





CREACT4MED Mapping: Best Practices

Application Number: BP 23

1. Basic info*		
Email Address	ryma.jaafra@gmail.com	
Title of the Best Practice	Couscous Publishing House	
Name of the Applicant	Rym Jâafra	
Is the BP a registered legal entity?	Yes, I will send the certificate of registration by email	
Website		
Country	Tunisia;	
Subsector	Media (publishing, TV & radio, digital media, film and video, music);	
Category	a) Cultural and creative entrepreneurship;	
Year of establishment and duration	2/28/2012	
Target group of the BP	Our project is the publication of a magazine of comics entitled "Bab bhar" which means "The door to the sea". It targets children aged 6 to 11 attending state schools located in unprivileged neighborhood in the capital Tunis,Bizerte and Nabeul. This magazine in Arabic literary has already been launched with 2 test issues between October 2020 and May 2023 and it was sold in twenty thousand copies during this period. The project is managed by the social company Couscous publishing house based in Tunisia. Thanks to an original and fun content composed by comics and educational sections, the magazine 'The door of the sea' has succeeded in getting children passionate about reading at the digital age. In addition to the dissemination of culture, our magazine pays particular attention to education and actively participates in improving infrastructure in Tunisian public schools.	
1. Best Practice Characteristics		
Problem Statement	PROBLEM 1: INCULTURE: According to a UNESCO study currently 74% of	

Problem	Statement

PROBLEM 1: INCULTURE: According to a UNESCO study, currently 74% of Tunisians do not have a single book at home. Another alarming number, new Tunisian publications intended for the 6/12 age group did not exceed one hundred and fifty for the year 2022. Due to insufficient publications intended for children, they have lost the habit of reading. A child who does not read will be ignorant and will not accept difference and diversity, which will lead to intolerance.

PROBLEM 2: DEGRADATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS INFRASTRUCTURE IN TUNISIA:

Children suffer from the deterioration of the infrastructure of their schools and the lack of hygiene. We observed for ourselves during our interventions in these schools of capital Tunis several facts: rats which invade the schools (Dar Fadhal in Soukra), broken doors and windows in the middle of winter (Bougatfa school in Sidi Hssine). Currently, more than 4000 schools suffer from problems with their infrastructure according to Minister of Education Hatem Ben Salem.

PROBLEM 3: UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment in Tunisia is among the highest in the world and this phenomenon particularly hits young people with a rate above 30%. This unemployment also affects artists, those who try to work in the field of comics cannot find any publishing house to publish their works.







Mission Statement & Value proposition

The goal of our social company Couscous publishing house is to educate children from an early age to tolerance and to passionate them about reading comics, which is very important to stimulate their imaginations at the digital age.

From the beginning of October 2020, we sold 10 000 copies of the 1st issue of the magazine at a price of 3.5 dinars (1euro) in public primary schools located in marginalized neighborhood at the capital Tunis,Ben Arous,Bizerte and Nabeul. The 2nd issue was sold in 10 000 copies.

The magazine was distributed in all newsstands from north to south in 213 points of sale with the intermediary of the company Sotupresse. Intolerance originates from ignorance and misunderstanding, these are the most serious dangers that threaten our country, Tunisia. Our publishing house's mission is to educate children to tolerance by using comics as an educational and fun medium. We have made a partnership with the Tunisian ministry of education in order to promote and sale the magazine in state primary schools. 20% of the sale price of the magazine was spent on improving the infrastructure of public primary schools and creating libraries. Each issue of the magazine "The Door to the Sea" treats with the problem of intolerance that can develop in children. Educators and parents could use the magazine as a guide to open dialogue with the child about the benefits of tolerance. Thus, this magazine encourages intercultural dialogue, because it explains the problem to the child and teaches him the acceptance of cultural diversity from an early age. These values are addressed by: Comics and educational sections. Objectives and changes:

- 1/ Tolerant child: Inculcate tolerance in children by making them aware of the richness of cultures around the world.
- 2/ A child citizen of the world: Thanks to a well-studied educational content, the Tunisian child will learn to love his country and other countries and the goal will be that he considers himself a citizen of the world.
- 3/ An educated Arab child: The magazine promotes the cultural development of the child.
- 4/ Educate children about the protection of the environment and the planet: In the magazine 'The door of the sea", we published the comics of 'Lina' accompanied by an educational sections that raise awareness children to the protection of planet earth: 'Lina' is a Tunisian cosmonaut whose mission is to find a planet that can accommodate the earth settlers who no longer have a choice and must leave the earth which was very polluted because of the greed of the landowners who have overexploited its natural resources. It is a science fiction comic, a humorous adventure that reminds man of his duty to protect the planet.
- 5/ An opportunity for Tunisian artists: In each issue of the magazine, the project will be based on Tunisian cartoonist, designers and authors who will be able to earn a living by practicing their art, it creates dynamism between the magazine team.







Results and growth

Our innovative strategy of sales and distribution of the magazine in state primary schools: Create the desire to buy comics among children: The magazine team adopted an original approach to promote the magazine to children in schools: Cartoonist Rym Jâafra and author Yassine Ellil traveled to schools in capital Tunis, and we presented school after school, class by class, the heroes of the comics and we did drawing demonstrations on the boards. This approach has paid off, as an average of 15% of children in the targeted schools have purchased the magazine and currently, we have 15000 loyal children who buy the magazine 'The door of the sea' in capital Tunis. As of today, Couscous publishing house has sold 42'000 magazines, (10'000 at launch, 14'000 of the second edition, and 18'000 from the third edition and has reached over 235 schools from marginalised neighbourhoods in tunisia situated in Ariana, Tunis, Ben Arous, Nabeul, and Bizerte.

1/ Comics as a medium to get children interested in reading:

Comics are the best way to get children interested in reading because they contain little text and lots of images, making it easier to introduce them to reading longer texts and books.

A child who reads will have access to culture, he will be an asset for his society of tomorrow, because knowledge generates creativity and openmindedness and will make the child a citizen of the world.

2/ Improving infrastructure in schools:

In Tunisia, the laws allow magazines to be promoted and sold in schools on the condition of paying 20% of the price of the magazine to the school. We distributed two test issues in schools between 2020 and 2023, we sold 10000 copies of N°1 and the same for N°2. We allocated 20% of the sale price to the schools and they received a total of 11000 Tunisian dinars (3300 euros) allocated to repairs, the purchase of supplies and also to create libraries in 3 schools such as the school Jayara1 in Sidi Hssine.

3/ Create jobs:

The social company Couscous publishing house created 3 jobs under contract, 2 artists and 1 driver during the test period. With its expansion for the 2023/2024 school year, it will be able to double the jobs created and it will also hire a graphic designer, a cartoonist and a driver. It is estimated that this project will create 18 jobs over 5 years.

Strategy to be financially sustainable

Our strategy to guarantee the financial sustainability of the project is to continue to sale the magazine at a law prize 1 euro and to make interventions with the magazine 'The door of the sea' in state primary schools and not to limit to the same school or the same region in terms of sales. Our target audience are children aged between 6 and 11 years old who will continue to buy future issues of the magazine, because there will be fantastic stories full of adventure and suspense in each issue, it will attract the attention of the child, who while reading the 1st episode, will ask with curiosity and impatience the continuation of each story. This will allow us to stabilize the customers and therefore the possibility of increasing the number of children buyers who will continue to be loyal to the purchases of the 3 issues per year and subscribe to the magazine throughout the year.







The capital Tunis has 200000 children enrolled in public primary schools. We estimate to reach 100000 copies sold in the next 4 years. We started by selling the magazine in public primary schools located in popular and marginalized neighborhoods in the capital Tunis:

- Raoued / Bardo / Boumhal / Ville Ettadhamen / Sidi Husseine / Sijoumi.
- Rades / Mégrine / Ben Arous / Mourouj 2 / Ezzahra.
- Mourouj 1 / Fouchana / Mhemdia / Manouba / Mornag. Then, we will expand our sales sphere to reach children attending public primary schools in Nabeul, Bizerte, Sousse, Monastir, Tozeur, Gabes, Medenine, Mahdia, Beja and Jendouba. Number of pages:

Tozeur, Gabes, Medenine, Mahdia, Beja and Jendouba. Number of pages 29 of which 20 pages are devoted to comics. The format; square: 22.5cm / 22.5cm. Periodicity: 3 issues per year (during school months according to the Tunisian school system).

