



# Intersectionality in European Union Development Programmes: A Case Study of ENI CBC MED

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## **DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP**

*I, Hind Abushkahdim, declare that this thesis entitled “**Intersectionality in European Union Development Programmes: A Case Study of ENI CBC MED**” is an original report of my research, and has been written by me and has not been submitted for any previous degree. The collaborative contributions have been indicated clearly and acknowledged.*

*Place and date: Pavia, Italy. 31 May 2022.*

*Hind Abu Shkhadim*

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### Zásady pro vypracování

This research aims to study how EU programs that focus on development consider intersectionality principles in their projects regarding the project cycle from designing, implementing, and evaluating. As well, how the intersectionality appears in both staffing and communication within the projects. The intersectionality principles that will be taken into consideration are the Intersecting Categories, Multi-level Analysis, Power, Reflexivity, Time and Space, The Diversity of Knowledges, Social Justice, Equity, and Resistance & Resilience.

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## **DEDICATION**

*From the earliest days of my childhood, and even before I could develop or form an understanding of the reality around me, I have always considered my mother to be the first feminist I can recall in my life. Not aware of feminism or what this concept meant, my mother, did not have to shout chants of women's rights and liberation in the streets to change the reality of women in a patriarchal society, including hers. On the contrary, she has always had a unique intelligence that allowed her to support and empower the women around her in a way that was consistent with the social context of their reality.*

*She has always fascinated me with her understanding of situational knowledge, analyzing power relations in society, and her deep understanding of the relations between oppression and privilege. I have always called this ability in my mother "my mother's magic". A joke I always made was that donors had to learn from her how to deal with gender concepts and use her magical methods to produce contextually appropriate inputs.*

*Through my journey in this master's program, I came across a scholarly term for what I called "my mother's magic", namely "Intersectionality". This term was first coined thirty years ago by the American scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw. The concept of intersectionality immediately captured my interest and since then, I have been exploring ways in which we can empower more people around the world to meet their real needs and in line with their realities.*

*To my mother, Hanady Azmi Tahboub, I dedicate this work.*

## **Abstract:**

This research aims to understand the consideration of the intersectionality by the European Union in its development programs. The ENI CBC MED Programme is used as a case study to approach the study's aims. This program is implemented as a large-scale EU program that comprises 80 projects to further achieve the goals of promoting economic and social development and addressing common environmental challenges in the Mediterranean areas, which are well-known for their highly diverse communities that represent various social categories like, nationality, language, religion, race, ethnicity, and others. Although the term intersectionality is relatively new, it is being used as a principle of assessment as it intends to capture the understanding of discrimination and privilege. The research focuses on analyzing intersectionality, guided by six key principles, “Intersecting Categories”, “Multilevel Analysis”, “Reflectivity”, “Time and Space”, “The Diversity of Knowledge”, and “Social Justice” in the design and the implementation of the program through the analysis of the program documents, the interviews with the program staff, and the focus groups with the program partners. The main takeaway in the process of this research has been the observation that intersectional perspective is partially and indirectly employed as a tool throughout the design and implementation of the program. However, some of the well-used intersectional principles are not recognized as part of the intersectional approach, which stems from a lack of awareness of the concept of “Intersectionality” itself.

**Keywords:** Intersectionality, European Union, Development Programs

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## ACRONYMS

AA	Audit Authority
CCP	Control Contact Points
ENI CBC MED	The European Neighbourhood Instrument Cross Border Cooperation in the Mediterranean
EU	European Union
GoAs	Group of Auditors
IBPA	Intersectional Approach Model for Policy & Social Change
JTS	Joint Technical Secretariat
JMC	Joint Monitoring Committee
JOP	Joint Operational Programme
LB	Lead Beneficiaries
MA	Managing Authority
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NCP	National Contact Point
NEET	Not in Employment, Education, or Training
PSC	Projects Selection Committee

# INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, numerous development improvement projects have addressed the conflicts and issues of target communities only from the donors' perception without sufficient involvement of local communities to articulate their needs and the adequate manners to meet them. In many cases, this has resulted in complications and negative impacts rather than benefiting the target communities. An example of this is the gender-specific programs that were developed without taking into account the existing knowledge and power relations in Palestine. Thus, contrary to expectations, many of these programs have often negatively impacted the situation of Palestinian women because Western donors did not completely comprehend the context of Palestinian women.

Subsequently, a negative image has been created among many local communities as a result of such interventions, which has led to unnecessary resistance to all gender organizations and programs by local communities in Palestine, especially among the most marginalized (Shalhoub and Kevorkian, 2002).

This misreading has not only prevented projects from heading in the right direction of development but also led to regression and further negative results in the target areas. Such subsequent detrimental outcome is due to the lack of profound understanding and active involvement of target groups in the planning and implementation processes of the programs (Jamal & Manal, 2015). Through the initial knowledge of intersectionality, it has become explicit that what prevented development projects from succeeding is the lack of "Intersectionality", which is defined as the coming together of different social groups to fight together against forms of oppression (Crenshaw, 1989).

Intersectionality is a significant tool to understand complex social relations and particularly gender relations in a more advanced manner as it allows the comprehension of how gender dynamics intersect and articulate with other social dynamics that have a significant impact on power relations and social and gender inequalities, including racial, socioeconomic

(class), ethnic, or those marked by sexual orientations and dissident identities (Atewologun, 2018)

This thesis examines intersectionality in the European Union's development programs, as it is a pioneer in gender equality policies and addresses social issues that affect large areas that include not only European countries, but also several neighboring ones. Therefore, intersectionality should be an important element considered in the formulation process of its programs, especially those that focus on development inside or outside the European Union. *“The European Union, a pioneer in gender equality policies, is moving from predominantly attending to gender inequality, towards policies that address multiple inequalities” (Verloo M. 2006).*

This study aims to examine how European Union programs that focus on development take intersectionality into account in its projects. The principles of intersectionality that were considered are Intersecting Categories, Multilevel Analysis, Reflexivity, Time and Space, Diversity of Knowledge, and Social Justice. The definitions of the principles are based on the book Intersectionality 101 by Olena Huncovsky, which will be described in detail on page (9).

These intersectionality principles can provide a framework to assist in analyzing how the European Union plans, designs, and implements its programs with reference to the target groups' social, political, economic, and situational context through understanding the effects of their interventions between and across different levels of society, which formulated in the main research question: **How do European Union development programs take intersectionality into account, using ENI CBC MED as a case study?**

In order to conduct this investigation, the following sub-questions will be raised:

1. How does the ENI CBC MED program interconnect the different social categories (race, gender, sexuality, class, nationality, ability, language, religion, culture, ethnicity, body size, and age)?
2. How does the ENI CBC MED program work with multilevel analysis of the macro, intermediate, and micro levels of the local community?
3. How does the ENI CBC MED program function Reflexivity?

4. How does the program ENI CBC MED recognize the principle of “Time and space”?
5. How does ENI CBC MED recognize the diversity of beneficiaries' knowledge?
6. How does the ENI CBC MED program address social justice issues?

The above questions stand in line with the six objectives that guide the analysis of this research.

- Understanding how the ENI CBC MED program interconnects the different social categories, which highlights all social categories mentioned here: race, gender, sexuality, class, nationality, ability, language, religion, culture, ethnicity, body size, and age)?
- Comprehension of ENI CBC MED work with multilevel analysis of the macro, intermediate, and micro levels of the local community?
- Evaluation of reflexivity is functioned in the ENI CBC MED program
- Underlining the recognition of the Time and Space principle in the ENI CBC MED program
- Underlining the recognition of the diversity of beneficiaries' knowledge in the ENI CBC MED program
- Exploration of how the ENI CBC MED program addresses social justice issues

Three principals were excluded from the research, Power, Equity, and Resistance & Resilience, due to the limited applicability of these principles within the timeframe and scope of this study. See Limitations section for more details.

## INTERSECTIONALITY FRAMEWORK

The concept of "Intersectionality" was introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw as a way to resolve the issues of identity politics and refers to it as "the various ways in which race and gender interact to shape the multiple dimensions of Black women's employment experiences" (Crenshaw, 1989). In her introduction of it, Crenshaw distinguishes between structural intersectionality, political intersectionality, and representative intersectionality. Structural

intersectionality is used to describe how different structures interact to create a complex that highlights differences in individuals' experiences based on their social categories. For example: Black women who are victims of domestic violence. Political intersectionality highlights two opposing systems in the political arena by disregarding one and highlighting the other. For example, it separates women and black women into two subordinate groups (Crenshaw, 1994).

As for representative intersectionality, it advocates for the creation of images that support multiple oppressed groups. For example, in the case of black women, representative intersectionality criticizes the sexist and racist marginalization of women of color in representation and underlines the importance of black women being represented in the public sphere (Crenshaw, 1994).

Intersectionality has developed within feminist theory and is based on a feminist understanding of power and knowledge production. As an analytical tool, it serves to illuminate the emergence and interaction of power structures. According to Oxford Reference, it is defined as “The theory that various forms of discrimination centered on race, gender, class, disability, sexuality, and other forms of identity, do not work independently but interact to produce particularized forms of social oppression. As such, oppression is the result of intersecting forms of exclusionary practices. It is thus suggested that the study of identity-based discrimination needs to identify and take account of these intersectionalities” (Castree N., Kitchin R., & Rogers A, 2013).

All these concepts are used as analytical tools to understand how aspects of an individual's social and political identity merge and lead to discrimination and privilege in different ways, not only in relation to gender issues but also in relation to all other aspects such as environment, economic empowerment, political engagement, etc. (Davis, 2008). Furthermore, the use of intersectionality as a framework and practice has gained prominence in many sciences over the past 20 years. However, there is still a lack of application of intersectionality in the development field, which subsequently limits the potential to translate such a framework into effective practices on the ground *“Indeed, the relative absence of an*

*intersectionality lens in the developmental sciences stands in stark contrast to other social science fields such as counseling psychology, education, legal scholarship, public health, sociology and social work” (Collins & Bilge, 2016).*

In addition, many different definitions and literature have been proposed, the main results can be summarized in many points, three of which will be mentioned here. First, inequalities are never the result of single, unequal factors, rather, they are the result of intersections of different social situations, power relations, and experiences. Therefore, when analyzing social problems, the meaning of a category or structure cannot be determined in advance; categories and their meanings must be discovered in the process of inquiry. However, it is crucial to recognize that these outcomes change over time and in different spaces and contexts *“The relationships and power dynamics between different social domains and processes (e.g., racism, classism, heterosexism, ableism, ageism, sexism) are intertwined. They may also change over time and vary by geographic location” (Hankivsky, O., 2014).*

Second, intersectionality promotes an understanding of people shaped by the interaction of different social locations (e.g., 'race'/ethnicity, indigeneity, gender, class, sexuality, geography, age, disability, migration status, religion). People's lives cannot be explained by looking at single categories such as gender, race, and socioeconomic status. People's lives are multidimensional and complex (Mitchell, 2019). The reality of life is shaped by various factors and social dynamics that are interwoven. These interactions take place in a context of interconnected systems and power structures (e.g., laws, policies, state governments, and other political and economic associations, religious institutions, and media). Moreover, such interactions give rise to interdependent forms of privilege and oppression characterized by colonialism, imperialism, racism, homophobia, ableism, and patriarchy (UNPRPD, 2021).

Third, while it is essential to understand how development occurs within these microsystems and beyond, traditional frameworks in developmental science often emphasize universality, thereby neglecting the considerable within-group heterogeneity that exists and lacking emphasis on the structural oppressions that shape daily interactions and perpetuate

inequities (Santos & Toomey, 2018). These traditional frameworks may neglect the different aspects within target groups. As a result, they might provide un-matching interventions or even set strategies that are far from the different contexts and realities. *“Move beyond single identities or group-specific concerns, which are ineffective in explaining the nuances of human lives; in this way, important information about the unfair impacts of politics and policies is less likely to ‘fall through the cracks’”* (Hankivsky, 2014).

This study defines intersectionality among 12 social categories (race, gender, sexuality, class, nationality, ability, language, religion, culture, ethnicity, body size, and age) based on a model by De Vries (2015), whose approach a complex, multifaceted analysis across the categories represented by layers on the prism and analyzed along with several aspects that include both subjective and objective modes (Atewologun, 2018).

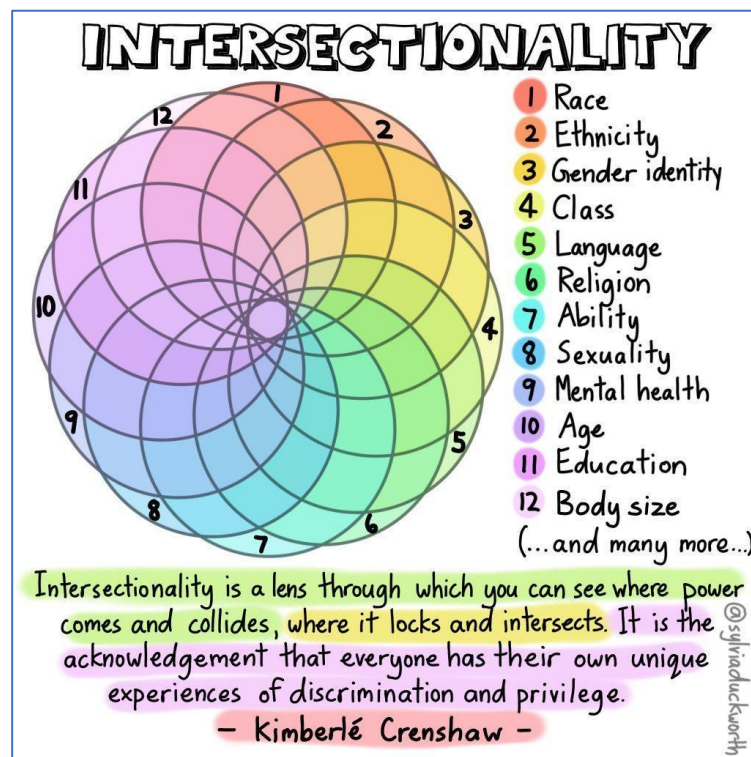


Figure (1) wheel of intersectionality (Silvia Duckworth, 2020)

In order to understand intersectionality, it is crucial to recognize the relationship between privilege and oppression. The more privilege people have, the more difficult it



becomes for them to recognize the factors of oppression. In fact, there can be no oppression without corresponding privilege - if one group is oppressed, another group is privileged (Collins P.H., 1990).

