April 2016.* MRG has explained that, despite its shortcomings, the adoption of the law is still an important development. In the context of the project and its advocacy efforts, one of the important developments about the law is that it also covers the issue of discrimination in education, which has been one of the main focuses of advocacy for MRG since 2006.

*The law has been criticized severely by many Human Rights institutions, including the MRG, for failing to meet international and European criteria on human rights (please see footnote 4).

2.2.2. The Socio-Political Context during Project Implementation

In the most recent years, the positive developments and the promising space for democratization have faded, and have even started to regress due to a series of domestic and international dynamics and developments. In this context, during March 2014 and October 2015, when the project was implemented, the political context in Turkey became gradually, but increasingly volatile.

In this 20-month- period Turkey has witnessed 3 important elections (including the first presidential elections and the first re-elections in the country's history),[10] worsening of the Syrian war and the refugee crises, suicide bombings by the IS in Suruç and Ankara that killed 135 people, re-escalation of the armed conflict between the PKK and the Turkish armed forces. Again, during this period Turkey has faced increased criticism due to concerns over the independence of the judiciary, separation of powers, and respect for human rights and freedom of expression.[11]

In this atmosphere, the already prevailing political polarization in the country has deteriorated, particularly along the axes of being pro-/anti-government and/or Turkish nationalist/pro-Kurdish. The acts and discourses of political party leaders have also contributed to this polarization. Furthermore, the priorities of the public due to the socio-political changes have shifted, and calls for "stability and traditional values" have gained more importance than those for democracy and change.

All these developments have had important implications for (actual and potential) advocacy efforts with regards to ensuring equality in education in Turkey. Both the elections and the rise of security/refugee issues high on the agenda, have impacted the priorities of the government and the political parties, and advocacy for minority rights and combatting discrimination in education have become difficult since these issues now are no longer so high on the agenda.[12]Particularly during the campaigning period for the

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10 These are the August 10, 2014 Presidential Elections, the June 7, 2015 General Elections, the November 1, 2015 General "Re"-Elections. The November re-elections, which were announced in August 2015, are included here, since the ending months of the project coincided with the campaign period for this elections and as will be explained had some implications for the project planning.

11 For example, see EU Progress Reports 2014 & 2015. MRG also issued a press release on September 2015 on the escalation of conflict and human rights violations. Concerned by ongoing violence in Turkey, MRG urges peaceful resolution to crisis.

12 Interview with informants.

two general elections, the attention and priorities of most of the MPs were shifted towards campaigning, and most decision-making on important policy matters came to a halt. The increasing polarization and animosity between the political parties that has rendered collaboration and communication increasingly difficult, as well as the further centralization of power at the national level[13] also make advocacy efforts difficult for the civil society organizations.[14] It limits the means by which the CSOs (and especially smaller NGOs) can reach out to, communicate with and partner with the political actors to bring about desired change.

As will be discussed in later sections, some project activities, and particularly those related to advocacy efforts were also impacted by these recent unexpected developments.

Finally it must be noted that the centralization trend in Turkey also limits advocacy options. In the current circumstances, it is understood that at the national level the main actors to target for advocacy efforts are, the Minister of National Education (MoNE), members of the Parliamentary Education Commission (and particularly the members from the governing AK Party) and the MoNE Undersecretary.[15]As also confirmed by many informants, in the current socio-political circumstances the key decisions for thorough policy change and law enforcement primarily lie with the leaders of the AK Party government, and the MPs in general, the opposition parties, as well as other actors in the government bureaucracy (including MoNE officers) now have far less leverage over decisions over main policy. With regards to the latter, it is understood that while contacts with and contribution of officers in the relevant ministries are considered valuable, nevertheless their influence is perceived to be limited to informing their superiors.

2.3. Theory of Change

At the beginning of the evaluation it was observed that some components of the logical framework did not accurately reflect the project's pathway for change that was described in detail in the project proposal. It was observed that, particularly the expected outcome 3, which seeks increasing *both the awareness and the commitment* of the decision makers

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13 Including the overarching influence of the Turkish President on the ruling Ak Party's policy agenda.

14 Interview with informants, web research.

15 Interviews with informants, web research

at all levels, is a very relevant and necessary,but yet a longer-term objective.Therefore it ismisplaced in the hierarchy of the objectives, alsoconsidering the project's time limitation, design and activities, as well as the comprehensiveness of this task.

Accordingly, in order to present a more accurate picture of the project's design/result logic and change pathways, and to assess the achievement of the project in a fairer manner, the figure describing the pathways/theory of change was illustrated, based on the project documents (including the indicators) and interviews with the project coordinators; the coordinators have agreed that the figure reflects what the project tries to achieve accurately.

In the new pathways the most important difference from the logical framework to note is the distinction between those dimensions that fall within the project's influence and those that do not. Furthermore, *immediate term* refers to changes that can be observed

Figure showing the project's revised theory of change:

Long term

MRG would LOVE to see that, there is respect for the right to education of religious and linguistic minorities in Turkey according to international standards , and that the discrimination faced by this communities within the education system are tackled
- Overall Objective

MRG would love to see larger commitment among the decision makers for ending the discrimination minorities face in accessing equal education, and a stronger support among the society

Medium term

MRG would love to see that, minority activists and representative CSOs are able to participate in the design of curricula and implementation of [legal] measures guaranteeing the right to education

MRG would like to see increased awareness among society and state actors about the discrimination minorities face in accessing equal education

Short term

MRG would like to see that, minority activists and representative CSOs [network partners] use their improved capacities and knowledge, in collaboration, in monitoring and advocating against discrimination in education
- By using the final monitoring report (publication) for advocacy + by project's advocacy activities/initiatives + by continued interaction with regards to monitoring and advocacy

MRG would expect to see that society and state actors [i.e. targeted state actors (z.b.)] have access to quality information and contacts on discrimination on education.

Immediate term

MRG would expect to see that, minority activists and representative CSOs have improved their capacities and knowledge to monitor discrimination in education
- By way of the Guide, training, involvement in monitoring, reporting

Project Influence

Target Groups: Minority activists & representative CSOs

Target groups: Society & State Actors

following the immediate completion of the project, where as *short term* implies that the evaluation can capture changes in these areas only partially, again due to the short-term grant of the project.

Expected outcome 3 of the project, in this regards, is placed as a mid-/long-term objective, however the link between awareness raising and the two enabling components, namely the availability of quality data and the relationships are recognized within the scope of the project influence, as initial phase objectives. Similarly, with regards to the representative CSOs and minority activists, the pathway figure makes a distinction between improving their capacity and knowledge, and them actually using the attained knowledge to bring about the intended changes.[16]

Overall, the project seeks to bring a longer-term positive change with regards to equality in education. Some of the main assumptions of the project that would also aid in reading the pathways figure, in that regards are:

- The intended change (the overall objective) can be achieved in the medium- to long-term only if the key decision makers have the ***political will*** *to* take the initiative and make the required policy changes (including legislation and enforcement), in *partnership* with the minority rights groups (so as to make sure that the policies address the needs of the communities)

- For this, decision makers need to become more ***aware***of the shortcomings and also feel the support and push of the public opinion, (i.e. ***public will***; therefore need for increased awareness in public), and,

- The minority groups NGOs need to be stronger and mobilized in terms of both interacting with the decision-makers at different levels and monitoring/data creation so that they can help decision makers be aware and direct them in the right direction

In this light the current project has taken the minority NGOs as its primary target group, and has planned to utilize a combination of key activities/tools (in varying degrees) for overall advocacy to achieve the overall objective:

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[16] Focusing on participants' perceptions with regards to the knowledge and skills they attain in trainings/interventions can be misleading; it is important to take into consideration what kind of behaviroal changes are actually produced following the intervention. This distinction facilitates observing whether the trainings/interventions actually bring about change.

i. A combination of (a) grassroots organizing and mobilization[17] (i.e. capacity building for advocacy) and (b) coalition and network building[18] (related to expected outcome 1).

ii. A combination of (c) issue/policy analysis and research combined with (d) policy proposal development(related to expected outcome 2).

iii. A combination of (e) earned media,[19] (f) relationship building with decision makers[20] and (g) briefings/presentations[21](related to expected outcome 3).