Our objective for the next school year of 2023/2024 is to expand our sphere of sales and to reach children attending schools located in Sousse, Monastir and south of Tunisia and increase our sales to 30000 copies of number 4,5 and 6. Currently, we are in the process of work on the graphic design of the magazine: Adding colors to comics, the design of the cover. Each school has 6 levels according to the Tunisian school system, we have targeted children enrolled in classes from 1st year primary to 5th year. The target age groups are children aged between 6 and 11 years old.

2. Impact (please complete at least 3 of the 6 sub-sections)

Economic significance

Sales operation and distribution of the magazine in state primary schools: From the beginning of march 2023, we printed 15000 copies of our magazine of comics 'The door of the sea', we started by distributing the 1st issue in state primary schools in capital Tunis, Ariana and Ben Arous. We carried out interventions in schools with the magazine in the classrooms in order to make our magazine known to children. The number of interventions varies according to the number of child and the size of each school spread over the capital Tunis, Ariana and Nabeul.

As a sales strategy, we started by selling the magazine in schools that contain a large number of children (between 500 and 1000 children per school), we achieved sales success. As a start, and from the beginning of march 2023, with the support of the Investmed grant, we sold the stock of the 14223 copies of the 1st issue. In April 2023, we printed 15000 copies of the second issue in order to increase the number of child readers of our magazine, we distributed the magazine in schools located in marginalized neighbours in Tunis such as: Fouchana, Bhar lazreq, Raoued, Sidi Hussine, Sijoumi, Etttadhamen.We have succeeded our strategy of sale, we sold 13467 copies of issue n°1.

Children loved stories published in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd issue of the magazine 'The door of the sea' and they were awaiting the release of issue n°4. Since the beginning of May 2023, we have printed 15000 copies of the third issue and we sold 5788 copies between the period which extends







between 01/04/2023 until May 31, 2023, we have stopped sales operations in schools because of the exam period, during June, children pass exams and the magazine was sold only in bookstores and newsstands. In September 2023, we resumed operation of sale of the magazine in schools located in Tunis, Bizerte and Nabeul.

Improve the infrastructure of public primary schools:

We launched two test issues in almost all schools in capital Tunis between 2020 and 2023, we sold 10000 copies of N $^\circ$ 1 and 10000 copies of N $^\circ$ 2. We allocated 20% of the sale price to schools that sold our magazine and they received a total of 11000 dinars (3300 euros). This sum was allocated to repairs in schools, the purchase of supplies and also to create libraries in certain schools such as the Jayara1 school located in Sidi Hussine. With the financial support of Investmed grant, 20% of the sale price of the magazine was spent on improving the infrastructure of state primary schools and creating libraries.

In march 2023, we sold 14223 copies of issue n°1, 130 schools located in marginalized neighbours in the capital Tunis, Ariana and Ben Arous have benefited from 20% of the sale price of issue n°1, they have regenerated 3 005.83 euros (9956.1dinars) to improve infrastructure. In April 2023, we sold 13467 copies of issue n°2, 114 schools located in Bizerte and Tunis have regenerated 2 848,96 euros (9426.9 dinars) with the sale of second issue. In May 2023, we sold 5788 copies of the third issue, 44 schools located in Nabeul and Tunis have benefited from the sale of issue n°3 and they regenerated 349.84 euros (1157.6 dinars).

Replicability and upscaling

The Ministry of Education has published that for the 2021/2022 school year, 1 120 000 students have joined the benches of state primary schools. In addition to the capital Tunis and Ben Arous the areas targeted by the magazine:

- The governorate of Nabeul: 39500 children.
- The governorate of Bizerte: 27000 children

According to the experience of the sale of test numbers, the average sale in relation to the total number of children per school is 15%. It is estimated that in Bizerte, we will be able to retain 4000 school children and in Nabeul, 6000 children. These 10000 children will be added to the 10000 children already retained between 2020 and 2022 to reach a total of 20000 school children who will buy the magazine on a regular basis. The magazine will not be cottoned only in the Tunisian territory, it will be exported in the Arab countries, especially the countries of the Maghreb such as Algeria, Morocco and Libya and it is estimated that the magazine will manage to sell 100 000 copies more outside the Tunisian territory.