Over and above that, it is also important to understand that factors of oppression that people experience lead them to develop knowledge from their social experiences when their social situations do not fit into the hegemonic system, and they surf on different interlocking oppressions, which is referred to as "Situated Knowledge". According to the Oxford Reference, it is defined as "All forms of knowledge that reflect the conditions in which they are produced, and at some level reflect the social identities and social locations of knowledge producers" (Castree N., Kitchin R., & Rogers A, 2013).

### INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH MODEL FOR POLICY & SOCIAL CHANGE (IBPA)

In 2010, C. Nicole Mason introduced a new model called the Intersectional Approach Model for Policy and Social Change. In this model, social change and equality issues are presented as shapes by intersecting dimensions. The model aims to promote policies that address the social and structural roots of policy problems (Hankivsky, 2014).

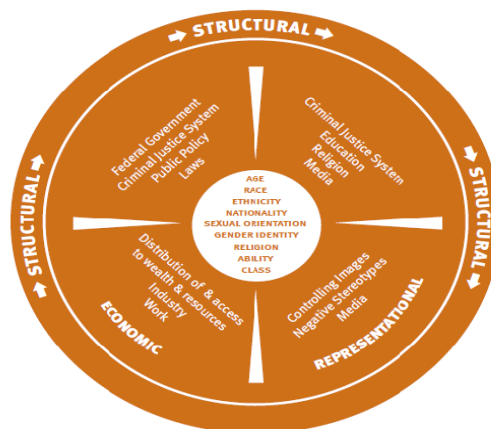


Figure (2) The intersectional Approach Model for Policy & Social Change (Mason, 2010, p.6)

The model aims to explain and develop policies that are inclusive and address the root causes of the social problem or issue. It also challenges organizational agendas, policy frameworks, and models that are limited to a single issue by encouraging organizations, policy advocates, and community leaders to comprehensively address the root causes of discrimination and inequality, (Mason, 2010). Furthermore, it emphasizes that people belong to more than one social category at a time and focuses on the interactions of different social locations, systems, and processes, investigating rather than assuming the importance of a particular combination of factors. To date, most studies and policy initiatives that aimed at capturing the differential impacts of climate change on populations have focused solely on a single variable, e.g., gender, location, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. (WHO, 2011).

This model criticizes such approaches like the one in gender analysis, noting that it is based on a construction of gender as binary men vs. women, which not only leads to simplistic comparisons and homogenization of 'men' and 'women', but it also overlooks "significant differences in knowledge, resources, and power within gender groups that influence development and adaptation outcomes related to climate change" (Carr & Thompson, 2014). Such a focus obscures the fact that gender derives its meaning from its intersection with other identities, roles, and responsibilities.

The Intersectional Approach Model for Policy and Social Change does not only lead to a multilevel analysis of the intersecting factors, processes, and structures that impact the experience of climate change, but its principles also lead to questions about how climate change issues are framed and understood. Intersectionality offers critical insights into the ways in which institutional practices and norms and associated power dynamics shape the knowledge and norms used by policymakers. Through questions such as "What kind of knowledge is privileged in dealing with climate change?" and "How is the understanding of what is legitimate knowledge related to social categories and power relations?" (Mendoza, Guillermo, Ad Jeuken, John H. Matthews, Eugene Stakhiv, John Kucharski, and Kristin Gilroy, 2018). An intersectional analysis can bring to light alternative knowledge about climate change and therefore enhance climate change strategies (Kaijser & Kronsell, 2013).

Moreover, in her book *Intersectionality 101* Olena Huncovsky presents a thorough description of the principles of intersectionality, as a direction for researchers, policymakers, decision-makers, and activists on how to apply intersectionality to their work. An excellent start would be to think about the key principles, that are presented below, and which encompass the aims and objectives of intersectionality that have been previously published as constituting an intersectionality-based policy analysis framework (IBPA) (Hankivsky, 2014).

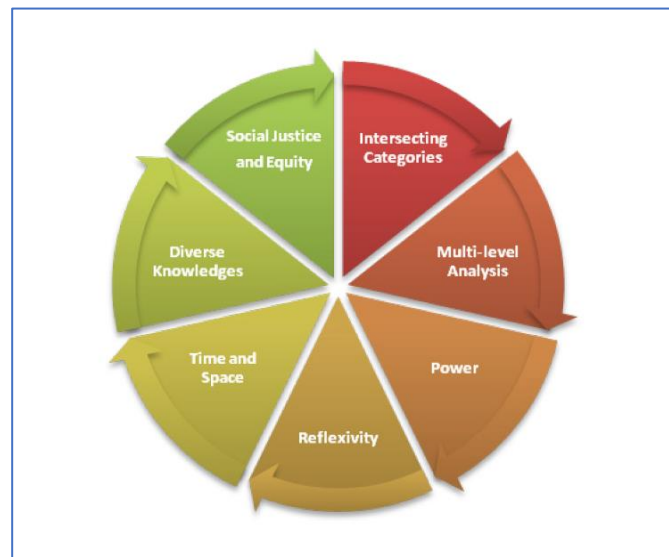


Figure (3) the principles of intersectionality, ". (Hankivsky, 2014, p. 8).

Taken together, however, these principles provide a framework that can guide the ‘doing’ of intersectionality-informed work, not only in policy but also in research, activism, and practice (Hankivsky, 2014, pp. 9-12):

1. **Intersecting Categories**

Intersectionality conceptualizes social categories that interact and constitute each other to create unique social locations that vary by time and place. These intersections and their effects are what matter in an intersectional analysis (Hankivsky & Cormier, 2009)

## 2. **Multi-level Analysis**

Intersectionality is about understanding the effects between and across different levels of society. These include the macro-level (institutions and policies at the global and national levels), the intermediate level (institutions and policies at the provincial and regional levels), and the micro-level: institutions and policies at the community level, at the grassroots level, and the individual or "self" (Hankivsky, 2014).

## 3. **Power**

Power operates at discursive and structural levels to exclude certain kinds of knowledge and experience (Foucault, 1977). Moreover, power shapes subject positions and categories (e.g., 'race') (e.g., racialization and racism); and these processes work together to shape experiences of privilege and punishment between and within groups (Collins, 2000). A person may experience both power and oppression simultaneously in different contexts and at different times (Collins, 1990). These power relationships include experiences of power over others, but also power with others (power where people work together) (Guinier & Torres, 2003; Hankivsky, 2014).

## 4. **Reflexivity**

Reflexivity recognizes the importance of power at the micro-level of the self and our relationships with others, as well as at the macro-level of society. Reflexive practice acknowledges multiple truths and a diversity of perspectives while giving more space to voices normally excluded from the role of political "expert" (Bolzan, Heycox, & Hughes, 2001). Which requires committing to an ongoing dialog about "tacit, personal, professional, or organizational knowledge" and its influence on policy (Parken, 2010, p. 85). Reflexivity can help change policy when participants infuse their work with critical self-awareness, role awareness, questioning of power and privilege, and challenging of assumptions and "truths" ((Clark, 2012; Hankivsky, 2014).

## 5. **Time and Space**

It is within these dimensions of time and space that different kinds of knowledge are situated, our understanding of the world is constructed, and social orders of meaning are created (Saraga, 1998). In addition, privileges, and disadvantages, including intersecting identities and the processes that determine their value, change over time and place (Hulko, 2009; Hankivsky, 2014).

## **6. The Diversity of Knowledges**

Intersectionality addresses epistemologies (theories of knowledge) and power, specifically the relationship between power and knowledge production. Including the perspectives and worldviews of people who are typically marginalized or excluded in the production of knowledge can interrupt the forces of power activated by the production of knowledge (Dhamoon, 2011).

## **7. Social Justice**

Intersectionality places great emphasis on social justice (Grace, 2011). Approaches to social justice differ in whether they focus on the redistribution of goods (Rawls, 1971) or on social processes (Young, 1990); however, common to all approaches is a concern with achieving justice (Sen, 2006). Social justice theories often challenge injustice at its root and require people to question social and power relations. For example, according to (Potts and Brown 2005), social justice is about "changing the way resources and relationships are produced and distributed so that everyone can live a dignified life in an environmentally sustainable way. It is also about creating new ways of thinking and being, not just criticizing the status quo" (Hankivsky, 2014).

## **8. Equity**

Closely related to the social justice principle of intersectionality, equality is about fairness. According to (Braveman and Gruskin, 2003), equity in public policy occurs when social systems are designed to equalize outcomes between better and worse off groups. The term equity should not be confused with equality. For example, while

inequality can refer to any measurable difference in outcomes of interest, inequities exist when those differences are unfair or unjust. (Hankivsky, 2014).

## **9. Resistance and Resilience**

Consideration of resistance and resilience is an essential component of intersectionality, as these can breakthrough power and oppression. Even from the so-called "marginalized" spaces and places, oppressive values, norms, and practices can be challenged. One mechanism of resistance by subordinated groups is to destabilize dominant ideologies through collective action. Conversely, policies and discourses that label groups of people as inherently marginalized or vulnerable undermine the reality that there are no 'pure victims or oppressors' (Collins 1990; Dhamoon & Hankivsky 2011).

Therefore, this model was chosen as a reference for this study as it covers the main aspects needed to underline how the European Union's designs and implements their programs use an intersectional perspective in relation to the development phenomena of interest and particular development theories, including economic, social, technological, and environmental.

## **EUROPEAN UNION AND INTERSECTIONAL PERSPECTIVE**

Mentioning the importance of intersectionality has emboldened me to argue the necessity of such principles within the interventions of leading institutions in the field of development programs, such as the European Union (EU). As stated above, the EU is a pioneer in gender equality policies. However, the concern here is if the EU development projects address a more inclusive and egalitarian policy for all, while considering the differences in needs with an in-depth understanding of power relations stemming from gender and other inequalities.

*"A 'one size fits all' approach to addressing multiple discrimination is based on an incorrect assumption of sameness or equivalence of the social categories connected to inequalities and of the mechanisms and processes that constitute them. Focusing on similarities ignores the differentiated character and dynamics of inequalities"*  
(Verloo M. 2006)

There is also a tendency to simplify. For example, the gender aspect is often reduced to a narrow man-woman binary in which women are portrayed as vulnerable, marginalized victims (Dutta 2011), or they are assigned the role of providers with a special, almost divine connection to nature (Gaard 1993). This can be reflected in other issues as well, such as in the case of economic empowerment. Here, there is a danger of reinforcing categorizations and neglecting that differences are socially constructed and context specific. Ultimately, this not only fixes differences and turns them into categories, but also excludes those who do not fit into these static categories and denies social struggles, contestations, and the complexity and fluidity of identities (Alaimo 2009).

Although studies and political initiatives that focus on one single variable, such as place or gender, are valuable for illuminating power relations in the face of economic oppression, they often fail to consider how this base for inequality is intertwined with and even reinforced by other structures of domination. This research attempts to study an example of an EU development program that focuses on both social inclusion and environmental issues to examine how this program addresses the above challenges.

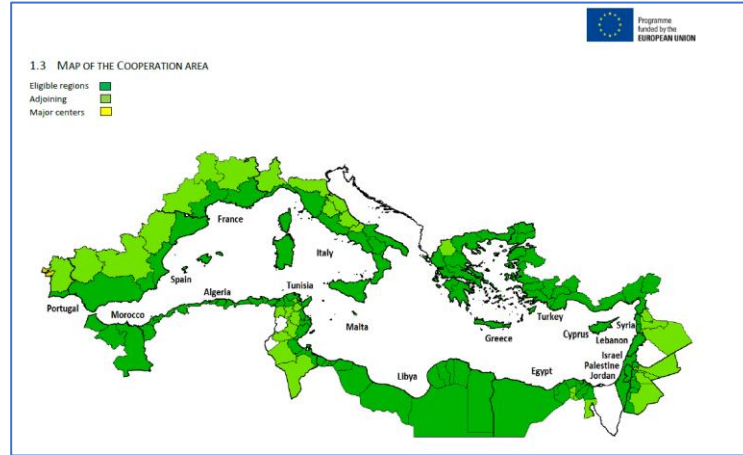
## ENI CBC MED PROGRAMME AS A CASE STUDY

The ENI CBC MED Program targets coastal areas of 14 EU and partner countries<sup>1</sup>, covering 112 territories. It is estimated that nearly 198 million people live in the cooperation area (Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Palestine, Portugal, Spain, and Tunisia). Besides the listed 14 countries, other countries eligible under the European Neighborhood Policy may join the program at a later stage. The cooperation area is divided as follows: (1) Core eligible areas, which are fully eligible to participate in the projects; and (2) Adjoining territories, in which participation can be allowed on a case-by-case basis by

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<sup>1</sup> The number of eligible countries participating in the ENI CBC MED program is 14, but only 13 Mediterranean countries have signed the financial agreement with the European Commission, except for Algeria. As mentioned in the second call for proposals (for strategic projects), page 4: “Please note that the participation of Algeria is under suspension clause. Entities located in the eligible territories of Algeria may apply for this call for proposals but can receive Programme funds only if Algeria signs the Financing Agreement with the European Commission within the deadline of the call.”

the Joint Monitoring Committee, considering the real benefits for a project (ENI CBC MED, Cooperation Area).