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[17] "Creating or building on a community-based groundswell of support for an issue or position, often by helping people affected by policies to advocate on their own behalf." Please see *A User's Guide to Advocacy Evaluation Planning* by Harvard Familiy Research Project for more on advocacy planning and tools.

[18] "Unifying advocacy voices by bringing together individuals, groups, or organizations who agree on a particular issue or goal. Ibid.

[19] "Pitching the print, broadcast, or electronic media to get visibility for an issue with specific audiences." Ibid

[20] "Interacting with the policymakers or others who have the authority to act on the issue and put change in motion." Ibid

[21] "Making an advocacy case in person through one-on-one or group meetings." Ibid

3. OBSERVATIONS AND FINDINGS

3.1. Progress toward Results

3.1.1. Overall Timeliness of Activities

There have been some delays in the implementation of the initial project meetings (the planning and the training meetings) at the beginning of the project due to external constraints (such as the anniversary of Gezi Events), however these have not caused major problems with regards to the continued implementation of the project. During the second year of the project implementation MRG asked for and received a 2-month extension of the project until October 2016from the EU, in order to ensure the effectiveness of the launch event as well as other advocacy efforts for the report by organizing them in September: according to the initial calendar based on the start of the project in March, MRG would do the launch event during May-June 2015 before the summer months, however these months coincided with the before and after of the general elections, and posed a risk for the impact and wider outreach of the launch event. Despite the extension, due to the unexpected unfavourable political developments (and particularly the November 1 re-elections), the majority of the advocacy activities envisioned were not undertaken within the project period.

It is understood that in general the procedures of the EU grants can also affect timeliness of activities positively or negatively, since the grantees know the duration of their project but do not always know when they will be signing the contract, and hence will start the project. For some projects, such as the project being evaluated, the start and the end dates that determine the project cycle can be significantly important. For example for this project the start/end dates were important because (a) monitoring discrimination in education for two-full school semesters was a key component of the project, (b) the project had as its main componentstraining and advocacy/outreach, both of which are very difficult, if at all possible in the context of Turkey during the summer months. During interviews it was understood that having March as the starting month and August as the ending month for the project posed challenges for the project coordination team: 6 months of the 18 months project (one third of the total project time) were the summer months - which they would not have had, had the project started,for example, anytime between September and January and ended after 18 months.

3.1.2. Progress toward Intended Results

This section addresses the results or effects achieved by the project in relation to the projects' main stakeholders.

It is observed that the definitions of the specific objective of the project and the expected outcome 1 are very similar. The specific objective focuses on (a) stronger involvement in monitoring and (b) improved capacity to advocate for policy changes, for the minority CSOs. The Expected outcome 1 implies increased monitoring and advocacy capacity and also additionally focuses on collaboration among the NGOs. The specific objective (as well as the Expected Outcome 1) is also supported by Expected Outcome 2 that assumes availability of quality information will support the CSOs in their monitoring and advocacy/outreach efforts.

The Expected Outcome 3 of the project, as explained in the section on theory of change, contributes more to the overall objective, and less to the specific objective; in other words, in comparison to 1 and 2, it is at a higher level. Therefore, for the sake of accuracy and fairness, expected outcome 3 will be assessed in accordance with the revised theory of change, which redefines this outcome as "society and state actors have access to quality information and contacts on discrimination in education". (Nevertheless, two of the indicators in the Specific Objective are also related to the advocacy component of the project.)

It is for these reasons that a separate evaluation of the findings on the Specific Objective is not included below; however progress vis-à-vis indicators and definitions for this objective are addressed under each of the Expected Outcomes to facilitate reporting of evaluation observations. More on the specific objective is included in the Conclusions section.

Specific Objective: Strengthen minority civil society's involvement in the monitoring of discrimination in the Turkish education system, and increase their capacity to advocate for changes in this area at local and national levels.

Indicators for the specific objective are:

- Minority communities report an increased interest from key stakeholders to tackle discrimination of minorities in education**.** This is seen in the number of meetings between government officials and minority representatives working on the issue of education – *This indicator is a longer-term indicator and while it cannot fully be assessed within the scope of this evaluation, it will be referenced below expected outcome 3.*

- The network set up under this project and in charge of monitoring the issue of discrimination in education of minorities is functioning well, with specific cases of discrimination identified and denounced – *This indicator will be addressed below expected outcome 1.*

- Positive steps are made by relevant stakeholders towards the adoption/implementation of measures to tackle the discrimination of minorities in education. – *This indicator is a longer-term indicator and while it cannot fully be assessed within the scope of this evaluation, it will be referenced below expected outcome 3.*

Expected Outcome 1: Strengthened capacity of and collaboration among minorities, civil society organizations, and activists to campaign on the issue of discrimination in education.

This expected outcome (EO) has three distinct components embedded in it:

a. Capacity building for monitoring (i.e. grassroots mobilization),
b. Capacity building for advocacy & campaigning (i.e. grassroots mobilization) , and
c. Network building for collaboration & synergy to campaign on the issue of discrimination in education

For the sake of clarity, these are assessed separately below.

Capacity Building for Monitoring (Expected Outcome 1.a):

MRG sought to strengthen the capacities (knowledge and skills about monitoring) of the network participants via the following activities/tools: Training workshop, preparation of the monitoring guide, involving them in the monitoring process, other related activities.

General knowledge and skills on monitoring discrimination. The participants interviewed were overall positive about the monitoring capacity building component and felt that as individuals they attained important skills and knowledge. Both the training workshop and the monitoring process were appreciated by the majority interviewed.

Differences were observed between less experienced and no experienced participants with regards to how they benefited from the project activities. Participants from NGOs with no or little experience in monitoring discriminatory practices explained that they learned what discrimination is and about the importance of monitoring; and they appreciated the knowledge. Nevertheless many of these participants also explained that they/their organizations will not be able to continue monitoring activities, now that the project is over – due to matters of institutional/HR capacity and the lack thereof and/or priorities of their institutions.

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In comparison to their less experienced counterparts, and being already familiar with the aims and importance of monitoring, those network NGOs with experiences and practices of monitoring discrimination emphasized more the skills-building component of the project. These NGOs, which were fewer in number, particularly emphasized the approaches and skills they attained with regards to learning how to do monitoring systematically and in a more rigorous way, including data collection and data reporting processes. One participant said that the experience of bringing together the monitoring data in a systematic report was a very valuable experience.

One challenge voiced by participants, has been with regards to transferring the knowledge, skills and learning attained at the training and network meetings to other individual members in their organizations.

The Monitoring Process. The Monitoring process has been planned by MRG not only as a data collection phase (related to expected outcome 2), but also as part of the capacity building goal where the participants would learn monitoring *by doing* (action based learning approach).