Employment generation

Jobs created by the social company Couscous Publishing House
Our project is an opportunity to create jobs for artists in Tunisia:
With the support of Investmed grant funded by the European Union under
the ENI CBC Med Programme, the social company Couscous publishing
house created under contract 3 jobs a cartoonist, a colorist and a driver for
the distribution of the magazine during the implementation of the action
period between March and November 2023. To guarantee and follow the
success of our magazine 'The door of the sea', our publishing house will







hire authors and creative scriptwriters to integrate them into our team and encourage them to freely express their ideas. It creates dynamism between the magazine's team also a richness in content.

Our social company is made by a talented team and due of our innovative sales strategy, we have increased the number of sales of our magazine, this will boost our business to move forward faster and achieve success. We are a dynamic team made of scriptwriters, cartoonists and graphic designers who ensured successful content in terms of the magazine's graphic design, adding colors of all the comics and the educational sections. Yassine Ellil is a talented author, he wrote fantastic stories conceived with passion and humour full of adventure and suspense to captivate children's attention. He forms a great team with cartoonist Rym Jâafra in their promotional strategies, they work together in classes with an extraordinary look, they are running many interventions in state primary schools to ensure the success of sales and promote the magazine.

Inclusiveness

The magazine of comics 'The door of the sea' is particularly targeting children attending schools in popular and difficult neighbours located in rural and urban areas at the capital Tunis, Ariana, Ben Arous, Nabeul and Bizerte. Our project of a magazine of comics for children 'The door of the sea' 'is very important in order to create a market, an industry of comics in a country like Tunisia which has suffered for a few years from an alarming cultural desertification. We have a great potential for the development of our publishing house, because we offer an original content of comics with fantastic stories and educational and fun sections for children aged between 6 and 11 years old. We are a team made up of talented, dynamic young artists who are passionate about the art of comics and we want to pass our passion to children.

Thanks to an original and fun content, the magazine will inspire children to read. The project was created by the collaboration with women artists, graphic designers and talented authors and cartoonists who was able to earn a living by practicing their art, it creates dynamism between the magazine's team also a richness in content.

The adventure of comic heroes embodies the dreams of every child to live extraordinary stories by identifying with these heroes who take them out of their boring daily lives. Among these comic heroes, Cartoonist Rym Jâafra created the comic: "Halima in Wonderland", type: historical / fantastic. Script: Yassine Ellil: It is the story of a little Tunisian girl 'Halima', who will take a fantastic journey through time. The child discovers like 'Halima' through the objects of Tunisia, the great cultural richness through the cultural mix of our country. The little girl finds a magic necklace that takes her to a fantastic world, she meets a creature that has teeth in the form of Tunisian doors, she will ask him to enter a door that will lead 'Halima' to discover other objects from Tunisia: Pottery of Sejnane, traditional clothes, jewellery. This comic is a hymn that sings the beauty of Tunisian traditions and its heritage. Children will also discover educational sections linked to the themes of comics.

Author Yassine Ellil created the comic: 'The adventure of Sami through civilizations': type: fantastic/historical, script: Yassine Ellil, colors: Rym Jâafra. Resume of the story: It is the adventure of a little Tunisian boy named 'Sami' who travel back in time thanks to a magic computer, accompanied by a monkey 'Kiki' and a lion 'Leith' and a dragon. Sami