Map (1) Cross Border Cooperation Within the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI)

The ENI CBC Med Joint Operational Programme document (pp. 7-8) provides detailed description of two overarching goals as the following: (1) to promote economic and social development and (2) to address common environmental challenges (ENI CBC MED, Thematic Objectives, and Priorities).

The total EU contribution to the program for 2014-2020 is 209 million euros to achieve the following 4 thematic objectives:

- A.1 - Business and SME development
- A.2 - Support to education, research, technological development, and innovation
- A.3 - Promotion of social inclusion and the fight against poverty
- B.4 - Environmental protection, climate change adaptation and mitigation

Thematic Objectives	Priorities
A.1 Business and SMEs development	A.1.1: Support innovative start-up and recently established enterprises, with a particular focus on young and women entrepreneurs and facilitate the



	protection of their Intellectual Property Rights and commercialization where applicable
A.1.2: Strengthen and support euro-Mediterranean networks, clusters, consortia and value-chains in traditional sectors (agro-food, tourism, textile/clothing, etc.) and non-traditional sectors (innovative ideas solutions for urban development, eco-housing, sustainable water-related and other clean technologies, renewable energy, creative industries, etc.)	
A.1.3: Encourage sustainable tourism initiatives and actions aimed at diversifying into new segments and niches	
A.2 Support to education, research, technological development, and innovation	A.2.1: Support technological transfer and commercialization of research results, strengthening the linkages between research, industry and other private sector actors
A.2.2: Support SMEs in accessing research and innovation, also through clustering	
A.3 Promotion of social inclusion and the fight against poverty	A.3.1: Provide young people, especially those belonging to the NEETS, and women, with marketable skills
A.3.2: Support social and solidarity economic actors, also in terms of improving capacities and cooperation with public administrations for services provision	
B.4 Environmental protection, climate change adaptation and mitigation	B.4.1: Support sustainable initiatives targeting innovative and technological solutions to increase water efficiency and encourage use of non-conventional water supply
	B.4.2: Reduce municipal waste generation, promote source-separated collection and its optimal exploitation, in particular its organic component
B.4.3: Renewable energy and energy efficiency - Support cost-effective and innovative energy rehabilitations relevant to building types and climatic zones, with a focus on public buildings	
B.4.4: Integrated Coastal Zone Management - Incorporate the Ecosystem-Based management approach to ICZM into local development planning, through the improvement of intra-territorial coordination among different stakeholders	

Table (1) ENI CBC MED Thematic objective and priorities

Furthermore, unlike traditional EU programs that are directly following the European Commission in Brussels, the ENI CBC MED Program has several actors relevant to project

implementation. The most prominent actors are as mentioned in the ENI CBC Med Joint Operational Programme document, (pp. 8):

- **Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC)** is the decision-making body of the Program. It will follow the implementation of the Program and progress towards its priorities using the objectively verifiable indicators and related target values defined in the Program, supported by the Managing Authority. It is composed by the representatives of the countries participating in the Program and takes the final decision on the allocation of grants;
- **Projects Selection Committee (PSC)** in charge of evaluating project proposals. Formed at the occasion of the launch of each call for proposals, it is composed of 13 voting members, representing the 13 countries participating in the Program;
- **Managing Authority (MA)** as executive body and contracting authority of the Programme, the Managing Authority is responsible for its management and implementation. The Managing Authority is the Autonomous Region of Sardinia and is located in Cagliari (Italy);
- **Audit Authority (AA)** supported by the Group of Auditors (GoAs) is the independent body in charge of carrying out audits on the program annual accounts, the management and control systems and on projects;
- **Control Contact Points (CCP):** one in each participating country, in charge of validating the compliance with the criteria set by art. 32(2) of the IR 897/2014 for the project auditors. Moreover, the CCPs will support the MA during its checks on the eligibility of expenditure and for its on-the-spot visit to projects;
- **Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS):** it assists the Managing Authority in the day-to-day management of the Program. Composed of international staff, it is located in Cagliari;

- **Two Branch Offices**, respectively located in Valencia (Spain) and Aqaba (Jordan) to ensure closer proximity with potential beneficiaries.

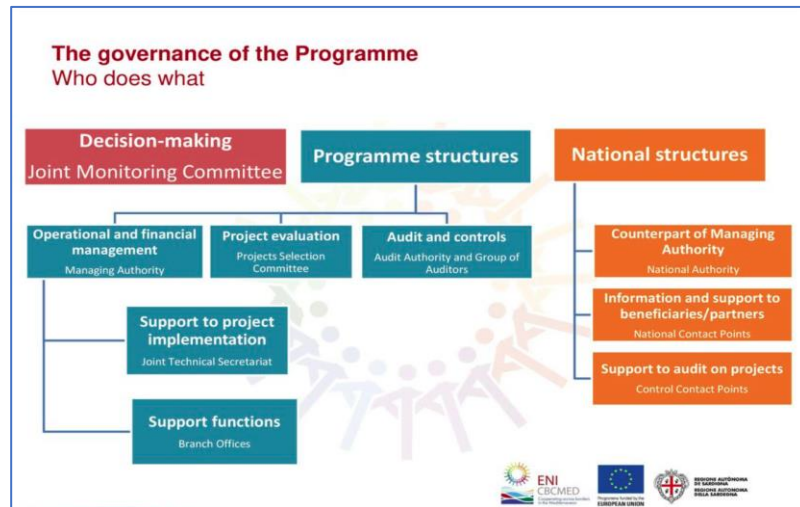


Figure (4) ENI CBC MED Programme Management Structures

In brief, this program was selected for several reasons. First, it works in and covers a large and diverse area. The 14 different countries are in a way similar in geographic conditions and face several common issues, however, these countries embody different backgrounds, languages, ethnicities, races, religions, and cultures. It would be helpful to study how the program is a grid with all these differences, and how it intersects all the different categories among the mentioned areas.

Secondly, the program's highest administrative authority, The Managing Authority, is the Autonomous Region of Sardinia and is in Cagliari, Italy, not in Brussels, which has a deeper understanding of the Mediterranean context and common issues. Finally, ENI CBC MED Program targets four different thematic areas of development: Economic, social, environmental issues, and technology transfer in the region. This would help to apprehend how intersectionality consideration can be applied in different aspects. Moreover, the third thematic area is a deep focus on social inclusion which can be considered as an added value to this study to underline how intersectionality is also tackled in this regard.

## METHODOLOGY

This research aims to examine how European Union programs that focus on development take intersectionality into account in their projects. To answer this question, the research was conducted in three phases. The first phase is an in-depth analysis of project documents to find the intersections between the concepts and the project's teams' viewpoint in the documents. Second phase is an interview with the team to corroborate the findings of the document analysis. The third phase is a focus group with eight program partners working on grassroots projects under the umbrella of the program to corroborate the findings of the document analysis and interview data at the implementation level.

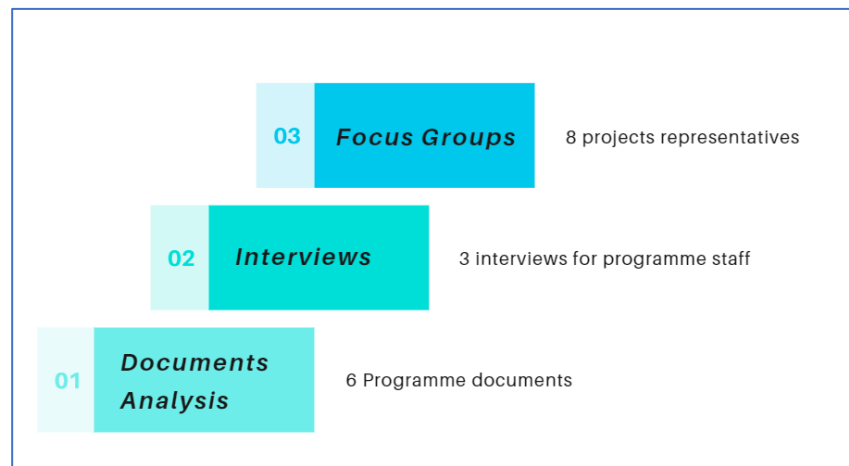


Figure (5) research methodology

In the first phase of this study, the research presents an in-depth analysis of 6 documents related to the program design and implementation, and the evaluation of ENI CBC MED is as follows:

1. Code of conduct for funded projects - ENI CBC MEDITERRANEAN SEA BASIN PROGRAMME 2014-2020
2. Project Implementation Manual, which is the reference document to guide the sound and efficient implementation of funded projects, and is designed to support the main

phases of the project lifecycle in different areas, i.e., technical management, financial issues, and communication/visibility, as follows:

0. Foreword
1. Key Documents
2. Actors Involved
3. Project Start
4. Reporting
5. Project Amendments
6. Monitoring
7. Financial Management
8. Risk Management
9. Project Closure
10. Communication And Visibility

3. Indicative evaluation and monitoring plan. This document contains the Indicative Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan of the Program.

The M&E Plan provides a concise description of the Program Indicators to measure whether the actions implemented by each project achieve the expected results. The Plan is relevant to project implementation as the project achievements contribute to attaining Program Indicators

4. Guidelines for Grant Applicants CBC MED PROGRAMME 2014-2020

5. Handbook for Sub-grants management ENI CBC MED PROGRAMME 2014-2020

6. ENI CBC Med Joint Operational Programme:

In October 2014, the European Commission (EC) adopted the Programming document to support ENI Cross-Border Cooperation, which is Border Cooperation that defines the strategic framework for 2014--2020 ENI CBC MED

These documents were chosen to understand in which way the intersectional perspective is practiced within the program design, implementation, and evaluation. Regarding the design, the ENI CBC MED Code of conduct, and ENI CBC Med Joint Operational Programme were

chosen for the analysis as they define the strategic framework. With regard to the program implementation, three documents were chosen, (1) The Project Implementation Manual with its ten parts (2) Guidelines for Grant Applicants ENI CBC MED PROGRAMME 2014-2020, and (3) Handbook for Sub-grants management ENI CBC MED PROGRAMME 2014-2020 to examine intersectionality among the practical interaction between the program and the projects on one side, and between the projects and the target beneficiaries on the other side. As for the evaluation of the program, the Indicative Evaluation and Monitoring Plan was chosen as it provides a concise description of the Program Indicators to measure whether the actions implemented by each project achieve the expected results.

Hence, the selection criteria of these documents were based on several grounds. Firstly, the selected documents reveal one of the program stages which are: design, program implementation, and evaluation. Secondly, the selected documents show representation of both, strategic documents for reference and the operational documents for the daily guidance. Thirdly, the documents also represent the three different levels of guidance, the program level, project level, and sub-grand level: as shown in the table below:

<b>Documents of ENI CBC MED</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Level of framework</b>	<b>Level of Guidance</b>	<b>Last Update</b>
Code of conduct for funded projects	Design	Strategic	Program level	Last Update Feb 2022
Project Implementation Manual	Implementation	Operational	Project level	Last Update Nov 2021
Evaluation and Monitoring plan	Evaluation	Operational	Project level	Last Update Nov 2020
Guidelines for Grant Applicants	Implementation	Operational	Project level	Last Update Nov 2020
Handbook for Sub-grants management	Implementation	Operational	Sub-grants level	Last Update Dec 2021
ENI CBC Med Joint Operational Programme	Design	Strategic	Program level	Last Update Nov 2020

Table (2) in-depth document selection criteria

Finally, the last updated versions of the documents were chosen for the analysis; however, all of them were available online, on the ENI CBC MED website. See appendix 1 for more details.

Aiming to answer the sub-question of this research, the analysis of the documents above was guided by the principles of intersectionality mentioned earlier in this study (intersecting categories, multilevel analysis, reflexivity, time and space, the diversity of knowledge, social justice). Each of these principles was transformed into a question and then divided into sub-question to be used in the process of studying and analyzing the documents. It is essential to mention that the research did not only look for the words used but the meaning of each paragraph was read thoroughly to ensure clarity and integrity. (All summarized in appendix 2)

Thus, to verify the findings of the document analysis, three interviews were conducted with three ENI CBC MED workers, the selection criteria of the workers ensured having representatives of different genders, nationalities from the shores of the Mediterranean, and different working locations to represent different actors of the program. Certainly, the confidentiality of the interviewees was maintained, with anonymization of participants' names and nationalities.