The process started in September 2014 with the first school semester. Initially and ideally, it was planned that all of the partner NGOs would be involved actively in the monitoring process. Meanwhile the indicators set for the project, set the target number of network members that would participate in monitoring as 8 (half of the network CSOs). During the process the coordinators ran into some challenges with regards to effective partner participation; it was understood that some partners had not fully understood that they would have to do fieldwork and were waiting for applications from their constituencies; others were not sure as to how to do the fieldwork. The coordinators adopted a series of methods and approaches to mitigate the challenges, including providing direct coaching to the partners over the phone, preparing separate forms for different network members according to their area of work[22] and conducting

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[22] During the project, it was observed that the monitoring tools and approaches (particularly the guide and forms) did not fully met the needs of some participants, and particularly Laz and Circassians, since their experiences of discrimination differed significantly from that of other minority groups: Laz and Circassion children generally do not have issues with access to education or different treatment at school. Their main concern is about teaching of their mother tongue at schools therefore their monitoring work was different. This is why during the monitoring process MRG and HF prepared special forms for them to provide a monitoring report on the teaching of their mother tongue at schools and the participants used these forms instead of the form in the guide to report to the project.

complementary monitoring field work in Edirne, Diyarbakır and Mardin with the participation and facilitation of the network participants in those towns. In the end, eleven out of fifteen network participants (excluding HF and MRG) prepared reports as a result of the monitoring process, and some these were usedin the preparation of the final monitoring report.[23]

Capacity Building for Advocacy & Campaigning (Expected Outcome 1.b)

MRG planned to strengthen the capacities (primarily skills) of the network participants with regards to advocacy mainly via the following activities/tools: Training workshop, and involvement of participants in the project's outreach activities.

Training. With regards to training workshop and advocacy, the project proposal reads, "The training will be focused on international human and minority rights as well as international and regional laws and norms on discrimination. However, the training will also cover *advocacy strategy, methodology, tactics; networking with relevant stakeholders and donors, securing media coverage, research and reporting and liaising with the media*." In the final training programme which focused primarily on how to do monitoring has not covered the latter issues that are related to advocacy:during the planning stage the coordinators observed that the programme would be too condense and felt the need to focus the training more on the monitoring for the upcoming monitoring process, and then to gradually introduce the advocacy component. Due to several internal and external challenges ran during the course of the project (please also see below) it has not been possible to provide systematic training to participants on advocacy methods and strategy: for example the advocacy training that was planned to be conducted prior to the visits to the policy makers were cancelled once these visits were cancelled due to external political programmes. However the project coordinators have explained that general approaches to advocacy and outreach were covered during the network meetings in the scope of planning for the upcoming stages of the project. During the interviews having improved their advocacy and media communication skills was not among the primary benefits that the participants emphasized about the project.

Participatory Outreach. The second method that was planned by the MRG to build advocacy skills has been to actively involve participants in the advocacy activities that

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[23] Six of these reports prepared are also referenced in the final monitoring report: These are reports prepared by KAFFED (Circussions), Laz Institute, MEZODER (Assyrians), Association of Protestant Churches, Zero Discrimination (Roma people) and ROMFO (Roma people).

were planned to be undertaken during the final phase of the project, again aiming to teach them advocacy by doing (action-based learning). However, the implementation phase of the advocacy was negatively affected by the political developments; components of the advocacy where the participants and coordinators together would do go and visit the relevant key actors did not materialize (please also see section on expected outcome 3 for more details). In this respect, the skills/capacity building component of the project with regards to advocacy and outreach to policy makers was limited.

The project coordinators have responded to these developments by redesigning the advocacy events: a press conference (launch event) and two public panels were held in Istanbul and Ankara and some NGO representatives from among those who prepared monitoring reports have also actively participated in these as presenters/panellists. This active inclusion, participation and visibility were much appreciated by those network members, were thought to be empowering and creating stronger ownership for the project. One participant has said that the method made them feel like "equal partners" and that she will also use such participatory methods in planning for similar initiatives.With the facilitation of the project coordinators, few network members also participated in events organized by other institutions, sharing experiences of discrimination and presenting their work, and explained that participating in these activities motivated them.[24]

Network building for collaboration & synergyto campaign *(Expected Outcome 1.c)*

For this component of the expected outcome MRG planned to primarily utilize the following activities/tools: Network establishment, network meetings, other supporting activities as necessary.

In the project proposal MRG's view of the monitoring network and its purpose and importance are explained as follows:

> *"The project envisages the creation of a network among members of minority communities, civil society organizations, and activists interested in getting*

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[24] For example see İstanbul Bilgi University, SEÇBİR seminar programme with the participation of Hubyar Sultan Association and Laz Institute, and the programme of the Human Rights Agenda Conference, with the participation of Hubyar Sultan Association and Protestant Churches Association. Also see tv programme with participation of Laz Institute representative at IMC TV.

involved in designing, monitoring, and implementing policies and practices concerning education and discrimination.... This network will be vital in strengthening the collaboration between activists, minorities, and national human rights organisations, much needed to start tackling the issue of discrimination in education (result 1) [sic]. This project will be completed in 18 months, however the network is planned to continue operating even after its completion. This project is in a way will be the first stage of a long lasting cooperation."

The Monitoring Network and Meetings. The project network was established following the planning meeting that took place in Istanbul. Based on preparatory work undertaken with the advisory board, invitations were sent to target NGOs that represent a wide range of minority groups across Turkey. The network was formed with those 17 NGOs that attended the meeting and also expressed willingness to participate in the network. As intended, the network was composed of representatives of a diverse group of minorities in Turkey, for this would "ensure that the voice of all communities is heard [and] all potential cases/examples of discrimination are [reported]".[25]

As planned, a total ofthree network meetings were held in İstanbul, Diyarbakır and İstanbul chronologically. The meetings were designed by MRG as forums for collective discussion on project progress and results, as well as planning for the future steps, and therefore were participatory in nature.[26] Almost all network NGOs were represented in every meeting, however the NGOs were not always represented by the same individuals. This has created a challenge of continuity where different individuals were informed about different components/phases of the project.[27]

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[25]From the Project proposal

[26]Such as when the network partners decided to hold panels for advocacy.

[27] When asked participants explained that they were asked to represent their institution with one representative.

BOX 3 - A: Observations on the Monitoring Guide

The main rationale for preparing a monitoring guide within the scope of the project has been to produce a training material that is suited to the needs and capacities of the NGO partners, and one, which could be used both during the capacity building/training workshop, and as a reference for the NGOs while undertaking the monitoring work. Furthermore, it was envisioned that the guide would also be a reference document for other NGOs who would want to undertake monitoring work independently in the future.

The guide was prepared by an expert and was revised also with contributions from the network members in a participatory approach, to ensure utilization focus. One of the main features of the guide is its simplicity. It's a small booklet of a few pages, written in a simple language. (There has been other publications and guides on how to do monitoring, however their language is mostly academic/semi-academic and they provide in depth information which is not easy for target groups such as the project partners to follow). All participants interviewed, stated that it was easy to understand, found it useful and they were content with it, particularly when they combined it with the capacity building training, and they appreciated that their demands for simplicity were taken into consideration in finalizing the guide.

However, many also stated that they did not really use the guide while doing actual monitoring. It was expressed by several informants that especially for target groups inexperienced in monitoring, one-on-one coaching is more important and useful than a guide, no matter how simple. Project coordinators have also shared this observation; indeed during actual monitoring, faced with such needs and demands, they have provided one-on-one support for the partners. Few participants also noted that although it was simple, still the guide contained a lot of text, and recommended that use of visual material or tables or schemas could have eased its use for target groups. Finally, the sample monitoring forms shared in the guide was not thought to be appropriate for the type of (more indirect) discrimination that some of the minority groups (such as Laz and Circassion minorities) in the network were experiencing; therefore for these groups the project coordinators prepared new forms which would match their needs and subject areas (these are not included yet in the guide).