	discovers civilizations around the world. There are sections related to this comic explaining to children the history of each civilization such as Maya and Egyptians.
Social impact	Children enrolled in primary state schools are educated to tolerance and acceptance of cultural diversity" Social impact of the magazine of comics "The door to the sea": Our project of a children's magazine of comics 'The door of the sea' aims to passionate children to read fantastic stories in a world of technology and rapid access to information. Another objective is to educate children to tolerance and accept diversity by using comics as a didactic and playful medium. The 'Sea Gate' is the name of a monument located in the center of the capital Tunis. It was named after this gate which is oriented towards the sea. This monument connects the old Arab city of Tunis and the part of the city built by Europeans. We therefore chose this name for the title of the magazine in order to express Tunisia's openness to the cultural richness of the civilizations of the Mediterranean and elsewhere. In the magazine 'The door of the sea', we created comics inspired from the Tunisian identity in all the comics and columns. This identity is a mixture of several Mediterranean and other cultures. Thus, the child who reads this magazine will be aware of the diversity of his heritage and will be guided to understand and accept other cultures, not only to tolerate them, but also to benefit from their richness. Comics as a medium for tolerance education and intercultural dialogue: The content of the magazine promotes intercultural dialogue. We published the comic 'The adventure of Sami through civilizations' where the hero travels back in time through ancient civilizations and discovers their cultural
	heritage. Children who read the magazine assimilate cultures and other beliefs and this promotes the acceptance of difference. For us, intercultural dialogue is the awareness of being a citizen of the world and the richness that other cultures can bring us.
Innovation	Successful launch of innovative digital tools: The use of Wacom Cintiq Pro 32: At the social company Couscous publishing house, we value and empower our teams to thrive. We have invested in the purchase of very good equipment to ensure the good artistic performance of the team; we own the Wacom Cintiq Pro 32 the biggest screen ever created. The Wacom Cintiq Pro 32 packs a premium 4K display with stunning color performance and near-zero parallax. Paired with the Wacom Pro Pen 2, it's designed to make every flash of genius shine. By using the Wacom, graphic designers and cartoonists were able to improve the graphic quality of the magazine and beautify the colors. Establishment of innovative partnership structures: We have a partnership with the Ministry of National Education through an official authorization which allows us to intervene and sell our magazine in state schools. This authorization has been renewed every year since 2020. The innovation of our project is in the fact that artists who designed the content travel to more than 300 schools a year and speak directly to children when they enter the classroom to promote the magazine. Our project is part of a context of ignorance of Tunisians of other cultures and other religions. Only 21% of Tunisians bought a book according to recent polls in 2022. And recently in February 2023 statements and acts of racism







are committed by Tunisians against Sub-Saharan refugees. Our project works to instil tolerance in children from an early age.

Innovative strategy of sale of the magazine 'The door of the sea': Intervention of artists in state primary schools:

Since 1/03/2023, we have started by distributing the first issue of our magazine of comics 'The door of the sea' in state primary schools located in capital Tunis. We are starting a very effective and innovative sales strategy: Tunisian author Yassine Ellil and artist Rym Jâafra entered class by class to introduce the 9th art to children by showing them the process of creating comics. We presented the magazine by explaining to them what the job of comic book maker is, behind the scenes of the creation of all the comics and the sections, above all we told the children the story 'The adventure of Sami through civilizations' extracted from the magazine in order to create in them the spirit of discovery and suspense.

Thereafter, we leave the stock with directors who will carry out the operation of the sale in cooperation with guardian of schools. We have partnered with the ministry of national Education for permission to promote our revue in state primary schools. The school directors were cooperative in order to ensure the smooth running of sales operations and facilitate communication with the entire administrative body in each school. Indeed, since March 2023, we have achieved success in terms of sales for the months of intervention in schools, children loved the story of Sami, the hero who travels through civilizations with a monkey, lion and dragon. They were impatiently awaiting the release of the 4th and 5th issue of our magazine which are in progress.

Environmental sustainability

Raise awareness of children about the protection of the environment and planet earth :

Comics 'Lina', type: Science fiction, adventure and humour. Drawings and script: Yassine Ellil, colors: Rym Jâafra

