

A Report on Mapping Mobility Funds in the Mediterranean

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The Roberto Cimetta Fund

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Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Research Questions Addressed	
I. Overview of Mapping data	5
Definitions of mobility	5
Operational aspects of mobility Funds	6
Tools and Requirements of the Application and Selection Process	8
II. Analysis	12
Gaps and services	12
Measuring long term achievements: The Impact	13
How to move forward: Recommendations	14
Annex I: All Operators Contacted (Attachment)	
Annex II: Description of Mobility Operators	

The Arab Education Forum/*Istikshaf* Program: A report on Mapping Mobility Funds in the Mediterranean

Introduction:

This report was commissioned by the Arab Education Forum/ Istikshaf Program with the objective of exploring mobility networks/ programs operating within the Arab world or extending the Region. For the purpose of this mapping 32 organizations were contacted. 15 have responded of which one was not relevant due to its limited geographical proximity to two European Countries¹. While one organization was added that was found relevant; but it did not fill a form². This report is based on data collected from 15 relevant mobility operators working with in North- South region..

The mapping exercise was conducted to explore mobility operators, their vision behind adopting mobility, needs and gaps which impact mobility with the overall objective of exploring how to best improve the impact of artists' mobility in the region. The analysis of this report depends primarily on the data submitted by 18 mapped organizations.

The exercise has adopted an e- mapping methodology which was conducted by both the AEF and the Roberto Cimetta Fund, whereby the AEF covered mobility funds in the Arab region and the RCF contacted those in Europe. Additional data on relevant operators was collected through Website reviews.

32 mobility funds were identified and contacted as part of this study. They were defined as "Mobility operators who support the mobility of artists around the Mediterranean among other beneficiaries". The results of the mapping will be communicated to other mobility operators, donors and applicants who benefit directly from mobility funds.

The process of collecting data took place according to the following time line:

A- Mid January 2010: A review of Organizations funding artists' mobility

¹ Pépinières Européennes pour Jeunes Artistes operates from –to rance (Midi-Pyrénées and Aquitaine regions and Spain (Aragon region). Thus, despite filling the mapping form it was classified as outside the scope of the Study.

² This Organization is The Centre for International Mobility (CIMO). It awards scholarships to foreign post-graduate students and young researches; from all over the world to carry out post-graduate studies and research and teaching in Finnish universities.

- B- Mid February 2010: A data collection tool was designed by the AEF and reviewed by all the project partners: Al Balad Theatre, Dramatiska Institute, Roberto Cimetta Fund, Studio Emadeddin.
 - C- March 2010: the data collection tool was translated into English and French.
 - D- March 2010: the e- mapping was uploaded on Safar's website to make it accessible to any mobility fund online.
- 14 responses – in writing- were received from mobility operators out of the 32 who were contacted. While one has been researched electronically.

The data collection process lasted for 9 months and despite a clear deadline data continued to be received. Thus, this report will be based on information received until early January 2011. Any additional data will be annexed and shared with partners.

Research Questions Addressed:

This report attempts to answer the following questions:

1. How do mobility operators define their operation? i.e. the various definitions of mobility by various organizations.
2. How do mobility operators achieve their goals operationally?
3. Who benefits from mobility funds/ organizations?
4. Identification of gaps and services.
5. What tools are used to address the beneficiaries? How is the application process facilitated?
6. What are the requirements detailed in the application of each mobility fund / organization?
7. What is the purpose behind funding mobility?
8. How do various organizations/ funds measure the achievement of their goals (qualitatively)?
9. Is there a long term follow up of mobility results/ impact?
10. How are grants distributed according to age, gender and geography?

The overall objective of this report is to produce a descriptive and analytical account addressing the results of the research above and contextualizing it; In order to provide recommendations on how to improve the quality and outcome of mobility funds, with special focus on the Euro-Mediterranean (in particular the Euro-Arab) context. Finally, it can be used as a tool for knowledge building and sharing.

I. Overview of Mapping data

Definitions of mobility

In examining the definitions presented by mobility operators, it is important to highlight two main findings:

The first, is that considering the small sample of organizations reviewed it was clear that even though a concentration of mobility funding was noticeable in the 1990s and gained momentum during the 2000s, mobility operators have been active since 1923 (the Culture France Association). Despite the various definitions and approaches adopted by various operators over time.

The second observation is one of numerical significance. A total number of 4813 grants (reported) have been awarded by 10 respondents during the 20-year span as of 1990. This can mean redefining mobility needs with the systematic demand for it by various categories of applicants.