One important observation about the guide is that, contrary to its name and purpose, significantly few pages have been devoted to providing guidance on monitoring in the field,, with the majority of the text focusing on definitions with regards to discrimination and appendices. Furthermore, the information on monitoring primarily focuses on the scope of monitoring, and only one page is devoted to how to do actual monitoring. The guide does not contain advice on practical matters such as how to plan the monitoring activity, how to manage the monitoring process, how to record the collected data or the possible challenges that the participants might run into during monitoring (both due to their capacity, and due to the socio-political contexts in their localities). In other words, it does not contain guidance on the complete steps of the monitoring process for the NGOs, which might explain why many of the partners, although they themselves had participated in the design of the monitoring of the guide, needed additional support from the project coordinators during implementation.

The project coordinators have explained that although not included in the final version of the guide, the information on the practical matters about monitoring were covered in the later network meetings. One of the coordinators have suggested that they might consider updating the guide with all these materials with regards to application procedures, as well as in light of lessons learned during the implementation with regards to what the NGOs need.

Overall, the participants interviewed are content about the meetings and the discussions, as well as the meeting logistics. Especially the Diyarbakır meeting is much appreciated by the participants; in addition to the usual meeting component, this meeting also had a field component where the participants visited a school that provides education in Kurdish, an NGO working on Kurdish minority rights, and the priest of the Diyarbakır protestant church – the participants explained that the field component enabled them to observe and understand the discrimination experienced by the Kurds first hand, in their own localities; some stated that involving more field visit/observation component in the network gatherings in the future could benefit the members significantly both in terms of relationship building and in terms of understanding the discrimination cases in context.

The diversity of the network and the meetings has provided participants with a holistic view of the context of discrimination in education in Turkey. Most participants interviewed were content that the network consisted of such a diverse group of participants. They explained that they were not aware of the types and extent of discrimination faced by other minorities in Turkey before, and that this project has enabled them to learn about the broader discrimination issue in Turkey with regards to education and the problems experienced by other minorities living in different geographies.

Box 3 - B: Observations about the Network Participants

As intended, the network is composed of representatives of a diverse group of minorities in Turkey, with sometimes very different experiences of discrimination, with different implications.[1] The network NGOs are also diverse in terms of their structures, purposes/focus and operational capacities, as well as previous experiences regarding monitoring discrimination. Among the network participants there are individual NGOs as well as umbrella organizations/platforms; and activist/grass roots organizations, as well as more technical/academic organizations. Most of the network member organizations rely on voluntary work by their members (who have their own full time jobs, besides their activism). In rare cases, depending on the organizations' capacity to secure funds, the organizations might also have a professional/paid person in the team. Finally the priority to monitor discrimination is not the same for all NGOs, especially given restriction of their own human resource capacities added to the ever-changing political context of Turkey, when problems that require more immediate/intense attention might appear.

[1] For example during interviews representatives of Laz and Circassion groups in particular have underlined that the type of discrimination they were up against (right to learn own ethnic language) was very different, and in terms of consequences was "relatively lighter" (quoted) from those that were faced by other ethnic or religious groups

Collaboration and Synergy.The project has had some unintended, positive "networking" (but not "network") results, where certain specific NGOs developed closer relations and have collaborated or are exploring possible collaborations on different projects; these projects are not necessarily about discrimination in education. On the other hand, the general feeling is that the project methods could be improved in terms of aiming to build relationships and synergy among different members. There is an e-mail group for the project; participants explained that they use it mostly for communication purposes, announcing their events or other important news regarding minority rights. One informant explained that he was expecting this network to make him and his organization stronger, through a stronger sense of solidarity and cooperation but his expectations were not met. Others said that they felt they were more in relation with and responsible to the coordinating NGOs than to other partners.

It is understood that through the end of the project almost all the participants expressed their willingness to continue the network with a second phase project. In order not to dominate the network efforts and to make space for ownership among partners, the MRG and HF coordinators explained that they did not want to take an active role in the 2nd phase of the project. However, none of the partners have been willing to shoulder the fund raising, management and secretarial work related with it. It is concluded in this light that the network as of the end of the project period is not strong in terms of ownership and relations to be sustained by efforts of its members alone. Two other reasons for this are that monitoring discrimination is not necessarily a top priority for some of the organizations, and some organizations do not have the institutional or skills capacity to run grant projects. The evaluator has not come across plans for measures that would seek sustainability of the network (i.e. a low-scale exit strategy).[28]

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[28] The MRG project coordinator has explained that for the next term they have prepared a project that builds on the project being evaluated: The proposal that was submitted to the EU seeks to build a network of NGOs on discrimination to bring applications to the equality body and other existing mechanisms. Accordingly the network on monitoring discrimination will be extended and further advocacy events will be undertaken. The project covers a broader area of discrimination, including the education sector, so while MRG does not frame it as a second stage of the project on education they underline that if the project is approved it will sustain the network, in a different format.

Expected Outcome 2: Increased quality and updated information available on discrimination and education, to support the work of civil society and to shape policies and practices.

This expected outcome relates to the main publication of the project, namely, the monitoring report on the issue of discrimination within the formal education system of Turkey.

Overall, the report *DiscriminationBased on Colour, Ethnic Origin, Language, Religion and Beliefin Turkey's Education System* combines issue/policy analysis and research, with policy proposal development. It is detailed and relevant for advocacy efforts to end discrimination. The network participants interviewed stated that their input was comprehensively integrated into the report and that the report captures the issues of discrimination faced by their communities accurately. Several informants stated that the most important dimension of the report was that it captured the situation of discrimination in education in Turkey in all its aspects: "It captured a holistic picture of the situation in Turkey". In this respect the report has met the expectations of the network participants. The experts and EU officer interviewed also thought that the report was of good quality and was much relevant for the issue area. Overall the report fills an important gap in terms of documentation.

The report combines the review of the legislative framework and the curriculum and school textbooks with an overview of the actual cases with regards to discrimination in formal education; it provides a set of recommendations at the end, organized thematically. The content of both the report and the recommendations are detailed and thorough; the recommendations are outlined thematically and are addressed generally to the decision makers. Neither the Turkish nor the English versions of the report have an executive summary.

The use of report for advocacy at the national or local levels has so far been limited, mainly due to the political context that led advocacy activities to be cancelled.[29] However, some of the key points in the report were integrated into EU Turkey Progress Report for 2015 and UN CERD document on Turkey; the project coordinators have explained that they are also expecting to see the findings integrated into the ECRI report, which will be published in the coming weeks.

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[29] For this reason the evaluator have not interviewed any decision makers, also based on discussions with the Project coordinators.

Upon question on their views about use of the report by the civil society and grassroots organizations and activists in the future for advocacy and awareness raising, the participants interviewed have foreseen that there might be some limitations, since the capacities of many of the grassroots actors and constituencies in terms of time and/or skills would be limited to read such a long and comprehensive report.

Expected Outcome 3: Increased awareness amongst decision-makers at all levels of discriminatory practices based on race, religion, ethnicity and language in the education system and stronger commitment for changes.

This expected outcome refers to the advocacy and awareness-raising component of the programme. It has been affected by the changes in the overall political context.