<b>Key interviewees Code</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Office</b>	<b>Office Location</b>
A1	Male	North shore of the Mediterranean	Joint Technical Secretariat	Italy
A2	Female	Both shores of the Mediterranean	Branch office for the Western Mediterranean	Spain
A3	Male	South shore of the Mediterranean	Branch office for the Eastern Mediterranean	Jordan

Table (3) Interview Participants Information

Each interview lasted for around sixty minutes and was conducted online via “Zoom” platform. The main purpose of the interviews was to enrich the data collected from the document analysis are consistent with the perceptions of the program staff. The interview consisted of two parts. The first part aimed to understand how respondents perceive the principles of intersectionality, and the second aimed to discuss the considerations of intersectionality principles in the ENI CBC MED Project. See attached annex (2) for questions asked in the interviews.

Based on the results of the interviews and the analysis of the documents, the researcher has conducted two focus groups for seven ENI CBC MED partners who are responsible for implementing projects funded by the program in the four thematic areas. The focus groups participants were diverse, partners represented different countries covered within the program from both European parts of the Mediterranean with different nationalities. Moreover, high representation by both sexes was ensured, and the participants represented both the Lead Beneficiary [1] and project partners.

Equal to the interviews, the same protection mechanisms were applied to ensure confidentiality, any information related to the participants, including the name of the organization, were omitted. The following table shows the information of the focus group participants:

<b>Key FG Participants Codes</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Thematic area</b>	<b>Note</b>
<b>B1</b>	Female	Lead Beneficiary	France	Technology transfer and innovation	The Participant originally from Tunisia
<b>B2</b>	Male	Project Partner	Palestine	SMEs and business development	
<b>B3</b>	Male	Lead Beneficiary	Tunisia/ Italy	Environment and climate change	The Participant Italian working with Italian partner in Tunisia
<b>B4</b>	Female	Project Partner	Palestine	Social inclusion and fight against poverty	
<b>B5</b>	Female	Lead Beneficiary	Italy/Jordan	Environment and climate change	The Participant is Italian working in Jordan



<b>B6</b>	Male	Lead Beneficiary	Jordan	Technology transfer and innovation	The Participant worked in more than a project of ENI CBC MED
<b>B7</b>	Male	Lead Beneficiary	Greece	Environment and climate change	The Participant worked in more than a project of ENI CBC MED
<b>B8</b>	Male	Lead Beneficiary	Palestine	Social inclusion and fight against poverty	The Participant worked in more than a project of ENI CBC MED

Table (4) Focus Group Participants Information

In this stage, many considerations were well-thought-out to implement an intersectional perspective and create a trusting environment within the process of conducting the focus group. For example, the focus group was designed as a short workshop to make participants feel comfortable and safe to speak freely, by using icebreakers, respecting silence, and conducting additional activities to motivate participants to talk about, not only their own experiences but also the experiences of others.

In addition, focus group participants were divided into two groups of three-five participants each not only to give participants more space to express themselves, but also to observe the unspoken language and behavior of the participants and how they are in line with or contradict their words. Finally, language and cultural barriers were well-thought-out as participants came from different backgrounds and cultures.

Time	Activity
5 mints	Introduction
5 mints	Icebreaking
40 mints	Round one (contextual consideration of the ENI CBC MED program, from the partners point of view)
10 mints	Words matching activity
40 mints	Round two (how the principles of intersectionality are considered in the ENI CBC MED programme.)
5 mints	Evaluation

Table (5) focus group design

Thoroughly, the focus groups were conducted online via the “Zoom” platform. Each focus group has started with a short introduction about the research, researcher, and the participants’ backgrounds. After that, participants within the focus group have agreed on the confidentiality of the information discussed and presented.

The activities included ice-breaking activity (Activity one), where the researcher presents some words on the screen and asks the participants to give an example of oppression related to this word in their context. The six words that were presented are (gender, age, race, social class, ethnicity, and physical ability). Moreover, the researcher asked the participants if they would like to share any story to their liking.

Following the first ice-breaking activity, the researcher started the first round of questions, which aimed at understanding the context considered within the ENI CBC MED Program from the participants' point of view. See attached annex (3) for the questions asked during the focus groups. After that, the researcher implemented the second ice-breaking activity (Activity two), by asking participants to choose the three most important considerations in the development project from the following phrases: Flexibility in Implementation, Include Everyone, The Unspoken Knowledge of Beneficiaries, Addressing Social Justice, Geographic Context of Beneficiaries, The Historical Context of Beneficiaries, Power of Relation, Interconnection between the Social Categories, and Organizational Knowledge.

Consequently, the researcher conducted the second round of questions which aimed to understand how the principles of intersectionality are considered in the ENI CBC MED Program. See attached annex (3) for the questions for the second round. Finally, the focus groups concluded with a brief evaluation of the workshop, where participants expressed their thoughts and feelings on the two hours online session.

## RESULTS

The literature review highlights that the intersectional perspective is very essential in development programs. Applied to the case of the ENI CBC MED Program, this study assumes that intersectionality plays a vital role in the design and implementation of programs by fulfilling its principles.

Consequently, the analysis focuses on the understanding of intersectionality in the design and the implementation of the program through the analysis of the program documents, the interviews with the program staff, and the focus groups with the program partners, guided by the six key objectives previously defined and explained in the introduction section. The analysis highlights key themes and codes identified in the data and aligns them with the key objectives to understand the consideration of intersectionality in the ENI CBC MED Program.

The analysis began with highlighting the most relevant quotes from (1) the Program documents, (2) the interviews that were recorded online via “Zoom” platform and transcribed manually, and (3) the focus groups that were also recorded via "Zoom" and manually transcribed. Moreover, to maximize the richness of the data and illuminate interpretations, the transcripts were then analyzed thematically using Atlas.ti software. Thereafter, coding began by reviewing the documents and identifying codes that reflected information gleaned from the data as for the possible answers to the research questions. The codes were then grouped into broader themes through the use of a mind-mapping technique so as to create a model that visualized the relationships between the codes and the themes.

Consequently, these codes functioned as the basis for analysis of the interviews and focus groups, and they are the same codes that were applied to the highlighted interventions. At this stage, some codes were added as new information emerged from the interviews and focus groups. However, the main themes remained the same, as they provide a description of the most important codes identified throughout the analysis. Certainly, each theme was then further explored, reflected upon, and validated by going back and forth to the data to arrive at a solid understanding of the application of intersectionality principles within ENI CBC MED Program.

## Intersecting Categories

The results from the first question aimed to understand how the program intersects the different social categories (race, gender, sexuality, class, nationality, ability, language, religion, culture, ethnicity, body size, and age). The results were divided into three different themes that outline the groups of interest as the first principle of intersectionality: '**Treated Social Groups**', '**Semi-Treated Social Groups**', and '**Untreated Social Groups**'. To better understand the relationship between the themes and the emerging codes, Figure (6) provides a visualized aid:

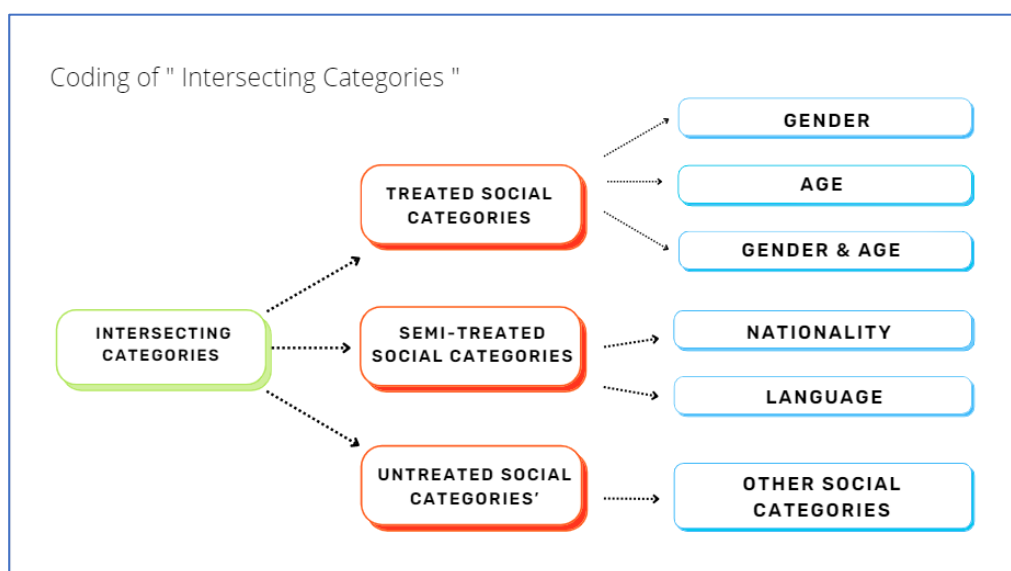


Figure (6) Coding of “Intersecting Categories”

The theme ‘**Treated Social Categories**’ outlines that the program chiefly focuses solely on two of the mentioned social categories, gender, and age. The program stresses the fact that individuals that belong to both categories face more challenges, “*Women and youths, particularly the so-called NEETS (young people Not in Employment, Education, and Training), are among the most disadvantaged categories across the area.*” (JOP ENI CBC MED 2014-2020, p 38).

Moreover, one of the program outputs in the first thematic area is to “*Support innovative start-ups and recently established enterprises, with a particular focus on young and women entrepreneurs, and facilitate the protection of their intellectual property rights and commercialization where applicable*” (JOP ENI CBC MED 2014-2020, p 38). The program also supports youth and women empowerment and involvement not only in traditional sectors that normally they are put in, but also all sectors including the non-traditional start-up entrepreneurs who could be able to produce innovative projects, such as: (cultural sector: visual and digital arts, performing arts, film, and video, and fashion and design). (ENI CBC MED, 2014)

Furthermore, it has been evident there is a great focus on supporting services provided, such as research and development, specific product development services, and scientific partner search which address the needs of women/youth entrepreneurs. (ENI CBC MED, 2014)

The code ‘**Gender**’ was established as a description of all the considerations and the interventions of the program to help women, “*Gender mainstreaming is an important cross-cutting issue in all aspects of work within the Programme. Indeed, gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment are important elements for fair, equitable and inclusive sustainable development. Within the specific thematic objective of the Programme dedicated to poverty eradication and social inclusion*” (JOP ENI CBC MED 2014-2020, p 38).

In addition to what has been mentioned in the project documents, both staff members and participants from the focus groups emphasized this suggestion. For example, “*So mainly the role of the project is to involve women in the different parts of the community as a different component of the communities and to take into consideration the level of education, the mentalities, going to a Village is not like going to the cities*” (A3). Additionally, a participant in the focus groups has clearly said: “*I am prioritizing marginalized women because they are not participating sufficiently enough in the labor market. I’m trying to make social justice in this regard*” (B2).

As for the code ‘**Age**’, it established to report all the considerations and the interventions of the program to support young people between the ages 18-35, as follows: “*Young people represent a huge untapped potential, in which society ought to invest, as they can provide the*

*human capital for future growth and be a major driver for development. Therefore, one of the most relevant challenges for the Programme area is to generate inclusive economic growth and create jobs, to reduce the high rates of unemployment and absorb the high number of new entrants, including women, into the work force, especially in the MPCs. Schemes to boost youth employment and investment in Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) are important drivers of change” (JOP ENI CBC MED 2014-2020, p 19).*

The program also emphasizes the NEETS terminology which stands for young people Not in Employment, Education and Training, represents a particularly vulnerable category. According to the program's strategic plan, *“Youth have been hit by the crises more than other age groups” (JOP ENI CBC MED 2014-2020, p 18)*. Additionally, the program has only one intervention for senior people within the third thematic area of social inclusion and fighting poverty. Basically, the intervention with the elderly people aims to contribute to the reduction in marginalization of the elderly and to improve the quality of social services provided to them, *“In this case elderly people, we have only one project out from 80” (A1)*.

Additionally, the program also intersects between both categories which is clearly indicated in the code **“Gender and Age Intersection”**. The indication shows how young women face the most serious hardships with regards to employment simply due to their gender and age, *“Young women in particular face extremely high levels of unemployment” (JOP ENI CBC MED 2014-2020, p 18)*. Also, very similar beliefs were expressed in the conducted interviews and the focus groups: *“This program adjusts focus to young women as they normally face multi challenges” (A3)*.

With respect to the second theme **‘Semi- treated Social Categories’**, the program has mentioned some of the categories that indirectly and partially were considered, such as the code **“Nationality”**. The program works in 13 different countries in the Mediterranean area, in both Southern European countries such as (Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, and Spain) and MENA countries like (Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Tunisia). The program clearly differentiates between core eligible regions and adjoining regions within some countries in the Mediterranean area, which are (Egypt, France, Italy, Jordan, Portugal, Spain, and Tunisia). These countries are not fully targeted, as only certain regions within the countries

are directly eligible. For instance, in the case of Jordan, “*Al-qaba, Al-Balga, Al-Karak, Al-Tafilah, Irbid, and Madaba*” (ENI CBC MED Guidelines for applicants. p 20) are core eligible, while “*Ajlun, Al-Mafraq, Amman, Azzarqa’, Jararah, Ma’an*” (ENI CBC MED Guidelines for applicants. p 20) are adjoining regions which need further explanations in case of their inclusion within the program.

The program highly encourages partnerships between these countries to apply for a project. It’s mandatory for projects to be under partnerships between at least three mentioned countries with a Maximum of 7 organizations, including both Northern and Southern sides of the Mediterranean, and not more than three organizations from the same counties “*The nationality it is a must, it is a precondition to involve more nationalities. Projects are involving more countries, and if they do not work on this, there is no project*” (A1).