Findings reveal that there are **5 main** definitions of mobility adopted by mobility operators which are detailed below:

Mobility as a policy instrument: to facilitate particular policies and certain cooperation within a wider political context in a certain region. Accordingly strengthening cultural ties with certain countries is part and parcel of a policy development endeavor. Mobility operators who adopt this definition view art as a catalyst for enhancing “political relations” and promoting particular policies or cultural experiences with certain regions, such as: the European neighborhood, French speaking countries or DAC countries or the Mediterranean. In that sense culture and arts are means of presence and influence. This approach is two ways pronged where mobility takes place within particular countries and vice versa.

Mobility as a means for Learning This definition adopts a learning approach aiming at cultural regeneration projects that spring out of indigenous knowledge and experiences within a particular context. In this perspective, individuals and youth play the role of a catalyst based on the premise that their contact with international interlocutors “can build national capacities through exposure to particular fields and sectors”.

Mobility as a contributor to an emerging art scene: According to this definition, support can be lent through various forms, such as providing mobility grants “to create an artistic and cultural community” within certain countries. This aim is achieved through providing funds for young artists to meet external counterparts, youth initiatives, and opportunities for shared exposure through: “exchange, internships and apprenticeships”.

Mobility as an opportunity to build artistic careers: Some mobility operators address purely the aesthetic and artistic need of artists/ individuals to help them build careers, especially independent artists, in order to create a platform for cultural exchange and knowledge sharing.

Mobility as a means for asserting cultural identity and creating a platform for its expression: This case is clear in the Arab region, where both intellectuals and writers are invited to the Arab world to present their work or to work on a project. This definition reacts to the “Cultural drain” as we may call it of artistic and cultural talent resulting from Arab artists leaving the region. Other operators function along the line of moving the process of learning and knowledge sharing to become an inter - Arab experience through residencies, joint projects or attending an event.

Operational aspects of mobility Funds:

Data gathered from the e-mapping indicates that the 15 organizations have received 3430 applications within the following ranked categories:

- Young artists and cultural operators
- Journalists, researchers or lobbyists
- Established artists, writers, curators and experts
- Students and local professionals from various sectors
- Youth
- Women

The number of accepted applications is 742 out of 3416 constituting 21.73% of the overall applications. Meanwhile, and in terms of cost coverage, artists receive grants ranging from 100% (by organizations which are solely targeting artists) to 15% (by organizations where arts mobility is a component.) It was observed that 7 out of the 14 organizations presented data related to the percentage of artists funded. As for other variables, such as: age, gender, geography and grants. Table I below indicates their distribution:

Table 1: Distribution of grants according to intended age, gender and Geographical distribution according to data provided by respondents.

Operator	Target age	Gender 2008-2009 Statistics	Geographic area covered	Average Grants per year	Grants of 2008-2009
ECF	0-35	-	EU- EU Neighborhood	150	-

AMA	Youth aged 9-100 years and women	-	Africa – Africa	10	-
KAFD	18-30 years	60% Females 40% Males	International	50	-
Al Mawred al Thakafy	All ages	18% Females 82% Males	All Countries- Arab Region	13	-
FF	All ages	-	Arab region- Arab region	30	-
Naseej- Resources for Community Youth Arab Development	Youth aged 18-35	50% Females 50% Males	Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Yemen and Palestine and vice versa	50	-
Roberto Cimetta Fund	All ages	50% Females 50% Males	European Countries, Mediterranean Countries, Arabian Gulf countries	50	88%
YATF	All ages	30% Females 70% Males	Arab world- Arab world	10	-
Culture France Association	All ages	-	French, African and Caribbean artists- internationally	-	-
International Organization for French Speaking Countries	All ages		French speaking south countries – international	100	-
Prince Claus Fund	All ages	-	DAC listed countries ³	30-40	-
Safar	Youth aged 15-35	2008: 32% Females	22 Arab countries	114	-

³ The DAC List is reviewed every three years. Countries are divided into income groups based on Gross National Income (GNI) per capita as reported by the World Bank, with the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), as defined by the United Nations, separately identified. Countries that have exceeded the high-income threshold for three consecutive years at the time of the review are removed from the List. The DAC List approved in September 2008 was used for reporting in 2009 on 2008 flows. The DAC List approved in August 2009 applies in 2010 and 2011 for reporting on 2009 and 2010 flows respectively.

	years	61% males 2009: 41% Females 59% Males			
CIMO	-	-	From all over the world to Finland	-	-

Tools and Requirements of the Application and Selection Process

All beneficiaries have access to mobility operators' grants electronically. Once they fit into the various criteria defined by operators they can apply online or via email and send their applications. The languages used by the organizations mapped are presented in table 2 below:

Table 2: Targeted Population and Language

Operator	Geography	Application language
ECF	EU- EU Neighborhood	English
AMA	Africa – Africa	English/ French
HOME	Everywhere	English – Slovene languages
KAFD	International	English/ Arabic
Al Mawred al Thakafy	All Countries- Arab Region	Arabic
FF	Arab region- Arab region	Not filled
Naseej- Resources for Community Youth Arab Development	Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Yemen and Palestine and vice versa	Arabic
Roberto Cimetta Fund	European Countries, Mediterranean Countries, Arabian Gulf countries	English/ French
YATF	Arab world- Arab world	Arabic/ English French
Culture France Association	French, African and Caribbean artists- internationally	English/ French
International Organization for French Speaking Countries	French speaking south countries – international	French
Prince Claus Fund	DAC listed countries ²	English/ French and Spanish languages
Safar	22 Arab countries- 22 Arab countries	Arabic
CIMO	From All over the World – Finland	Finish, Swedish and

The majority of respondents (42.85%) receive applications all year round, (28.57%) annually and (28.57%) receive them quarterly. Administrative procedures follow the internal regulations of each organization.

Three types of selection categories exist:

1. A selection process where decisions are taken internally within the organization without a need for a selection committee but according to internally defined criteria.
2. Another is a process whereby boards or committees that advise/ recommend possible eligible applications. Yet, the final decision was taken by the Organizations' management.
3. Meanwhile, 40 % of the operators referred the applications to "specialized committees".

It was observed, through the data filled and information displayed on operators' websites that the internal procedures by which the selection process takes place were not always clear to the outside audience.

Table 3 details the mobility operators' selection processes in terms of committees, their cycle, members and who forms these committees.

Table 3: Mobility Selection committees

Operator	Who selects	Committee members	Duration of committee cycle	Composition of committee
ECF	Final decision ECF	6	2 years	On the basis of balance regarding geographical scope, background, gender, etc.
AMA	Selection Committee	5	2-4 years	Journalists,, University lecturers, consultants and researchers
HOME	Management			-

KAFD	Management	-	-	-
Al Mawred al Thakafy	Selection Committee	A jury of 3	One evaluation cycle	A Committee from the general assembly Board and the Artistic Board of al Mawred Al Thakafy
FF	The program officer recommends candidates, while the supervisor approves the final selection	-	-	-
Naseej- Resources for Community Youth Arab Development	No Committee	-	-	-
PEJA	Selection Committee	20	2 years	A committee of partner residencies and invited personalities
Roberto Cimetta Fund	Selection Committee	14 volunteers	Not specified	Board of Directors of the Fund
YATF	Selection Committee	5	2 years	Multi disciplinary professionals and artists
Culture France Association	Selection Committee	variable	2-3 years	The administrative teams working at Culturesfrance select the experts (no information further)

International Organization for French Speaking Countries	Selection Committee	Unknown number	3years	-
Prince Claus Fund	Internal Selection process involves: the concerned department, funds Program coordinators and and Director	-	-	-
Safar	Selection Committee	8	1 year	Youth/ culture activists
CIMO	Internal: by Host University	N/A	N/A	Academicians

II. Analysis

Gaps and services⁴

The analysis of the above data will adopt an approach that perceives mobility as a means for expanding culture and art that develops in a source area and remains strong there, while also spreading outward to other areas through the temporary relocation of individuals and groups. The ultimate aim of this approach is to initiate an ongoing process of learning, exchange and creativity.

The mapped sample of mobility organizations indicated the following significant findings:

1. Mobility in the arts and culture scene has been a sustainable activity during the last 10 decades. Nevertheless, The vision of its operators, whom it targets and expected outcomes have changed within the context of political, social and cultural changes in the World. Hence, it is important to point out that a considerable increase in mobility activity has been witnessed with the emergence of new information technologies and the flow of information under globalization.
2. Mobility –regardless of various definitions adopted by its operators- is increasingly in demand. Yet, services meet 21.73% of this growing demand. Moreover, they tend to concentrate on mobility within Europe, or post colonial regions. The emergence of Arab mobility funds is a new development.
3. 50% of mobility funds tend to target the mobility of artists. Namely, 4 categories:
 - I. Young artists and cultural operators
 - II Journalists, researchers or lobbyists
 - III. Established artists, writers, curators and experts
 - IV. Artists in poor countries
4. A closer look at the distribution of the target population across gender and age indicates that mobility operators tend to target youth and women. In the mean time, gender gaps are clear either in data provided regarding the beneficiaries in recent years or the total lack of addressing gender as a cross cutting theme, especially for women in poor countries and in the South who can face mobility restrictions, particularly in conservative contexts.
5. Language issues limit the access of some mobility funds when they tend – indirectly- to address their message in a language which is foreign to their target

⁴ This section will be followed by a section on recommending how to move forward addressing each gap,

population. Some geographic areas such as the Gulf, regions of mixed populations i.e. the EU neighborhood and DAC listed countries; in addition to Arab countries in Africa are not addressed in the Arabic language. This situation limits the access of Arab artists to mobility and learning

6. The age limit in few cases raises another issue; particularly in countries where “off mainstream” artists can be at the lower end of the income spectrum. This situation is not just limited to lower or middle income countries. A good example – nowadays- is Italy where the cultural industries are in crisis and artists are not paid well, even those who are highly qualified. Many established artists in the world have had their best art production after the age of 45.