Earned Media (Launch of the report in Istanbul & media visibility).The final monitoring report *DiscriminationBased on Colour, Ethnic Origin, Language, Religion and Beliefin Turkey's Education System* was launched in September 2015 at apress conference in Istanbul. Many progressive and mainstream media outlets attended and reported on the launch event.[30] Especially the attention of the mainstream media to the events and their coverage of the report has been an important achievement in terms of outreach; all the more so when viewed in the light of the challenging context and the changing reporting priorities, as well as government influence on reporting, where many important achievements and work by the human rights NGOs easily goes unnoticed or are ignored.

Advocacy, outreach and awareness raising.Initially *local and national* advocacy campaigns were planned, where the coordinators and the network partners would visit key decision-makers to share the publication and its findings with them. The national activities had to be curbed/postponed due to the changing political context, and particularly the November 1st re-elections and the changing busy agendas of the decision-makers;[31] meanwhile there has been one local visit to the head of Istanbul Directorate of the Ministry of National Education, by the HF coordinator (October 12, 2015). AlsoHF

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[30]It was observed that media organizations with close ties to the government did not participate in the launch event. As discussed later this is a general challenge the CSOs in Turkey that work on democracy and human rights face.

[31] These include meetings with the MPs and the members of the Education Commission in the Parliament. The draft final Project report states that "… while adjusting the strategy to the then current context and in agreement with the donors, Network members also agreed to pursue this request in post project period and travel to Ankara with their own resources as well as to implement other advocacy related meetings."

coordinator visited the following MoNE officers in order to deliver the Monitoring Report by hand: Director of the Monitoring and Evaluation Section, Principal Clerk, Branch Director of Fundamental Education Programmes and Teaching Materials (October 16, 2015).

Within the scope of awareness raising, two panels were organized in Istanbul and Ankara and the network participants also participated in these as presenters. Also the project coordinators participated as speakers in other CSO events, such as events at the universities.

MRG also undertook some *international* advocacy initiatives during the last phase of the project. The targeted advocacy activities undertaken include the following:

- Panel discussion in Ankara, with attendance from the EU Delegation and British, Norwegian and Greek Embassies as observers (October 17, 2015)

- Sharing of the confidential draft report (in English) with the EU Delegation to Turkey, so as to help them draft the Progress report 2015.

  The EU delegation officer interviewed, explained that the monitoring report (as well as its availability also in English language) has been very helpful for them in drafting the relevant sections on education and minority rights/discrimination. Indeed, it is observed that several issues raised in the monitoring report, are also mentioned in the EU progress report.[32]

- Sharing of the report with the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD); the report was also published in the database of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.[33]

  It is observed that some of the important observations from the report, with respect to education rights of Kurdish and Roma children as well as education rights in mother tongue were also included in the *Concluding observations on the*

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[32] Such as discrimination faced by Roma groups in education, legal restrictions on possibilities for mother tongue education, or the discriminatory rhetoric in school textbooks against the minorities.

[33] Please see link here.

combined fourth to sixth periodic reports of Turkey prepared by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.[34]

- Meeting with the delegation from the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), by the MRG Coordinator and sharing of the report with the ECRI team (November 3, 2015). ECRI's next Turkey report will be published in Spring 2016 and project partners expect the ECRI report to cover some issues listed in the monitoring report.

3.1.3. Unintended Results of the Project

The TOR required the evaluation to identify positive or negative unintended (not in initial design) results. It was observed that the project has had the following unintended positive results:

- The project has facilitated overcoming of negative prejudices/stereotypes among the representatives of different minority groups, particularly between Roma and Kurdish groups. The network meetings in general and particularly the meeting in Diyarbakır, which allowed for one-on-one interaction and direct observation has been key to such change. The overcoming negative prejudices, has also made way for more willingness to stay in touch and collaborate among the participants. During interviews it was observed that the positive change that was brought by in this regard has stayed with participants despite the rising political tensions in Turkey.

- The project has built relationships among some of the network member NGOs, which in turn has resulted in information exchange and collaboration among these organizations in areas other than discrimination in education. Some of these collaboration initiatives captured by the evaluation are:

  o Based on learning and guidance provided by KAFFED, Laz Institute has taken the initiatives to enable provision of Laz language courses in Adult Education Centers around Turkey (HalkEğitimMerkezi)

  o Zero Discrimination and Association of Protestant Churches have joined forces to address the education needs of Roma refugees in Istanbul

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[34] Please see reference to report here, and particularly see sections, Situation of Roma, Kurdish Community, Protection of Minority Rights (which includes references to education rights in mother tongue)

o In face of threats and hate speech that is confronted by some of the NGOs in the group, some participants have stated that they will show solidarity with those organizations

The evaluation has not captured any unintended negative results.

3.1.4. Factors that have affected progress toward results and specific objective

The evaluation has identified the following factors that have *promoted* progress towards expected outcomes:

- MRG's partnership with HF has been one of the factors that have affected the project positively, particularly due to HF's strong reputation as a serious and respected NGO with experience in the field of education and rights. When asked how they decided to participate in the project, some of the participants explained that having HF on board was particularly motivating for them, that they trusted HF's experience and commitment and hence decided to participate and commit.

- Project coordinators' commitment and competence. During implementation, the project coordinators have played a key role in mitigating risks as they arose and adopting the project activities in a timely way to address emerging needs. There was continuous dialogue among both coordinators and strong utilization of lessons learned. Support received from the project coordinators, and particularly one-on-one support was among the most valued components of the project.

- The coordinators have used their knowledge, relationships and lessons learned from their past (related) projects in designing and running the project.

- The project had a good selection of experts in its advisory board, with skills and past experience that were relevant for the project's intended outcomes.

- Including a wide range of NGOs representing different minority groups has ensured that the final monitoring report is comprehensive and reflects the Turkish context holistically.

- Adopting an action based learning approach to capacity building. This approach and the related activities of the project have been very much valued by participants who actively took part in the activities. Furthermore, this approach (combined with coaching) has also enabled the project coordinators to closely monitor the behavioural changes in the participants, and enabled timely adaptation of activities.

- Lack of coaching in initial project design has caused some stalling in the project's early stages, but once this need was recognized, adoption of an ad hoc coaching method has contributed towards progress with regards to the monitoring process.

- Strong institutional capacities of the NGOs. Network participants' own capacities and priorities have affected progress towards results. On the positive end, having previous experience in undertaking monitoring (no matter how systematic) and/or having field presence and strong ties with the constituents have ensured stronger contribution to results by these participants, particularly with regards to skills building and data collection.

The evaluation has captured the following *external* factors that have *limited* progress towards expected outcomes:

- The political context of Turkey has restrained the project's capacity to deliver desired results. Elections have limited the ability of the project to reach out to key decision makers and have caused cancellations of some of the projects' main advocacy/relationship building activities.

- The monitoring/data collection process was affected by factors related to the constituencies of the NGOs. The most significant of them has been the unwillingness of parents in the field to report cases of discrimination due to fear of stigmatization of their children and/or fear ofthe state. This has made it difficult for some NGOs to conduct fieldwork.