Additionally, the analysis shows some attention to other categories. The code ‘**Language**’ represents the program concern to the languages in the target area. The program has chosen three languages for communication, and they are (English, French, and Arabic). These languages are the most common and used languages in the target area. However, according to the project document, only English or French are acceptable in all the procedures and in all documents referring to projects from the submission of the proposal to the drafting of the final project reporting, including the communication with ENI CBC MED staff. But only English and/or French are used for the legal and arbitration issues, “*The Programme languages are English, French, and Arabic. However, in all procedures and in all documents referring to projects - from the submission of the proposal to the drafting of the final project reporting, only English or French shall be used. Moreover, only English and/or French are used for legal and arbitration issues. Requests of information addressed to the Managing Authority, Joint Technical Secretariat and Branch Offices and the related answers will have to be drafted in one of the project languages (English or French)*”. (ENI CBC MED guidelines for applicants. p 17).

However, in the interviews and focus groups, participants expressed great satisfaction with the program's use of languages. For example, one of the program staff stated that the program addresses other languages when necessary, such as in the case of social media and

said: *“The three main languages are official languages of the program are Arabic, French, and English. Obviously, we have Partners from Greece Italy, from Spain and each partner in these countries communicates through the social networks in their own languages because they cannot promote training for young people who are unemployed in English. If they are from a remote part of a village in Italy, where young people just speak Italian and don't speak English”* (A1). Nevertheless, one of the beneficiaries in the focus groups emphasized the importance of having Arabic as one of the main languages of the program and said: *“ENI CBC MED program is closer to our local context. It's also speaking our language. I believe it's one of the unique programs. Ones that speak or address our people's localities in the Arabic language”* (B6).

The theme **“Untreated Social categories”** addresses all the social aspects that were not given sufficient attention in the program design and implementation, which was coded as **“Other social Categories”**. For example, disability, race, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, body size, and age, *“No mention for other aspects, such as class or race, or religion or culture these are mostly a defined in the cross-cutting issues”* (A2). The same interviewee added: *“I would confirm that the program is not so focusing discrimination against ethnicity or is not addressing people with handicaps. Nonetheless, some of these fields of discrimination are, as we know from our experiences. Some of these aspects are taken into account in some projects in particular with aging and gender”* (A2).

## Multilevel analysis

This section aims to focus on and study how the program includes multiple stakeholders, and in what manner it targets the issues at the local, national, and regional levels, and by what means does the program recognize the interaction among the three levels in regard to dealing with the issues. The main results shown in this section were divided into two main themes: **“Levels of Analysis”** and **“Multi-level cooperation”**. Figure (7) visually presents these relations to understand the relationship between the themes and the emerging codes.



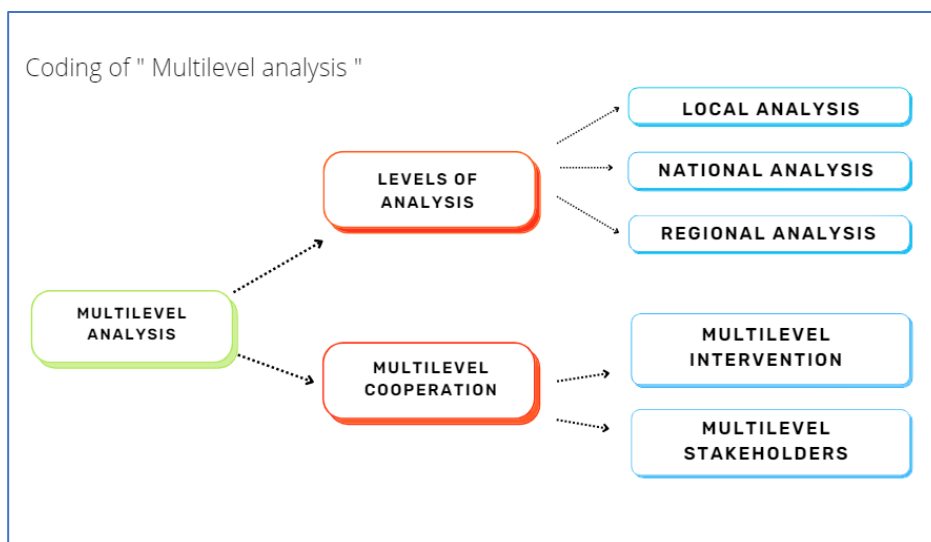


Figure (7), Coding of “Multilevel Analysis”

The theme “**Levels of analysis**” outlines the level of the analysis that the program mostly practices on the macro, intermediate and micro levels. The codes allocated for this theme are “*Local Analysis*”, “*National Analysis*”, and “*Regional Analysis*”.

With respect to the code “*Regional Level*”, it indicates all analysis, policies, objectives, and priorities of the ENI CBC MED Program agreed upon on the Mediterranean region level, “*EU has been working hand in hand with its Mediterranean partners to design cooperation programmes that take into account each country’s specific needs and features. (JOP ENI CBC MED 2014-2020, p 6)*. Furthermore, the participant countries were involved in the process of designing the program: “*So the program is somehow the child of a dialogue at the Mediterranean level*” A2. Hence, the program targets four thematic areas which were chosen based on common issues and needs in the Mediterranean area.

As for the code “*National Level*”, it indicates all analysis actions which were taken into consideration by ENI CBC MED Program on a country level, and how it aligns with regional objectives. For example, to create the M&E Plan, all partners had to meet in Aqaba, Jordan, in May 2014, following an extensive consultation process. After that, to translate the selected objectives into the M&E Plan, a process of collecting national inputs on expected outputs and outcomes in the form of indicators for each of the selected priorities and reviewing all expected outputs, outcomes, and their indicators was initiated during the Heads of Delegation meeting in

Brussels in July 2014. This was later followed by discussions and proposals for the review of expected outcomes, an indicative list of outputs, and their indicators. The results of this review have been incorporated into both the JOP and the preliminary draft of the M&E Plan for ENI CBC MED 2014-2020. In the final stage, the final draft strategy for ENI CBC MED 2014-2020 was endorsed by the JPC meeting in Rome in January 2015 (ENI CBC MED M&E Plan, 2014), *“When the program finalizes its thematic objectives and Its priorities. It makes an internal consultation in each country it collects, has experts, and collects information from the national authorities of each company in order to build a thematic objective. So, this is the internal procedure is done by the program” (A3)*. In terms of implementation, the program encourages projects partners to remain in contact with the national contact point (NCP), which possesses a long experience in the context, analysis issues, and challenges on a national level, *“Lead beneficiaries and partners are also requested to establish working relationships with the national agencies of their respective countries from the beginning of the project implementation” (B2)*.

It is important to mention that the micro level, which indicates the code **“Local Level”**, is mostly applied by partners who implement the project and who have a direct interaction with local communities, *“I think you should also differentiate between the program itself and the project itself. because we as a program do not have activities, what we are collecting is based on the national consultations with different levels of national authorities that participate in the program. So, we asked the national authorities for a pre-list of priorities to be implemented according to the implementing regulation or the EU decision that they cover such a priority. These priorities are selected jointly with the 13 participating countries. And so each national country expresses the entrance of its needs based on national interest, the best priorities that treated their situation.” (A3)*.

With regard to the interaction among the three levels concerning dealing with the issues, which is implied as the **“Multi-Level Cooperation”** theme, the general objectives of the ENI CBC MED 2014-2020 Program are to foster fair, equitable, and sustainable economic, social, and territorial development. This may advance cross-border integration and valorize the participating countries’ territories and values. Based on the Medium-Term Needs analysis of the cooperation area, the countries participating in the program have identified the following

general objectives: Promote economic and social development. and address common challenges in the environment. (ENI CBC MED M&E Plan, 2014)

For the first code of “**Multi-level Intervention**”, it describes how the program supports the intersection among its three levels, “*So, I think we have all of this three-level in mind, the national level is more involved in drafting the program, while the regional and local levels for the implementation of the projects. And then try to find the links between the different projects and demonstrating that we cooperate better*” (A1). This was also mentioned during the focus groups, “*The program and projects both aim to add value to the development of the cooperation area, even though they operate at two different, parallel levels, macro and micro* (A4).

Regarding the code of “**Multi-level Stakeholders**”, the program focuses in several ways on including all relevant stakeholders, including local authorities, national authorities, and the local enwinding benefits, “*The ENI CBC MED Projects should empower and reinforce capacities of national and local stakeholders facing the economic, environmental and policy challenges of coastal cities. (ENI CBC MED M&E plan, p 104)*. Moreover, the program also focuses on issues with the project partners. For example, the guidelines for Grant Applicants for the standard project emphasizes the widest involvement of the relevant stakeholders/key actors and networking. Project proposals should contribute to developing sectors, and national and regional public policies by fostering transferability of emerging good practices and results achieved, “*Project proposals should support transnational multi-level participatory processes involving local authorities from Mediterranean territories together with international actors, businesses, universities, and civil society stakeholders. They should identify, assess, and recommend innovative governance systems and policy tools aiming at better management of coastal areas*” (ENI CBC MED Guidance for the applicant, 2014)

In addition, the project reporting templates require the demonstration of the project effects on the beneficiaries' territories and sectors, and document the solutions established for the issues found at both energization and ground levels. Furthermore, make the partnership synergy visible together with the active participation in the cross-border framework, and to describe the collaboration with stakeholders and beneficiaries at both decision-making and implementation levels in order to highlight all implementation synergies at cross- border level.

## Reflexivity

This section screened the results of the 3rd sub-question of this research, which aims to study how the program targets the double oppressed people and how it is willing to provide space to voices typically excluded from the role of policy. The main themes identified describing this principle are “**Promote Social Inclusion**” and “**Communication**” as it shows in Figure (8).

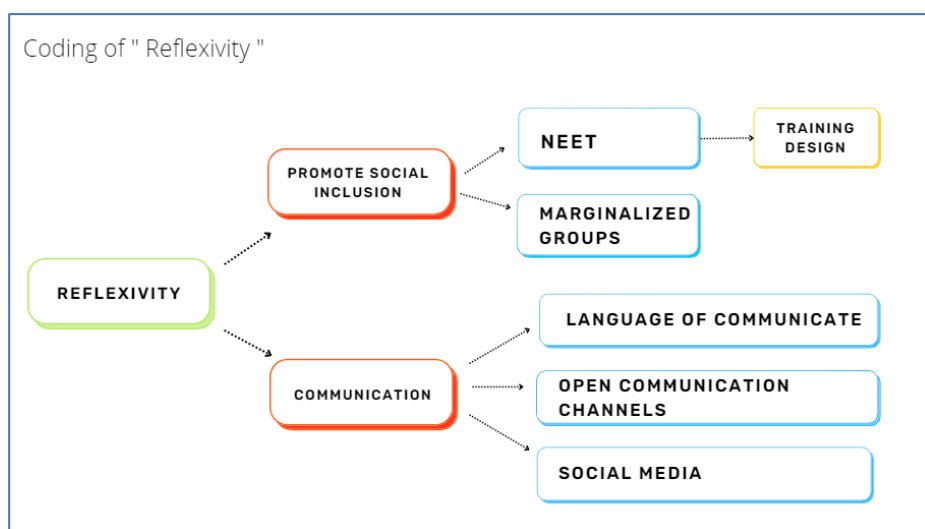


Figure (8) Coding of “Reflexivity”

The theme “**Promote Social Inclusion**” reflects how the program promotes social inclusion, especially for young people belonging to the “*NEETS*” (Not in Employment, Education, Or Training), and women of all ages by providing them the need for marketable skills to raise their employability and fight poverty, “*We are tackling this intersectionality aspect because we are focusing and we're putting the priorities what on when we called the NEETs*” (A1). Besides, the program supports social and economic actors. For example, Output 3.1.1.2 focuses on targeted training courses oriented to the labor market addressing young (18–24-year-old) and women (all ages), especially those belonging to Vulnerable Groups. This is intended to happen by applying customized training which is coded as “*Training Design*”.

According to program documents, “*Training Design*” follows three steps. The first one is Deliver training that was by “*designed and targeted to young people (18–24-year-old)*,

*especially those belonging to the NEETS and women, located in a certain area, are the beneficiaries of these training courses whose aim is to improve the quality of their life and ensure better integration into the workforce. .” (ENI CBC MED M&E plan, p 58).*

Second, by creating and improving curricula materials for use in training courses that target young people, especially those belonging to the NEETS, and women, to increase and improve their skills, *“Knowledge and skill-based occupations are becoming more important, and this reduces opportunities for less-qualified workers, leaving behind those marginalized, the NEETs. However, it is generally true that those who have conducted too general or theoretical studies will face problems when applying for jobs requiring more technical and practical skills. There is shortage of specific types of skills and underutilization of existing skills and competences, with more qualified youths facing difficulties in finding jobs matching their expectations and skills. (JOP ENI CBC MED, p38).* Finally, the third step is by *“Providing apprenticeships (Stage) and special support to the most marginalized and disadvantaged youth, NEETS, and women, especially marginalized individuals such as immigrants, ethnic minorities, disabled, etc., to enable them to successfully transition from education to work by improving career guidance and counseling and strengthening collaboration with employers”.* (ENI CBC MED M&E plan, p59).

