

MSF Urban Spaces _Concept Note

Problem Statement / Need (clearly articulate the challenge / issue to be addressed)

In a climate of increase of inequalities, instability and insecurity in different places around the world and the expansion of MSF Associations in different areas of the world, our associations have a more significant role to play, also in our home societies that many times are the same societies with our beneficiaries, either national or migrants and refugees. What we do is not enough. We are not driving the full potential of our engagement and we are not influencing our societies in the changes that are facing according to the humanitarian values and principles.

In environments of conflict, poverty, epidemics, climate change and rise of the right extreme, where populations are forced to move at an unprecedented level¹, MSF is urged to engage its membership most effectively, to increase its audience and magnify its voice into society. For this purpose, we need to rethink and transform the ways we associate. But where and how?

Proposal Description: Idea or Solution (idea, business case, prototype, other)

We believe that one effective approach should be to focus on our cities, and use them as a platform of hubs, so as to explore how groups and communities, within and out of MSF, are mobilized around a shared major issue and find practical solutions to problems raised.

Why Cities? 1. A fundamental shift in the population in the cities is a fact. 75% of world's population will be living in cities in 2050.² 2. Cities are vibrant, multicultural, participatory spaces. They are drivers of social innovation and the natural spaces that movements occupy. They constantly sought for local solutions with global connections.³ Been inspired by other cities networks, confronted with practical problems, such as the Eurocities network and the C40 Climate Leadership Group⁴, connecting cities around common forums and working out joint local solutions, it is evident that, If we don't get it right in our cities, we won't get it right at all. 2. To MSF, Cities have always been their entry point. It is where we monitor our operations and where majority of our members, supporters and friends is based. Migration and Urban Health is a core area of study in cities and are interconnected in more and more urban environments. Focus on cities, could provide answers to MSF associative expansion; in Istanbul, we could learn how to establish an association in a special context environment with very vibrant civil society, in Mexico we could learn how to engage with the challenges of the Mega-Cities and in Johannesburg how we could deal with increased violence, structural racism and health inequalities.

Our shared major issue will be migration. All MSF Associations involved in this project idea, have already built some experience around this topic. Individuals (MSFers or ex MSFers) have been active within our home societies, yet the existing challenges, make it evident, that we need to engage and mobilize our groups better.

How will we work? Using the example of migration, we could pilot the influence of transformation of the cities by people on the move and how associations interact.

We will connect:

- 7 MSF cities across the movement so as to network, exchange, learn from one another and design action together.
- with a wider community of civil society networks, initiatives and migrants' forums, involved in organizing action for change, so as to give us new insights into mobilization of groups and communities

At the end of this incubator project we will have a better understanding of the dynamics and the challenges of our environment, we will be able to be more inclusive and active in our engagement with MSF and with our societies and we will create:

"MSF Urban Spaces Toolbox" as an open source material on new alternative ways to mobilize our associations

"MSF Urban Spaces Forum" an open space, so as to host examples of good practices, trends, developments, speakers, initiatives and tools in mobilization and organizing action for change. This space will be used so as to encourage engagement in action, as well as for future dissemination of the project.

"MSF Urban Spaces Community" of multipliers trained on new dimensions of mobilization and initiators of action for change. Through this community we will link initiatives in network of participatory, inclusive and dynamic spaces putting people at the centre.

"Concrete Ideas and Suggestions on ways that new tools can be linked to existing structures within MSF"

"Comprehensive analysis" of new associative approach based on cities and global networking and recommendation on changes so that they could fit and feed our existing structures

"Global Gathering" an event where first best practices and learnings from project will be shared, and then the launch of wider implementation activities, will take place.

Our vision through this process, is to create a new dynamic of a critically engaged membership with greater capacity and impact in our societies. MSF Urban Spaces, will not only transform the way we organize our associations on a grass root level but it will also transform the way we perceive our associations. It will give them a new meaning and a new role by activating them in own home societies.