- Limited institutional capacities of the NGOs.Limited commitment of few network participants; limited participation in and contribution to project activities and outputs.One challenge voiced by some participants, was with regards to transferring knowledge, skills and learning attained at training and network meetings to other individual members in their organization. Some of the participants explained that it had been challenging for them to explain the aims of the project and motivate the rest of the members/member organizations to be

more active for the project. For few NGOs this has limited the degree of involvement and mobilization of the NGO in the project.[35]

- Time limitation. It was observed that the duration of the project (initially 18 months) was not sufficient to deliver the intended results, with regards to capacity building and network sustainability. The time has been enough to provide training and some relationship and capacity building (learning), but not enough for sufficient capacity building for all network NGOs and establishment of a sustainable network. On one hand this has been related to some issues related to project design (i.e. having overly ambitious objectives vis-à-vis limited resources). On the other hand, by nature, building networks and the capacities of the CSOs in a sustainable manner takes time and a medium- to long-term commitment of human and financial resources, which is a challenge for the CSOs in Turkey, in the absence of longer-term funds that could help sustain these efforts. .

The evaluation has captured the following *project-design-related* factors that have *limited* progress towards expected outcomes:

- Lack of clarity about the definition of "network." The project proposal refers to (ideally) an institutionalized, functioning network that focuses primarily on monitoring discrimination in education, and one that is maintained after the project completion; in other words, taken together with the expected outcomes, it refers to a group of organizations that would communicate and collaborate on a shared advocacy strategy to combat discrimination in education in the mid- to long-term. The project design however has not incorporated activities and approaches that would help ensure establishment of a strategic and institutionalized network, with frequent interaction among members and synergy. Instead the project "network" has functioned more as a "working group."

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[35] The project coordinators explained that in order to ensure institutional continuity they asked for a board decision from the NGOs on their representation in the network at the beginning of the project; by this MRG tried to make sure that NGOs commit to the project and support their staff and ensure participation of the same person.

It was observed that what network participants understood as the "network" was also related more to "networking" and informal relationship building, which could be utilized with regards to various minority issues, as opposed to a strategic collaboration with regards to monitoring discrimination in education.

- Unrealistic objectives with regards to establishment of a (strategic) network of NGOs vs. limited time and human resources. Particularly considering the time limitations on the project funding, as well as the capacities and priorities of the NGOs, the objective of establishing a network (strong and sustainable collaboration and synergy) for monitoring and advocacy has been overly ambitious. The project coordinators have agreed that the network would not be able to continue without continued secretarial support. On the other hand, overall, the project network has functioned well as a working group that provided the partners with spaces, tools and opportunities to build their knowledge and skills, and has helped them extend their contacts and reach the monitoring process has contributed to compilation of comprehensive up-to-date data with regards to discrimination in education. Therefore the question is, did the project really need the ambitious objective[36] of establishing a sustainable and comprehensive network in this "early phase" so as to progress gradually towards the overall objective?

- Limited institutional capacities of the NGOs. Network participants' own capacities and priorities have affected progress towards results. On the negative end, limited institutional capacities (with regards to human resources and finances) as well as having other priorities than monitoring discrimination (also affected by changes in the political context) have limited the extent to which some of the network participants were able to participate in and learn from the project activities, and consequently the project results with regards to capacity building. The project design did not take the institutional capacities of the NGOs into consideration when planning for the capacity building and monitoring dimension,

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[36] In Turkey there are several strategic networks/coalitions of NGOs and yet most have problems of effectiveness and sustainability. Experts interviewed confirmed that establishing a strategic network in the Turkish context has proved particularly challenging due to the limited capacities of the NGOs, the secretarial work, and lack of commitment, as well as lack of technical skills and knowledge on how to establish and maintain a network. The short-term funding available for the CSOs and lack of longer-term funding also make it very challanging to establish and sustain these networks.

and was not prepared to address related challenges as they emerged (please see Box 3-C).

- Training and meeting activities were not sufficient (a) in number and depth to fully achieve changes with regards to capacity building as explained in the outcome statements (i.e. changes in all NW participants); (b) in terms of methods to achieve changes regarding relationships and collaboration as explained in the outcome statements, such as with regards to establishment of a functional network.

- Unrealistic advocacy objectives (Expected outcome 3). This is a longer-term outcome, however it was placed as an expected outcome of the project to be achieved in the short-term. Moreover, the indicators of this outcome are short-term outreach indicators and are not consistent with the result statement, so do not measure its achievement. As of the end of the project this outcome has not been achieved, however it also would not be realistic to expect that it would be achieved in such a short period of time. The results with regards to this outcome should be viewed in this respect.

BOX 3- C: The Institutional Capacities of the Network Members (NGOs)

The evaluation has captured that the capacities and priorities of the different network partners have been decisive for the extent to which they benefited from the project and contributed to the realization of intended results.

Many of the minority NGOs are run by volunteers who have "day-time jobs", in some very few volunteers are active, again some also have frequent financial difficulties. For example, one of the informants from the network has explained that not only will they not be able to continue monitoring following the closure of the project, but also are they currently challenged with the risk of closing their organization altogether due to weak capacity. Another informant from an umbrella organization has explained that they are already having difficulties in general communication with their member NGOs and have problems with regards to overall coordination and effectiveness. Therefore it had not been possible for them to involve/mobilize them in the process. Furthermore, having limited human resources means that as priorities change, these resources will be re-channelized to issues that might require more immediate attention. For example, one informant from the network explained that as the political pressures on their constituencies increase in the field, with even physical action from the state security forces, it was very challenging for them to channel their limited resources to "non-immediate" and longer term matters such as maintaining systematic monitoring.

Overall it was understood that, although it was not part of the considerations around project design, from the beginning the institutional capacities of different NGOs as to how intensely they can participate in the monitoring process, and how much they can learn from it and multiply it, as well as to what extent they can maintain monitoring activities following the end of the project has varied. In other words, the achievement of project results has also been closely related to the institutional capacities of the NGOs.

It should be added that the capacities of the network partner NGOs are representative of the broader NGO environment in Turkey, where many NGOs working in other sectors, and particularly with regards to rights, have the same limitations and challenges. Therefore while it is important to take the institutional capacities into consideration while working with these NGOs it is also a challenge to address all their limitations, again due to limitations in resources/funds.

3.2. Relevance

3.2.1. Consistency with partner's priorities

The project is coherent with,

- The priority issues related to Turkey's EU accession, particularly: strengthening civil society, promotion and enforcement of human rights, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, education rights, minority rights and rights of the child.
- Needs of the country capacity, particularly: the gap with regards to lack of up-to-date statistical information and systematic cases records documenting discrimination in education as experienced by diverse groups in Turkey, that would also guide evidence-based policy making.
- Needs of rights-based minority groups with regards to taking more participatory roles in decision-making processes regarding their own lives. Many of the participants interviewed explained that their activism is ad-hoc and not systematic and there was an understanding of the need to learn and build skills as to how to do more effective advocacy (including lobbying, relationship building, formulation of demands, etc.) Also the spaces and opportunities where particularly the smaller minority groups can interact with the decision makers is limited if at all available, and the initial project design was relevant with these needs of the participants.
- Needs to do more effective advocacy through collaboration. The experts interviewed have explained that this is an important and yet missing component of doing advocacy with regards to minority rights.