In relation to the code **“Marginalized groups”**, *“Working with the weak groups and marginalized groups. pushes to taking into consideration, Their need. So mainly the methods applied in the projects are to start from any analysis this is usually carried out in direct touch with the groups. The projects have always started with the need analysis through interdisciplinary or focus groups. So, with these groups, just to set up, let me say, identify some difficulties, and to set up proper tools for them” (A2).* Most of the participants in the focus groups believe in the importance of giving priority to people who face multi- oppression *“If you are a female, you are marginalized, but if you are a female and refugee, you are a double marginalized. If you are a rural woman living in a remote area. You are a double marginalized, we always analyze our beneficiaries, to do the suitable action based on their situations”.* (B2)

Moreover, the program promotes social entrepreneurship, which according to the European Commission is *“Social Enterprises dedicate their activities and reinvest their*

*surpluses to achieving wider community objectives (social, societal, environmental) rather than profit maximization” (ENI CBC MED M&E plan, p 66). The program believes that social enterprises often have an innovative character through the goods or services they offer. They often employ the most vulnerable members of society (socially excluded people, care leavers, etc.) contributing to social cohesion, employment, and the reduction of inequalities, “Social inclusion actions and networks are carried out by representatives of the above sectors and organizations, working with other relevant stakeholders (regional and local authorities, universities, etc.) at a cross-border level to plan and organize activities that promote the development of inclusive and sustainable communities.” (ENI CBC MED M&E plan, p 66)*

As for the theme of “**Communication**”, it refers to the program's aim to provide space to voices that are excluded from the role of policy through encouraging active communication with the target groups with the three main codes “*Language of Communicate*”, “*Open Communication Channels*”, and “*Social Media*”.

“*Language of Communicate*” highlights what language the program found suitable to use with the target group, “one of our main challenges right now is trying to convince the partners who are coordinating these projects to adopt language that is more accessible to the general public because they tend to speak in a very administrative, like to write articles, in very administrative ways. My job is to adapt this language to translate it into language and make sure that is understandable for people” (A1). This staff member also described how she is mentoring the partners to also use the same method, “Try to make it accessible to make it easy. So, people understand what you are doing. And if you explain what you are doing at the EU level and an easy way, then people will understand perfectly why you are doing it? And you don't create walls and between people in remote Brussels and their bureaucratic language and final beneficiary who are in the West Bank or Tunis” (A1). Another point made by another interviewee was “It is already a need the program is aware of because we see there are projects that are involving hundreds and hundreds of vulnerable persons. It appears clearly that for allowing them to access those resources, you have to reach them and communicate with them in the way they are used to communicating. otherwise, you will not involve them” A2. All the participants in the focus groups agreed on the importance of using the suitable language with the target group, “during the implementation of the project activities I always make sure to use

*the communication language that the beneficiaries understand, I always remind my staff to do this practice” (B6).*

The code “**Open Communication Channels**” reflects the program responsiveness to partners and ending beneficiaries,” *I try with all my energy to respond to the phone calls, social media, email...etc. in fact, any tool that is available to meet people who ask for a meeting, or for any potential partner “(A3).* Moreover, one of the examples on how the program offers to hear people who are normally excluded was given in one of the focus groups, “*the program asked us to make a video, not with the direct beneficiaries of this action. But also, with the community itself. as these actions are already within their needs and achieve some of their needs or objectives” (B5).*

The code “**Social Media**” refers to the usage of social media platforms, such as YouTube channels, LinkedIn, etc., to communicate with the beneficiaries, “*The Programme is present and active on social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram) and encourages projects to do so on at least one social media platform of their choice, ensuring an active presence. Social media are a great way to reach a vast array of target groups, in particular young people, and allow direct connection with followers” (Communication and visibility, p10).* Social media platforms can also be a way to support the social inclusion of at-risk youth, “*Using social media can be a good way for unemployed youth and women to find out about job openings or other support services and to follow employers they would like to work for Moreover it gives them the space to share not only their voices but the skills” (B2).*

## Time and Space

The fourth objective was to understand how the program considers time and space in any analysis. Including the different kinds of knowledge which are situated, to improve our understanding of the circumstances of the final beneficiaries. The results here represent two themes: “**No Harm**” and “**Understanding the Context**”. (See figure (9))

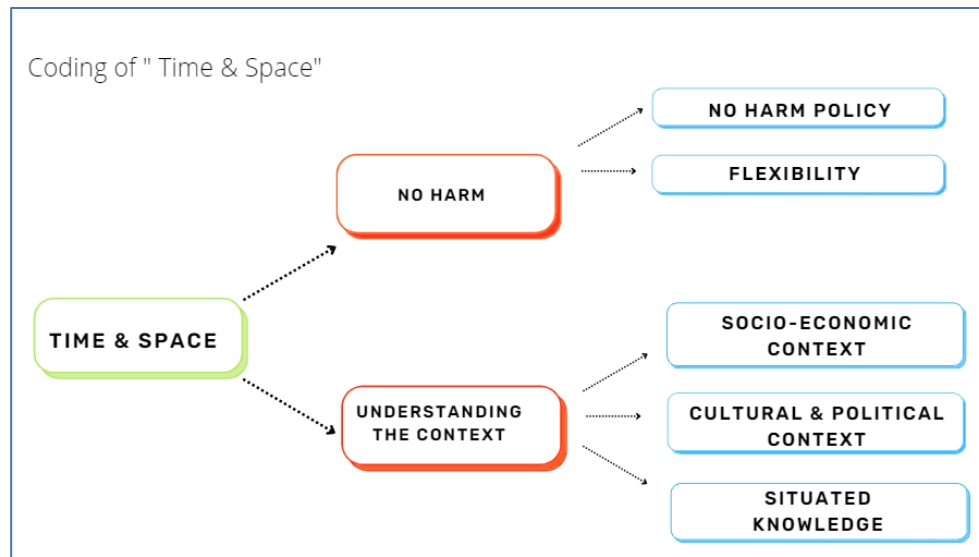


Figure (9), Coding of “Time and Space”

The code “*No Harm Policy*” demonstrates the program’s beliefs in doing the suitable interaction in relation to the context of the target group. “*Projects shall consider (people-to-people) efforts as being essential for strengthening ownership and encouraging active participation of the civil society across the countries bordering the Mediterranean. People-to-people modality is expected to be deployed in support of any “Thematic Objective of this Call for proposals” (Guidelines for applicants, p12).* The staff of the program also stated that “*a principle that when we work, we use which is “Do no harm”. It’s a principle considering or very much into the power of relationship or considering that the structure of the community that you are working on*” (A2). They added: “*there are key persons in each area. So, we encourage project and the organization, please. Please try to know who the key persons, the key players in each area*” (A3). Similar beliefs were shared by the partners, “*in my opinion, during the implementation of the project, the do no harm is respected*”. (B3)

The code “*Flexibility*” refers to the program adaptation to the circumstances and challenges of the target areas, “*We are very flexible in the program and respecting these needs*” (A3). During the focus groups, all participants believed that flexibility is one of the key elements to have successful interventions, “*I think ENI CBC MED is flexible this in this respect because*



*after all how things are done in Palestine, could be a little bit different than how things are done in Greece, within the same project because after all we work with our local community with our ecosystem, and I think there are some in the implementation process. There is Freedom or let me say flexibility how to implement things but within the design of the project, I think there are remarkable constraints” (B5).*

However, regarding the second theme “**Understating the Context**”, “*Central to the idea of preserving the Mediterranean coastal zones is the ecosystem approach applied through Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), a process that takes into account the complex set of interactions of different drivers and competing environmental, economic, social, cultural and recreational objectives that can affect ecosystems” (JOP ENI CBC MED, p 20).* The main codes are “**Socio-Economic Context**”, “**Cultural and Political Context**” and “**Situated Knowledge**”.

In the “**Socio-Economic**” code, the program intended to understand the socio-economic context of the beneficiaries, “*In view of the very large region and the large differences in economic situation of the region, in-depth external surveys for baselines will be focused only on territories concerned by project activities. The expected results indicators are also designed in such a way that projects will be required to collect most if not all the necessary information. Therefore, monitoring will be one of the obligations to be considered by the beneficiaries”.* (M&E Plan P.11). According to the second interviewee, “*Of economics, we have countries that are in particular for the northern shore of the Mediterranean that are, of course, are at the in an Eu frame so they have standards for society, administration, and rights. different is the situation in the South, where you have countries that are more variable year by year So the situation may change time to time, it important to consider all context during the implementation” (A2).* Moreover, an example of the implementation was mentioned, “*we do not try to adopt Western treatment in the countries where this is not feasible, either from the economic point of view, the social adaptation, and so on. So, in our case, we proposed a natural-based Solutions, and we take advantage also of the solar radiation” (B5).*

“**Political and Cultural Context**” is concerned with the understanding of the political and cultural context of the beneficiaries, “*I think that personally, I think that economic and*

*social aspect is quite well considered. But I may think that the cultural and political aspect is not always fully considered, I think that in the questionnaire that they use for this National consultation. They have to they are different indicators, and they're usually related to the economic situation of the country or the region. Also, the unemployment rate and this kind of indicator. But right now, I cannot think of any cultural or political parameter” (A1).* Another staff member added, *“The program tries in each work to avoid dealing with or take part or affecting any political situation. However, politics affects the implementation of the activities of the project and the country” (A3).* *“There is also the involvement of Israel, which puts as some stakes in the implementation”.* However, that does not contradict with the importance of understanding it *“the more you are informed about your society and about the socio-political classification of the community. The more you can take these considerations into account” (B3).* Another staff member continued, *“in our areas, especially in Jordan, maybe in Palestine even in Egypt. The men cannot go to meet or interview women or to meet women and make it even awareness or training. So, you must know this and try to manage. we asked the projects to be very flexible in this and have women to meet women. they must respect the national situation” (A3).*

Lastly, the code **“Situated knowledge”** reflects the situated knowledge implementation with the program consideration by the program. The results show indirect implementations, *“the design of the project doesn't specify those or intersected them. But one way or another, while we are doing the project, while we are analyzing our beneficiaries, we are doing this” (B2).* However, some of the partners believe that not focusing on these concepts makes them seem like they are optional, *“you either design a project taking into consideration some of these topics or Try to include them during the implementation which could be left to the power of the implementing partner” (B3).*

The results show that there is a lack of awareness about the situated knowledge theoretically, *“I would say don't know what is situated knowledge means but we are doing it by practice. And I think this is one of the other deficiencies has of the program as a whole is that it does not take into account some of the terminologies like having a common ground of defining things or building or building the capacity of the partners to understand” (B2),* and in some cases lack of program recognized the partners context *“not always they know the situation in*

*our countries. I mean when they are auditing the documents not always, they understand why these complicated issues, why we should have three or four auditors”. (B8). “I Don't feel that you have a program impose something to be implemented within each project” (B5).*

## The Diversity of Knowledge

This section shows the results of how the program understands the relationship between oppression and privileges. Only two codes were found: “*Transfer of Knowledge*” and “*Capitalization Projects*”. (See figure 10)

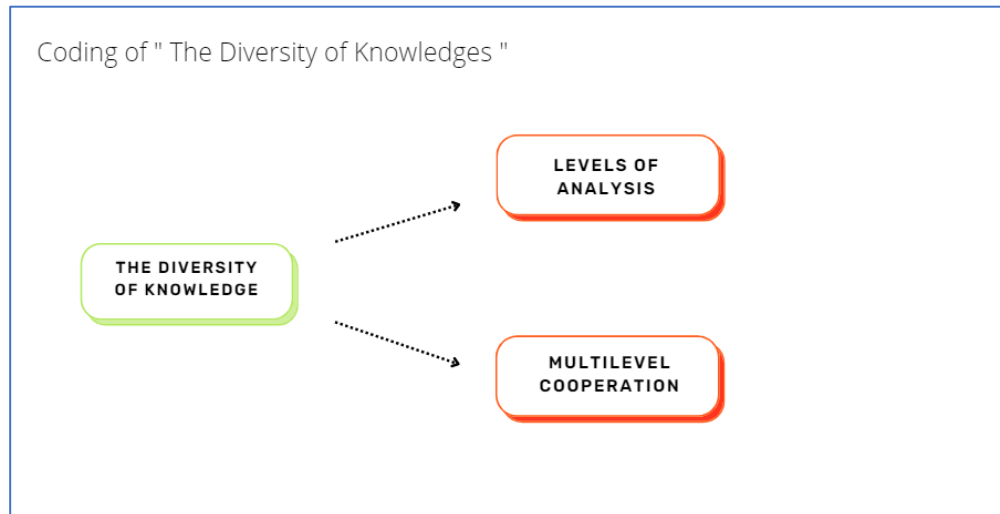


Figure (10), Coding of “The Diversity of Knowledge”

The code “*Transfer of Knowledge*” reflects how the program includes the marginalized people's knowledge by exchanging knowledge among all partners, “*encouraging exchange of good practices and experiences among National, Regional and Local authorities, strengthening their capacities for quality public services delivery, improving capacities in engaging on activities which can create job opportunities, generate income and have an impact on local communities, improve capacities to secure participation of local civil societies and socioeconomic stakeholders in local planning processes are among the most*

*pressing needs of the area” (M&E Plan, p12). Knowledge transfer is on the level of transferring knowledge among partners “so it is nicely distributed according to the expertise of the partners, especially because it could be the one partner institution is more advanced in some areas. And some other partners are more advanced in more technical things” (A2), another participant describe the transformation of knowledge” as mutual “In my point of view the advantage of this program is that knowledge transfers between is both way from north and the south of the Mediterranean” (B3). Knowledge transfer is also acknowledged on the level of final beneficiaries, “We try to take advantage of this unspoken knowledge. Sometimes, you know from a farmer. We will even hasn't even studied. He can show you how to do things that you didn't have in mind” (B5).*

The “**Capitalization Code**” refers to the projects which are designed to promote the exploitation and/or widest dissemination of the successful practices and results of previously financed projects, “*The program recently issued a proposal for the capitalization of a project, focusing on how to build or make this project scalability and repeatable in the counties. Making this, wouldn't happen if there is no good understanding and touching up on all the issues related to the community. So will not be replicable and maybe scalable” (B6)*

On the program level, the design was done based on the lessons learned gathered from several partners and beneficiaries in the previous cycle, “*Based on the experience of the previous ENPI MED CBC Programme 2007-2013, the new JOP focuses on economic, social, and environmental challenges of the utmost relevance for the cooperation area: revitalization of the economy through innovation and euro-Mediterranean networks and value chains that have the ultimate goal of boosting job opportunities and social inclusion; and conservation of unique ecosystems of the Mediterranean” (JOP ENI CBC MED, p 20). As it is also mentioned by the second interviewee: “so the way to work on it is the capitalization that these specific typologies of intervention, where best practices and prom promising models are improved or applied, something that has proven been very effective in terms of social inclusion in particular, or in the creation of jobs” (A2). Additionally, one of the partners in the focus groups shared a personal experience where the program adapted the knowledge produced during the project, “When I applied proposal I applied with my knowledge and understanding in the circular*

economy, I was not sure they we select, my surprise was that the program added the concept I proposed “constructions” under the circuital economy for the next round to apply” (B1).