7. There is a lack of clarity on how the calls for application are disseminated to ensure that they reach the widest audience. According to respondents it is mostly through electronic communication; this is where access issues resurface again. The investigation would question if there are other means for introducing mobility funds to wider audiences/circles? Are there any outreach programs targeting new beneficiaries. It was not clear if there were medium term strategies to (3 -5 years) to tackle issues of addressing the increase in demand for mobility and the constant change in cultural and artistic contexts/ climates.

8. An approximate 57% of mobility operators have indicated the existence of some sort of an advisory/ consultative body with independent artists or cultural activists. Nevertheless, the rationale or criteria for selecting committees or juries-particularly those who are independent- are not very clear except in very special cases. The other question that needs to be addressed is how far is the process of selecting the advisory committees/ jury shared with partners, i.e donors or the public.

9. Upon reviewing the data related to services provided to artists by mobility operators, an important issue emerges: the issue of how are priorities set both operationally and financially; when the decision for funding is taken. Data provided does not mention evaluations or assessments of the sectors served, with the exception of Safar Fund who has conducted 2 formal evaluations in a 5-year period.

Measuring long term achievements: The Impact

The **accumulative statistics** provided by **12** mobility operators covering several decades indicate that grants have reached approximately 4813 applicants⁵. In terms of validating the output all operators request a minimum of narrative and financial report and a documentation of the activity which is usually uploaded on a website or published in a news letter. Meanwhile, only two organizations have required more of

⁵ This number is the total of numbers shared by partners in the templates received by AEF and RCF. Some organizations did not provide numbers

a qualitative input by grantees which included an evaluation and a reflection on the mobility experience as part of the administrative requirement for closing a grant, on the output level. Thus, it is apparent – in most cases- that there is no systematic institutional effort to evaluate the output of mobility beyond checking that the actual travelling and encounter has occurred.

As for long term follow up, Alumni members are contacted mainly through the following means which are ranked below:

- Emails, e- newsletters and informal meetings or attending activities.
- Narrative reports/ stories and reflections are uploaded on website or cyber social networks such as face book.
- Formal networks linked institutionally to mobility operators. Such as, Safar’s Ambassadors.

The former is least common among the respondents mapped. This can explain why there was no information on the qualitative aspect of measuring the achievements of mobility or its impact.

One can conclude that mobility operators are in need of tools to assess the long term impact of their programs and to indicate how mobility contributes to further inform the artistic scene in a particular context and enforce learning to improve the artistic quality through exchange; Data reflects an absence of data on what indicators do measure the impact of mobility.

How to move forward: Recommendations

1. The need to advocate further funding of mobility in the light of an increasing demand which is met by less than 25%. In light of the current global crisis (like minded) mobility operators need to formalize a system of cost sharing or creating a consortium of donors to fund mobility activities in order to distribute the cost burden.
2. As for the Arab world (Arab- Arab) mobility funds are of special importance. As an independent venue for non- main stream artists to gain further exposure and learning opportunities and to regenerate the growth of local culture in the region.
3. There is a need to standardize the process of “administrating mobility”. That is the selection criteria, committee selection and spelling out the expected long term impact. This point is applicable for both Arab- Arab mobility funds as well as Arab- European funds.
4. Impact assessment indicators need to be defined to improve the outcomes of mobility and to argue its significance regardless of the geographical destinations.
5. Systematic knowledge sharing is a crucial need to enhance the artistic experience and further collaboration across borders and lessons learnt. New technologies would enable this process at a minimal cost for mobility operators, such as video conferencing and creating interactive cyber forums to keep abreast of developments related to mobility and its impact on the creative projects generated

by experiencing it. Sharing content would require a commitment to be open about information

6. Citing examples where the experience of mobility experience has reflected itself on the artistic output i.e such as the artistic productions of Safar Ambassadors, ECF alumni testimonies published for public sharing or Spaces supported by Ford Foundation. The documentation of the previous experiences would provide operators with knowledge on the programmatic level of what mobility Alumni's tangible achievements are.
7. All of the above require strong advocacy activities to facilitate and remove obstacles for mobility.