3.2.2. Assessment and Response to Changes in Context

Risk Analysis as stated in Proposal	Evaluation Comments
Civil society is not willing to engage on issues specific to minority discrimination in education (risk low, impact high) "… There is a very low risk that some of the civil society groups invited to join the network may not wish to do so. In such a case the partners will invite alternative groups instead."	This risk has not materialized, and the network was established. - *Other risks related to CSOs, not identified in the risk analysis:* The project process has shown that not all network members have been committed to the project to the same extent and hence their contributions have also been different, and has posed a risk, previously unidentified, towards project results. The coordinators have been able to mitigate the impact of this risk (of lack of commitment) on the quality of the publication by adopting their activities and approaches accordingly; nevertheless the risk to results regarding capacity building has not been possible to mitigate. Another risk, that has not been identified here but materialized has been related to inability of certain NGOs to undertake monitoring work due to the limitations in their capacities and experiences. The coordinators have swiftlyadopted to this challenge by closer involvement with these NGOs, coaching via phone and undertaking field work where necessary to fill the gaps. For the future, MRG shouldtake into consideration that the commitment of NGOs in the Turkish context, also due to the limitations brought by their capacities, priorities and the changing political context can be challenging, and for future projects mark this as a medium-risk item with necessary measures in place to address them. An assessment of the capacities of the NGOs should be incorporated into project design as well as risks.

Media actors are not willing to engage on issues of concern to minority communities (risk low, impact medium)	This risk has been marked low. The risk analysis has not taken into consideration that the media in Turkey is polarized and getting access to and visibility "pro-government" media for issues of democratization has been challenging, and so this is a mid-to high risk.[37] However the project has been successful in mitigating this risk to a greater extent. Indeed, it was observed that the mainstream media (but not exclusively pro-government media) has also reported on the project and its outputs.
"Awareness raising through media may bear a small risk of not getting adequate attention from the press and other media due to significant changes in the country.However this project will last for 18 months and partners will take every opportunity for publishing news/articles on the project subjects within the entire duration of the project. HF has close contacts with many journalists and these contacts can be used to overcome the risk. Moreover, MRG's Turkey coordinator has written articles for some newspapers and this experience will also help getting articles published in newspapers."	

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[37] The increased socio-political polarization in Turkey, which has also resulted in a rift in the media landscape (between exclusively pro-government and non-pro-government media; including mainstream and oppositional outlets) in the recent years, might limit the wider visibility of project results - since it is difficult to get the attention of the pro-government media on issues of democratization. It must be added that this factor is by no means a new challenge and is not particular to the MRG project; to the contrary in the last few years it has been one of the major challenges faced by CSOs working on issues of human rights and democratization. It limits CSOs capacity to build public will around these issues, as it reduces their ability to reach out to target audiences in the society.

For future risk planning, since advocacy (as well as influence of public will on the decision makers) is one of the primary mid-longer term objectives of the project, how to overcome challenges with regards to access to all media circles should be considered. Having a wide outreach proves more important than before particularly in the context of the changing priorities of the public and the side-lining of democratization issues.

Government actors are not willing to engage on issues of concern to minority communities (risk low, impact medium) "The primary risk in this component of the project is about getting attention of stakeholders in Ankara. However as explained earlier, as mentioned above, HF and MRG have positive relationships with members of MoNE, the Board of Education and the Council of Higher Education. If MPs are reluctant to address this issue, HF and MRG will seek these committed members' influence."	This risk has materialized due to reasons beyond the influence of MRG (i.e. the elections) and the project coordinators have adopted some components of the project to address the challenge from an awareness raising perspective. The meetings with the government actors have been limited, however more PR activities were added to the project.
Restrictions by government to implement programme activities (likelihood low, impact medium) "While some government actors may be reluctant to address this issue, it is unlikely they will implement obstacles to programme activities…"	The evaluation has not captured materialization of such a risk.
Weather and natural disasters (likelihood low, impact high)	The evaluation has not captured materialization of such a risk.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The period in which the project was implemented has been a very challenging period, with elections, unpredictably changing political agendas and rising social and political tensions. While these have affected project activities, as well as project partners, and thus have limited results, in general MRG and HF have timely and effectively dealt with these challenges as much as their influence has allowed.

Overall it has been observed that --leaving aside the contextual challenges that have limited progress beyond MRG's control-- the project was implemented and managed effectively to reach the expected outcomes, with adoptive and insightful approaches in face of risks.Meanwhile,there were problems/gaps related to initial project design, assumptions and planningthat have limited the progress of the project towards the expected results and the specific objective. The project design provided guidance with regards toproject approaches and activities (as well as their absence) and sometimes this guidance was misleading.

It has been observed during the evaluation that some of the challenges and limitationsdue to project design, encountered in the implementation have also been noted by the project coordinators, who have openly shared self-criticism and have explained how they will be using these lessons-learned in planning for future projects.

1. **Progress towards specific objective:**There has been limited progress towards this longer-term specific objective with regards to CSOs involvement in monitoring of discrimination in the Turkish education system. Secondly, capacity building for advocacy component has not yet been initiated. It is concluded that the results achieved (please see below) can contribute to the achievement of the specific objective, but only if similar efforts and approaches are sustained and capacity building activities directing the project's partners are continued over a longer term-period.

   Recommendations:

   1.1. If possible, undertake a 2nd Phase for the project and resume working with the partner NGOs that were the most engaged in the project.

   1.2. While undertaking project design, despite funding limitations and challenges, try to plan in phases to cover a minimum of 5-6 year period so that the results (such as skills and knowledge) as well as motivation and mobilization achieved in the

first phase will not be lost due to long pauses in between, and that MRG will be ready to apply for funding whenever an opportunity arises.

1.3. Integrate measures of sustainability and multiplier effect into the project design. Involve the project partners in the process to ensure (a) that the approaches are relevant for their needs and (b) that the partners' own knowledge and capacities are utilized as part of the measures for maximum efficiency. For example one way to do this can be to allocate a budget for a needs assessment exercise.

2. Progress towards Expected Outcome 1:

The project has been an important first step and has made some important contributions towards achieving grassroots mobilization for monitoring discrimination in formal education in the longer-term.

The project made important contributions to the capacity development of the network partner NGOs with regards to undertaking systematic monitoring; it was especially beneficial for those partner NGOs with more experience in monitoring and/or institutional capacity as well as those who participated in the project activities more actively. Action-based learning and coaching approaches to capacity building were important added values of the project. Variances across the progress of different partners due to their institutional capacity or level of engagement in the project was observed. Also the capacity building has been more at the individual level than at the institutional level. Capacity building of the partners in the area of advocacy was limited mainly due to unfavorable political context, which led to cancellation/postponement of project's major advocacy activities, as well as due to limited training in this area.

The monitoring network that was established with 17 partner NGOs representing minority groups was an important operational component of the project; it functioned well as a means to undertake the monitoring field and to build relationships among the participants. It also had the unintended positive consequences of overcoming stereotypes and facilitating collaboration among some of the partner NGOs in different areas. In terms of sustainability, the network has relied mostly on the human and financial resources that were provided by the project; the network partners explained that they did not and do not have the institutional or financial capacities to sustain the network in the same format, in this regards it is not clear whether the results will be sustainable. The short duration of project funding also limited results in this area. Meanwhile some of the partner NGOs from the network explained that they will continue with their monitoring work individually and will be sharing the results with the other members; seen in this light the project contributed to sustainability of efforts by individual NGOs in monitoring discrimination in education.

Recommendations:

2.1. Take into consideration the institutional capacities of the targeted/partner NGOs (such as human resources, financial resources, level of knowledge and skills) while setting project goals and related activities.

2.2. Take into consideration the priorities of the targeted/partner NGOs and their expected commitment to the project while selecting partners. Initially, having committed project partners who share and prioritize the project objectives will be more effective for the outcomes as defined by the MRG, than having a diverse group where the level of engagement and commitment varies.

2.3. Review the method for the selection of network participants based on lessons learned and evaluation findings.

2.4. Engage with the partner organizations and their members other than the focal points more closely; if possible explain them the objectives of the project and explore ways to ensure more members from the organizations can be involved in the capacity building so as to ensure more effective mobilization and institutionalization, and to overcome risks related to turn-over.