¹ UNHCR 2015 reports a number of displaced people surpassing post World War II numbers, 1 out of every 113 people, over 65 million globally

² Urban Age Project LSE: <https://urbanage.lsecities.net/>

³ <https://qz.com/80657/the-return-of-the-city-state/>, Quartz ('Nations Are No Longer Driving Globalization – Cities Are', 2013)

⁴ <http://www.c40.org/cities>, <http://www.eurocities.eu/>

Description of Benefits (impact of project success; what would success look like if the idea is scaled across MSF)

This project is going to contribute significantly to the evolution of MSF Associations, aiming to make them more effective and more impactful in support of MSF social mission. It transforms our Associations by giving them a new purpose and responsibility to one's own country and making our members more active starting from their own city. It will bring together a network of an active community of initiators, such as our members and staff, our beneficiaries and civil society actors that will design action together, feed our debates around migration issue and create greater capacity within our associations. Special focus will be on migration challenges. Starting in small ways, it will provide the MSF movement with concrete new tools (Toolbox-Forum), adaptable to different contexts, towards a more engaged membership.

Alignment with Strategic Objectives (link to MSF, OC and/or partner section objectives)

It aligns with: a) Expectation 3 & 4 of MSF Associative Roadmap⁵ b) MSF growth plan as a truly global and diverse movement c) OCBA /AGORA decision to focus on Associative Life and to support associative initiatives in Turkey d) MSF Greece Strategic Priorities for 2017-19 on the improvement of our reflection, analysis and research in migration capitalising the experience of MSF Greece in last 27 years

See also dependencies /linkages

Project Team Overview (who will develop the idea; if large-scale project, who is the team/Steering Committee)

Steering Group : 4 experienced members of complementary profiles. Especially appointed Board member of MSF Greece, MSF International/ASC representative, Expert on associative governance structures, Project Manager.

This group will be in charge of coordinating the content linked work. Will follow smooth operation and evolution of the project and guarantee that it is implemented in line with all underlying principles. Will facilitate the flow of information and communication among the stakeholders.

Development Group: 11 members as bridges to Associations involved, wider movement and civil society: 1 representative from each association/city involved, International Association Coordinator, OC Association representative, Representative from IB, Representative from cities' network with relevant experience, representative from migrants forums etc. This group will work on the development of tools and will create ownership of the project to wider movement. It will get involved from beginning and be consulted to all major milestones and project processes and results. Will meet 4-5 times during project life cycle.

Additional Resources Required (types of people/skills/expertise required (internal MSF, external))

Experts Profiles: Digital mobilisation expert, Movements mobilisation expert, Cities networks expert, Civil Society experts for consultations, educational advisor experienced in development and implementation on non-formal education tools for active participation

Key Stakeholders (individuals, groups or organizations that may be impacted or may impact the project)

1. Membership of Associations involved **2.** MSF International movement via International Associations Coordinators Group and Associative Standing Committee **3.** Wider Civil Society Networks

Considerations in Scaling (partnerships, intellectual property, contracts, other)

The project itself is designed to be scaled up as it pushes new ways to associate within the movement. Open Source Toolbox and Forum will allow for better networking both between all respective stakeholders during and after the end of project cycle. It is also designed in such a way, so that the ones participating in it, will be the initiators of the follow up and ensure its sustainability.

⁵[... the need to find 'new ways to associate', on the catalytic role of the Associations in the creation of space for critical and innovative contributions to debates, support denationalised approaches and challenge the status quo by looking at different ways for members to associate with each other

High Level Timing / Major Milestones (at least every 6 months, e.g. months 1 to 4; months 5 to 9)

January 2018	Project Team Kick off/Inception Meeting
February-March 2018	Launch of online platform “MSF Urban Spaces Forum”
March 2018	Mapping Report and Analysis on good practices around civil society response to migration
April –May 2018	Focal Persons/Focus Groups Work on potential role of civil society and mobilisation
June – August 2018	Project Team Meeting and work on new dimensions in mobilisation
September 2018	Workshop/Training on new ways of mobilising , Plan of Action of Joint designed activities
Oct.2018-April 2019	Implementation of joint co designed activities
January 2019	Project Team Meeting and monitoring activities/tools
May-August 2019	Report of activities, lessons learnt, new dimensions of mobilisation tools finalisation
September 2019	Global Gathering Event Launching of tools , Scale Up Plan of Action

Dependencies / Linkages (note if there is a link to other projects or dependencies)

MSF International Associative Roadmap and the need identified in it of developing new ways of associating. to respond to crisis more effectively, about getting better assistance to people and looking into MSF blind spots)
 MSF International position paper on migration/ The urgent need to response to crisis more effectively and especially to people forced to flee from home. MSF Greece decision to capitalise with migration experience. This TIC incubator can serve as an element of this initiative, addressing the mobilisation of our intellectual resources (membership) and bringing us closer to our beneficiaries, migrants’ forums and wider civil society.