## Social justice

The final objective aimed to study how the program perceives social justice issues. The results have shown the codes “*Thematic Areas of the Project*” and “*No- discrimination*” and “*Sustainability*”. As described in the figure below:

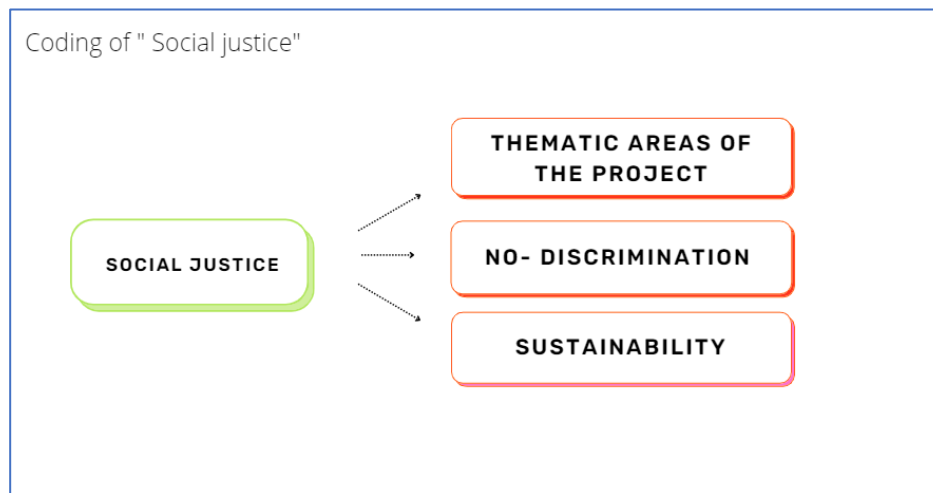


Figure (11), Coding of “Social Justices”

The code “*Project thematic areas*” demonstrates the way the program tackles the most common issues related to social justice in the target areas and works on making a positive impact on the target groups, “*We address social justice, but not in a direct way. I mean we won't put on our website that; the main aim of our program is to Foster social justice happening, in the Med. But indirectly through all the initiatives and all the projects, we have funding, and we are supporting, we are doing it*” (A1). The participants of the focus groups also mentioned the following “*I can say that the program addresses social justice issues, maybe in general, definitely it's in somehow address*” (B3). Also, “*The project is careful with the Overarching Objective of the Program, and in particular the Thematic Objective and Priority in the most effective and efficient way to solve the issues relevant to targeted areas at*

*Mediterranean Sea level. I mean the ENI CBC MED program covers real challenges. We face in between countries.” (B1)*

The code “**Non-discrimination**” highlights how the program applies the non-discrimination principle and equality in all its activities by all the actors within the program, such as staff, leading/partners, subgrantee, etc., “*you can find some references in in the guidelines for applicants where the applicants are invited to Ensure equal access to the resources provided by the program itself*” (A2). While for the code “**Sustainability**”, it indicates the program’s focus on the sustainability of the interventions with a multiplier which would create impacts on different scales; local, regional, and national levels, “*Environmental sustainability is a cornerstone of sustainable development, strongly interconnected with its other dimensions, i.e., the social and economic ones. It is important to recognize that environmental sustainability is not a problem to be solved but rather an opportunity to support broader social and economic goals, in addition to a healthy environment and society. Environmental sustainability is important for adaptation and resilience in the face of rapid and continuous changes in environmental and socio-economic conditions.*” (JOP ENI CBC MED, p58). Equal to that, “*ENI CBC MED programme try to address social justice through like social inclusion, fighting poverty, promoting a more sustainable Society socially and economically, environmentally, culturally*” (B3). In Addition to the fact that the fourth thematic area tackles environmental issues. The program takes sustainability and environment matters in the implementation of all thematic areas, “*The environmental issues is highly represented in the design and also the implement of the project, for example in our project the always focus on the environmental aspects of the implementation*” (B1).

## THE DISCUSSION OF FINDING AND CONCLUSION

In this part of the study, the findings are analyzed in relation to the literature review so as to highlight the themes/patterns discerned to answer the research question. The main takeaway in the process of this research has been to observe that intersectional perspective is indirectly and partially employed as a tool during the design and implementation of the

program. However, some of the intersectional principles being used are not recognized as part of the intersectional approach. This stems from a lack of awareness of the concept of “intersectionality” itself. The suggested implication of “intersectionality” here is in line with what has been mentioned earlier in the previous literature, presenting all these concepts can be used as analytical tools to understand how aspects of an individual’s social and political identity merge and lead to discrimination and privilege in different ways, not only in relation to gender issues but also in relation to all other aspects such as environment, economic empowerment, political engagement, etc. (Davis, 2008).

The main research question was unpacked through the sub-questions mentioned in the introduction. The following discussion presents the analysis in light of what has been discovered as a response to those questions.

The first sub-question aimed to introduce how the program intersects various social categories (race, gender, sexuality, class, nationality, ability, language, religion, culture, ethnicity, body size, and age). It was observed that significant focus was attributed to gender and age in this program. Many interventions were designed to support these two categories by considering them as the most vulnerable by the program. The categories were critically assessed in their intersectionality to prioritize the most vulnerable.

It has also been observed that although there were mentions of other categories other than gender and age, it has been done in an indirect way without being intersected. For example, considerations regarding nationality, language, culture and social class did not have any significant interventions designed for them.

Furthermore, other categories related to intersectionality which could be relevant from an intersectional point of view were not included in the program entirely. For example, race, disability, religion, sexuality, and body size. This could be due to the fact that the program is constrained to only prioritize its primarily identified thematic areas, which do not focus on the mentioned social categories. However, it is important to emphasize the importance of taking such an intersectional approach that relates to the individuals not as one ready-made template.

This is consistent with previous literature by Mitchell, who stated that people's lives cannot be explained by observing a single category such as gender, race, and socioeconomic status. People's lives are multidimensional and complex (Mitchell, 2019).

The 2nd sub-question explored how the program worked with the multi-level analysis of the local community, which is an important and critical component of the program. However, it is often difficult to achieve communication with different key stakeholders to generate harmony. It was observed that this category was implemented by using a strategy designed to ensure a high-level engagement of relevant stakeholders, which was achieved by the program as local, national and regional actors related to the study were actively involved. The design of this multi-level engagement strategy could be used in the future as a reference/case study of another program.

The model used considers common issues on the regional side and merges them with national priorities of each country to be further localized with the needs of the target communities/groups at the local level. It is in this way they holistically tie together the concerns of all the stakeholders. Although it is a time-consuming exercise, it is able to genuinely engage stakeholders and produce authentic results in comparison with strategies that are timesaving but not effective or genuine in reaching the stated goal of this intervention. Moreover, these results can be defined as a good example of what all of Dhamoon, Hankivsky, Winker and Degele have discussed on the requirement of addressing processes of inequity, and differentiation across levels of structure, identity, and representation for attending to this multi-level dimension of intersectionality

The 3rd sub-question pertains to the critical assessment of this program vis-a-vis the usage of reflexivity. Reflexivity as a concept that acknowledges the importance of power at the individual level and in connection to our relationships with others, at the societal level. This concept intends to capture multiple truths, and to consider voices typically excluded from policy priorities. (Hankivsky, 2014) In the 3rd thematic area of this program, it can be deduced that it does employ reflexivity as it focuses on enhancing social inclusion and fighting poverty. The program also intends to engage people belonging to the category of NEETS (not in



employment, education, or training), as well as women of all ages, to be given the training to acquire marketable skills to increase their employability which in turn helps them overcome economic oppression. However, it is important to clarify that while reflexivity is being employed to a great extent, it is not being done as effectively as multilevel analysis yet.

These findings can be in consonance with what (Crenshaw, 1994) has written about representative intersectionality, which advocates for the creation of images that support multiple oppressed groups. In the case of this program, for instance, representative intersectionality condemns the sexism and classism marginalization of poverty-stricken women who have not been trained or educated in representation and emphasizes the importance of groups being represented in the public sphere.

The 4th sub-question assessed how the program deals with the principle of time and space. It seeks to understand how the circumstances of the target groups are considered at the time of implementing the intervention. It was interestingly observed that the program as a whole does not have any clear written directives to be included by the project managers in this category. However, the agents working in the fields are incorporating this aspect as they directly interact with the beneficiaries.

The only intervention in this category used by the program is the “No Harm Policy”. However, it does not specify any details to contextualize its implementation. The project agents working under the program show a high level of understanding of the context to design interventions addressing the authentic needs of the target groups. Hence, since this aspect is not a mandatory requirement expected to be delivered by the project agents, the practice of inclusion of time and space thus effectively becomes optional to the people working on the project. This is a key aspect, not a direct/clear requirement; it can then not be evaluated.

However, the flexibility accorded in the program level serves as an added value for it allows the program to adapt to the possible risks and changing circumstances in the program’s lifecycle.

Regarding the situational knowledge of the project beneficiaries, the program shows to some extent an understanding of the economic and social context, but also a lack of understanding of the more nuanced political & cultural issues, which are more complex to grasp in the context of the Mediterranean localities chosen for implementation. However, the political aspect is very challenging to be analyzed as the program targets Mediterranean diversity.

In the end, it would be safe to say that the lack of the program generating awareness of the importance of the concept of “Situated Knowledge” is due to the fact that at the program level there is no sufficient apprehension of intersectional principles, which could have allowed for the inclusion of this category in a more direct and beneficial manner. However, in this case, it's very essential to understand how development occurs within these microsystems and beyond to avoid the traditional frameworks in development that often emphasize universality; thereby ignoring the considerable within-group heterogeneity that exists and lacking emphasis on the structural oppressions that shape daily interactions and perpetuate inequities (Santos & Toomey, 2018).

The 5th sub-question explored the “Diversity of Knowledge” principle, “Intersectionality is concerned with epistemologies (theories of knowledge) and power, and in particular, with the relationship between power and knowledge production” (Hankivsky, 2014). It has been evident that this aspect is the least implemented among all principles. It has been clearly observed that the principle is not sufficiently implemented, neither directly nor indirectly. However, only a few aspects were implemented, and they are summarized into two points. First, by the transformation of knowledge. The program somehow shows a positive approach by encouraging the interactive transformation of knowledge from South to North and vice versa. Unlike other programs, this might increase the knowledge of one side more than the other.

Nevertheless, the program does not capture genuine concerns about the production of knowledge by the marginalized groups, who normally have the least ability to share their knowledge. Thus, those groups are typically excluded in policy analysis.

The second point is the way in which the program builds on the knowledge, which was generated throughout the implementation process of the program and the “capitalization” of projects. This is a code mentioned earlier in the study and refers to projects designed to promote the exploitation and/or widest dissemination of the successful practices and results of previously financed projects. In a few cases, the shared results were produced with the active involvement of all beneficiaries.

The 6th sub-question pertains to social justice. It would be pertinent to highlight that the program partially targets the category of social justice in a direct manner. However, within the thematic areas identified for the program, social justice aspects were not included as a main target. The program documents show a tendency to strive for equality and reduce discrimination, which could be tackled in a clearer manner through the positive impact the program intends to make. The high focus on sustainability and environmental issues which are also important or relevant from the aspect of social justice are an example, and were reflected within the program. For instance, with regards to the fourth thematic area of the program priorities, “Environmental protection, climate change adaptation and mitigation”, the program gives special attention to applying the friendly environmental practices within the program itself, and the 80 projects which implement their interventions under the program umbrella.

Corresponding to what has been mentioned above, the literature by Mendoza, Guillermo, Ad Jeuken, John H. Matthews, Eugene Stakhiv, John Kucharski, and Kristin Gilroy: the Intersectional Approach can create a relation between social justice issues and environmental issues. For example, in regard to climate change, intersectionality can offer critical insights into the ways in which institutional practices, norms, and associated power dynamics shape the knowledge and norms used by policymakers. Through questions such as “What kind of knowledge is privileged in dealing with climate change?” and “How is the understanding of what is legitimate knowledge related to social categories and power relations?”. In addition, intersectional analysis can bring to light alternative knowledge about climate change, and therefore enhance climate change strategies (Kaijser & Kronsell, 2013).