2.5. Plan project activities in a way that would enable more interaction and stimulate collaboration among NGOs themselves. Continue to hold meetings in different parts of Turkey and facilitate NGOs to observe each others' circumstances in their own localities.

2.6. Prepare a terms of reference (ToR) that would help improve MRG-partner NGO as well as partner NGO-volunteers/constituency communication. Include here the objectives of the project, expectations from partners, how the project will benefit them and a general road map.

2.7. Sustain action-based-learning approach to capacity building and combine it with more one-on-one coaching with partners.

2.8. Integrate in-depth training with regards to advocacy to the trainings that are provided to the participants. This would have to include not only technical knowledge but also knowledge with regards to different advocacy strategies that can ben undertaken vis-à-vis different issues, as well as practice sessions. For example, in the next phase of the project, if it is realized, the participants can be asked to prepare their own advocacy strategies over a period of time, with regular coaching.

2.9. Update the monitoring guide so as to include all the valuable lessons-learned and additional outputs from the monitoring experience, including more specific

information on how to do the field, issue-tailored forms for monitoring different types of discrimination, etc.

2.10. Take into consideration the shrinking space for NGO's mobilization in Turkey while planning advocacy capacity building.

2.11. Re-evaluate the project strategy that focuses on strategic network building. Some relevant questions are: What does the project want to achieve? Is establishing strategic networks the right method in the existing circumstances? Or could the results be achieved through other means of collective and/or individual mobilization of NGOs? If the network is the right method, is it realistic to achieve it in the short-terms? Or does it first need some preparatory work? What other examples are there in the Turkish context, from whose failures we can learn from?

2.12. Set project results and outline related risks realistically. Make sure that the indicators set are consistent with the respective outcome, and are also easy to understand and track, and most importantly useful for MRG in evaluating and reporting its own achievements.[38]

3. Progress towards expected outcome 2:

The monitoring report prepared and published within the scope of the project is detailed, up-to-date, and highly relevant for advocacy efforts to end discrimination, and therefore is a valuable resource contribution.

The report combines the review of the legislative framework and the curriculum and school textbooks with an overview of the actual cases with regards to discrimination in formal education; it provides a set of recommendations. Having had a diverse group of minority NGOs within the monitoring network has helped ensure that the final monitoring report reflects the Turkish context comprehensively. The use of report for advocacy at the national or local levels has so far been limited, mainly due to the political context that led advocacy activities to be cancelled. Meanwhile there has been some important international advocacy achievements: some of the key points in the report were integrated into EU Turkey Progress Report for 2015 and UN CERD document on Turkey.

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[38] Please note that the results indicators do not have to be quantitative; indeed qualitative indicators regarding behavioural changes that the Project has created in target groups might capture results much more effectively in such projects.

Recommendations:

3.1. Always include an executive summary for the reports to make sure that the key messages can be captured by the executive decision-makers, and that the report results can reach wider audiences with limited time and/or interest in the issue.

3.2. Address recommendations to the relevant decision making individuals/ institutions/directorates:The recommendations could be more effective if they were also organized in a way that they address the particular decision-makers/actors/institutions that are responsible for these improvements. Furthermore such an organization could facilitate their use by the network partners, since their issues with regards to discrimination in education differ across minority groups and hence requires engagement with different actors regarding different policies.

3.3. Identify those recommendations that need to be addressed urgently; prioritize among those that need to be the focus of advocacy activities and those that can wait. Formulate the advocacy strategy accordingly together with the partner NGOs.

3.4. Consider preparing easy-to-read versions of such reports for the future projects; document the target group of which would be the general public, and whichcould be used by the participating NGOs to inform their own constituencies and share among their wider audiences for awareness raising and creating public will.

4. **Progress towards expected outcome 3:**

Overall, results towards project's advocacy objectives have been limited by issues related to initial project design and external political context. The expected outcome" of increasing the awareness of the decision makers at all levels" and ensuring their "stronger commitment for changes" has been overly ambitious for the given scope of the project; particularly considering the time, resource and other contextual limitations.[39] Furthermore the unexpected political developments beyond the control of MRG and HF have hampered project's advocacy activities: due to November 1 re-elections and the consequent programmes and changing priorities of key figures, most

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[39] Disguised as an expected outcome, this outcome is actually at the same level with the project's specific objective. Therefore it is normal that it has not yet been achieved, and will need some more time and effort. Please refer to the ToC figure at the beginning of the document

of the advocacy meeting with key figures were cancelled/postponed. Nevertheless the launch activities and panels have been important to bring visibility to the report and its findings, and to reach to wider audiences via media.

Recommendations:

4.1. Set project results and outline related risks realistically. Define the expected outcome that is related to outreach and communication separately, with its own set of consistent indicators.

4.2. Design an advocacy strategy for the project from the beginning with input from the partner NGOs; specify targets and respective methods.

4.3. Acknowledge the potential challenges and limitations on media outreach posed by the socio-political polarization in Turkey; explore methods to reach a wider audience. Having visibility in media that has close ties to the government proves important both to influence public will of these actors and to do more effective advocacy with the decision makers.

4.4. Plan for and use social media to disseminate project developments, results and outputs; explore how more visual methods (infograms, videos, pictures) can be used to further disseminate results; explore how partner capacities and skills can be utilized to both ends.

4.5. *Please see recommendation 2.7.*

4.6. Explore if and how engagement with relevant policy makers can be initiated from the earlier phases of the project onwards in a way that would promote progress towards results.

4.7. Better utilize achievements of the project with regards to international outreach; make sure that the international advocacy achievements of the project are communicated in media and to the national key actors; make this an integrated component of overall advocacy strategy.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: List of Informants Interviewed

	NAME	INSTITUTION	CITY
Project Coodinators: MRG & History Foundation			
1	Nurcan Kaya	MRG, Project Coordinator	İstanbul, interview
2	GülayKayacan	History Foundation, Project Coordinator	İstanbul, interview
Project Advisory Committee Members			
3	IşıkTüzün	Education Reform Initiative (ERG)	İstanbul, interview
4	Ulaş Karan	Bilgi University, Center for Human Rights Law	İstanbul, interview
5	KenanÇayır	Bilgi University, Sociology and Education Studies Unit (SEÇBİR)	İstanbul, interview
6	GürelTüzün	History Foundation	İstanbul, interview
Monitoring Network Participants			
7	AlperTolgaAkkuş	Mersin Anti-Discrimination Platform	phone interview
8	ElmasArus	Zero Discrimination Association	İstanbul, interview
9	Adnan AvcıBucaklişi	Laz Institute	İstanbul, focus group discussion
10	HacerFoggo	Roma Rights Forum (ROMFO)	İstanbul, focus group discussion
11	AydınDeniz	Hubyar Sultan Alewite Association	İstanbul, focus group discussion
12	Ali Neseboğlu	MardinEğitim-Sen	İstanbul, focus group discussion
13	TuranŞallı	Edirne Roma Education Volunteers' Association	phone interview
14	UmutŞahin	Association of Protestant Churches	phone interview
15	EvgilTürker	Federation of Syriac Associations	phone interview
16	BetülDinçer	KAFFED	phone interview

17	Muzaffer İris	Mesopotamia Culture and Solidarity Association (MEZODER)	phone interview
Other stakeholders			
18	EserCanalioğlu	European Commission	phone interview

Appendix 2: Terms of Reference