These results might have implications on a practical level, since the Managing Authority of the ENI CBC MED is consolidating the final version of the Interreg NEXT MED programme before it is submitted for approval to the European Commission, the results of this research have slight potential to affect future practices. Therefore, the proposed recommendations are as follows:

First, it's highly recommended for the program to offer capacity training about the concept of intersectionality, with special focus on the importance of understanding the concept of "Situated Knowledge" by both program staff and partners. Partners in this context indicate the inclusion of both, the lead beneficiaries and program partners, so as to implement this concept throughout the designing and implementing processes of the interventions as they are the agent with a direct interaction with final beneficiaries in the fields. Applying this recommendation would increase the possibility of having an intersectional perspective all over the program to best match with beneficiaries' real needs.

Another recommendation is setting a specific requirement related to intersectionality considerations in the calls for proposals, guidelines of instructions for applicants and subgrants, and in the progress reports from partners. The proposed requirement could be similar to the current gender and age considerations, which are two social categories that have the most significant attention. Furthermore, it is highly recommended for the ENI CBC MED Program to intersect both gender and age with other social categories, such as disability, ethnicity, race, social class, and nationality, especially with the rising issues related to migration among the Mediterranean countries.

Moreover, in relation to age, it is essential to pay attention to the fact that the Mediterranean area is witnessing an increase in the number of elderly. Therefore, programs could further target older adults with well-designed projects that take into account the intersectional perspective, and with great attention to their situational context, "Older adults in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) are expected to increase in number and as a percentage of the general population. All MENA countries are likely to undergo marked

changes from 2025, with those aged above sixty-four years representing the largest age group by 2050” (Abyad, A, 2021).

Lastly, although the program demonstrated high records in terms of flexibility and is well-structured with its non-discrimination policy, which aims to give equal chances to include multi stakeholder, the bureaucracy in the program might exclude some of potential partners who are mostly from marginalized areas. This is due to the lack of capacity to meet all the program requirements such as the fact that the differences of the changing rates are not eligible cost, the financial guarantee, and the large number of supporting documents required by the program. All these can be challenges that prevent organizations who do not have a strong administration and financial capacity to be part of the program. This is critical, especially in the case of the small, and local organizations that are normally located in marginalized areas and have direct connection and deep understanding with the most vulnerable groups.

## LIMITATIONS

The limitations of the study can be reflected in the three uncovered principles of intersectionality, Power of relations, Equity and Resistance and Resilience. This study was not able to search the three principles due to a lack of sufficient time, logistics and the huge amount of data needed to study them.

First, regarding the power of relations principle, it requires daily observation of the daily interaction among a wide range of actors within this program. Moreover, examining this principle by tools used in this study, in-depth analysis, interviews, and focus groups might either not generate any results, or provide biased results as many people would report more positive/ negative situations from reality.

Secondly, due to the lack of the possibility to implement an in-depth long observation as mentioned above, the researcher decided not to study the principle of Equity as this concept is concerned with fairness. Different from equality, which means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities, equity recognizes that each person has

different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome. This concept is harder to study within this research as it needs to look not only at the surface level, but also at the impacts of the intersections of multiple positions of privilege and oppression.

Thirdly, this research did not study the final principle of intersectionality, the Resistance and Resilience, for it is too huge of a concept to be studied in this paper, as it needs an in-depth understanding of the power and oppression to recognize the multi oppressed “marginalized” spaces and locations, and the oppressive values, norms, practices and challenges. Also, the mechanism of subordinated groups was to use collective actions to destabilize dominant ideologies, policies, and discourses.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix (1): The List of Documents

1. Code Of Conduct for Funded Projects - ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme 2014-2020  
[https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Code%20of%20conduct/Code%20of%20conduct\\_31012022.pdf](https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Code%20of%20conduct/Code%20of%20conduct_31012022.pdf)
  
2. Project Implementation Manual:
  0. Foreword  
[https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/September%202020/EN/0.%20Foreword\\_18.09.2020.pdf](https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/September%202020/EN/0.%20Foreword_18.09.2020.pdf)
  
  1. Key Documents  
[https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/September%202020/EN/1.%20Key%20Documents\\_18.09.2020.pdf](https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/September%202020/EN/1.%20Key%20Documents_18.09.2020.pdf)
  
  2. Actors Involved  
[https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/September%202020/EN/2.%20Actors\\_18.09.2020.pdf](https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/September%202020/EN/2.%20Actors_18.09.2020.pdf)
  
  3. Project Start  
[https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/September%202020/EN/3.%20Project%20Start\\_18.09.2020.pdf](https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/September%202020/EN/3.%20Project%20Start_18.09.2020.pdf)
  
  4. Reporting  
[https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/02.07.2021/4.%20Reporting\\_updated%2001.07.2021.pdf](https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/02.07.2021/4.%20Reporting_updated%2001.07.2021.pdf)
  
  5. Project Amendments

<https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/October%202021/5.%20Project%20Amendments.pdf>

6. Monitoring

[https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/September%202020/EN/6.%20Monitoring\\_18.09.2020.pdf](https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/September%202020/EN/6.%20Monitoring_18.09.2020.pdf)

7. Financial Management

[https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/02.07.2021/7.%20Financial%20management\\_updated%2001.07.2021.pdf](https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/02.07.2021/7.%20Financial%20management_updated%2001.07.2021.pdf)

8. Risk Management:

[https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/8.%20Risk%20management\\_v.1.0\\_30072019.pdf](https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/8.%20Risk%20management_v.1.0_30072019.pdf)

9. Project Closure

<https://www.enicbcmed.eu/projects/support-to-implementation>

10. Communication And Visibility

[www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/MIS/10.%20ENI%20CBC%20Med\\_Communication%20and%20visibility\\_Updated%20November%202021.pdf](http://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/MIS/10.%20ENI%20CBC%20Med_Communication%20and%20visibility_Updated%20November%202021.pdf)

3. Indicative Evaluation and Monitoring Plan:

[https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Documents/Annex2\\_updated%20M%26E%20Plan\\_C\\_2021\\_4327\\_1\\_ANNEX\\_EN\\_V1\\_P3\\_1281798.PDF](https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Documents/Annex2_updated%20M%26E%20Plan_C_2021_4327_1_ANNEX_EN_V1_P3_1281798.PDF)

4. Guidelines for Grant Applicants CBC MED PROGRAMME 2014-2020:

<https://www.enicbcmed.eu/calls-for-proposals/call-for-standard-projects>

5. Handbook for Sub-grants management ENI CBC MED PROGRAMME 2014-2020:  
<https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Project%20implementation%20manual/subgrants/Update%20December%202021/Handbook%20for%20subgrants%20management.pdf>
  
6. ENI CBC Med Joint Operational Programme:  
[https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Documents/ENI%20CBC%20MED\\_%20JOP\\_Mod.%20July%202021\\_C\\_2021\\_4327\\_1.PDF](https://www.enicbcmed.eu/sites/default/files/Documents/ENI%20CBC%20MED_%20JOP_Mod.%20July%202021_C_2021_4327_1.PDF)

## Appendix (2): Document Analysis Questions

	<b>Evaluation question</b>	<b>Criteria of evaluation</b>
Intersecting Categories	How the program intersects the different social categories (race, gender, sexuality, class, nationality, ability, language, religion, culture, ethnicity, body size, and age)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How the program intersects two or more of the mentioned social categories?</li> <li>● How the program copes with gender issues?</li> <li>● How the program copes with race issues?</li> <li>● How the program copes with sexuality consideration?</li> <li>● How the program copes with class differences?</li> <li>● How the program copes with nationality differences?</li> <li>● How the program copes with ability/ disability issues?</li> <li>● How the program copes with language consideration?</li> <li>● How the program copes with religious differences?</li> <li>● How the program copes with cultural differences?</li> <li>● How the program copes with ethnicity consideration?</li> <li>● How the program copes with body size consideration?</li> <li>● How the program copes with age consideration?</li> </ul>
Multilevel analysis	How the program understands the effect between and across the different levels of society, including macro, intermediate, and micro?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How does the program include multiple stakeholders?</li> <li>● How does the program target the issues at the regional level?</li> <li>● How does the program target the issues at the national level?</li> <li>● How does the program target the issues at the local level?</li> <li>● How does the program understand the interaction among the three levels in regard to dealing with the issues?</li> </ul>
Reflexivity	How the program acknowledges multiple truths and a diversity of perspectives while giving space to voices typically excluded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How the program targets the double oppressed people?</li> <li>● To what extent the program designed is willing to give space to voices typically excluded from the role of policy?</li> <li>● How does the program include the marginalized people's needs?</li> </ul>

	from the role of policy "expert"?	
Time and Space	how the program understands the situated knowledge of beneficiaries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To which extent does the program focus on a “no harm policy” in the process of implementation?</li> <li>● To what extent the program design is flexible to include the different perspectives of the target group?</li> <li>● To which extent does the program take the geographical circumstances of beneficiaries into consideration?</li> <li>● To which extent does the program take the historical circumstances of the final beneficiaries into consideration?</li> </ul>
The Diversity of Knowledge	how does the program addresses the relationship between power and knowledge production?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How does the program understand the relationship between oppression and privileges in designing intervention?</li> <li>● How does the program include the marginalized people's points of view and knowledge?</li> </ul>
Social justice	How the program addresses social justice issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In which way does the program focus on the positive impact?</li> <li>● In which way does the program is copes with the social justice issue?</li> </ul>

## Appendix (3): Interview Questions

### **Oral Consent**

I would like to ask your consent for the video to be recorded for research purposes, and kindly ask you for permission to use the information acquired in this interview for research purposes. All information will be anonymized, and the principle of confidentiality will be respected.

### **Introduction**

This is Hind Abushkhadim, an MA student at Global Development and Foresight. I am working on my thesis which studies “Intersectionality Consideration in European Union Development Projects ENI CBC MED as a case study”.

Before starting I would like to ask about your names, positions, and briefly about your roles in the program?

### **Interviews questions**

**AIM:** To determine the extent to which the results of the document analysis are consistent with the perceptions of program staff.

**Objective 1: To understand how respondents perceive the principles of intersectionality.**

#### **Main research question 1?**

What are respondents' perceptions of the principles of intersectionality?

#### **Interviews Questions**

1. How is the situational context in which beneficiaries live considered within the program design?
2. As (position of the interviewee) what tools did you use to address intersectionality in your work?  
(Intersectionality can be determined as a tool to address the various types of intersectional discrimination that beneficiaries may face based on race, gender, age, ethnicity, physical ability, class, or other characteristics that make them multiply oppressed.)
3. In your opinion, what potential benefits do you think intersectionality can have in the context of ENI CBC MED?
4. In your experience, what are the biggest challenges in applying intersectionality?

**Objective 2: Discuss the considerations of intersectionality principles in the CBCMED Project.**

**Main research question 2:**

How does the program consider the principles of intersectionality?

**Interviews Questions:**

1. How does the program interconnect the different social categories (race, gender, sexuality, class, nationality, ability, language, religion, culture, ethnicity, body size, and age)?
2. How does the program realize the effect of intersectionality among the different levels of society, including macro, intermediate, and micro?
3. How does the program recognize the knowledge of the beneficiaries developed from the perception of their daily life situations and its geographically and historically specific perspective?
4. How does the program engage in ongoing dialog about "unspoken, individual, or organizational knowledge" and its impact on program goals and objectives?
5. How does the program recognize multiple truths while giving space to voices that are normally excluded or marginalized?
6. How does the program address social justice issues?

## Appendix (4): Structure and questions of the focus groups

### **Oral Consent**

I would like to ask your consent for the video to be recorded for research purposes, and kindly ask you for permission to use the information acquired in this focus group for research purposes. All information will be anonymized, and the principle of confidentiality will be respected.

### **Introduction**

This is Hind Abushkhadim, an MA student at Global Development and Foresight. I am working on my thesis which studies “Intersectionality Consideration in European Union Development Projects ENI CBC MED as a case study”.

Before starting I would like to ask about your names, positions, and briefly about your roles in the program?

### **Activity one**

Now, I will show you some words on the screen and ask you to give an example of oppression related to this word in your context:

Gender	Age	Race
Social class	Ethnicity	Physical ability

### **Round one questions**

1. How do you think ENI CBC MED's structure addresses local issues?
2. What degree of freedom is there in making proposals, technically and financially?  
(Explain in the foot note)
3. How is the situational context in which beneficiaries live considered within the program design?
4. What are the challenges of implementing intersectionality in development projects?



## Activity two

Please rank the following concepts. Choose the most important three to be considered in development projects:

Flexibility in implementation	Include everyone	The unspoken knowledge of beneficiaries
Addresses social justice	Geographic context of beneficiaries	Historical context of beneficiaries
Power of relation	Interconnection between the social categories	Organizational knowledge

## Round two questions

5. How does the program interconnect the different social categories (race, gender, sexuality, class, nationality, ability, language, religion, culture, ethnicity, body size, and age)?
6. How does the program realize the effect of intersectionality among the different levels of society, including macro, intermediate, and micro?
7. How does the program acknowledge multiple perspectives while giving space to voices that are normally excluded or marginalized?
8. How does the program address social justice issues?