Our objective is to educate children about environmental protection by using comics, fantastic and adventurous stories. Educators and parents could use it as a guide to open a dialogue with the child about caring for the natural world. In the magazine 'The door of the sea', we published comics 'Lina', type: Science fiction, adventure and humour. Drawings and script: Yassine Ellil, colors: Rym Jâafra. Summary of the story: Lina is a cosmonaut whose mission is to find a planet that can accommodate the earth settlers who no longer have a choice and must leave the earth which was very polluted because of the greed of the earthlings who have overexploited its natural resources. It is a science fiction comic, a humorous adventure that reminds man of his duty to protect the planet. Comics: Shadi and Zahra, type: Adventure, humor, travel, drawings and script: Yassine Ellil, colors: Rym Jâafra: In the third issue of the magazine 'The door of the sea', we published the adventure of a little boy Shadi and his sister Zahra who find an octopus in Sidi Bou Said, children will take good care of the marine animal. Invited to share a trip to the beautiful village of Sidi Bou Said with the two children and their octopus, we return to the history of biodiversity. This captivating story around the complex subject of biodiversity: the threats weighing on biodiversity, the interactions between living species. The drawings invite its discovery and understanding.







And children will understand that to live in harmony on our Earth, it is necessary to respect each species that populates it!

The context: why this project is important?

Protecting the environment is of the utmost urgency. The company Couscous publishing house publishes the magazine of comics 'The door of the sea' for children aged between 6 and 11 years old to educate them about environmental protection. For the year 2023, the magazine 'The door of the sea' highlights the importance of water. Each issue of the magazine care about 6 themes:

- Deforestation
- The importance of water
- · Reduce plastic waste
- Explore and enjoy nature
- · Climate change
- Biodiversity loss and soil degradation can also affect human health. The main objective of these issues is to make children aware of the need to preserve environmental resources and the possible actions they can take from an early age, wherever they are. Thus, in the year 2023, our objective is to make children aware of the importance of not wasting water. Through different sections, children will have access to quality content, in particular: The comics 'Lina' written and draw by author Yassine Ellil in which the Tunisian little girl wants to save the planet earth, the story addresses the problem of wasting water and the need to preserve it, followed by an educational column on to the protection of the planet.

When children learn to appreciate the world from a young age, they are more likely to help protect our land for future generations to come. Generating a passion for the protecting planet early on makes a big difference in influencing children's future-environmentally friendly habits. By reading our magazine 'The door of the sea', kids and parents can take a number of steps to help their children to learn about the world and caring for our environment. According to the report The Global Environment Outlook, written by 250 scientists and experts from more than 70 countries, it appears that if measures to protect the environment are not considerably intensified, cities and entire regions in Asia, the Middle East and Africa could see millions of premature deaths by the middle of the century. In view of these challenges, the magazine 'The door of the sea', was designed as a dynamic and educational tool at the service of families and society.

3. Challenges and lessons learned

Challenges

The first challenge that threatened the execution of the project was the closure of booksellers and primary schools in Tunisia because of the pandemic of Covid 19 in Tunisia in March 2021. During this health crisis, our publishing house took new strategies by adapting to the current situation. The government announced a wave of contamination by the Covid 19 virus in Tunisia, we published the magazine 'The door of the sea' online, it was accessible to children confined in homes thanks to an interactive website. Children was able to read comics online and have fun during lockdown. A second challenge is that the price of paper has increased due to the pandemic of Covid 19, the printing of the magazine has become very expensive, in this case we will have to increase the price of the magazine to 4.5 dinars to ensure the sustainability of our project.







Lessons learned	Parents and children in Tunisia have lost the habit of going to newsstands to buy a magazine, because a long time ago there were no magazines of comics for children in Tunisia. In this case and according to our experience, the cartoonists of the magazine promote the revue in state primary schools located near bookstores and arouse the curiosity of children in order to encourage them to go and buy the magazine. We have a single Arabic-language competitor magazine entitled 'Majed' and a multitude of European magazines such as Picsou and Mickey. The magazine which comes from the United Arab Emirates'Majed' is the same price as 'The door of the sea' magazine, it has the advantage of containing more pages like other European magazines which contain gadgets and toys. The child identifies more with our magazine because it contains Tunisian stories expressed in a language that he understands. Our price is 3 times cheaper than European magazines. Competing magazines like us are distributed on 213 newsstands throughout Tunisia. We have the advantage of distributing in primary schools and we have reached, for example, 157 schools in the capital Tunis and this number is constantly increasing.	
4. Demographic Information		
Is the organization led by a woman?	Yes	
What age is the lead of the organization?	Between 16 and 35 years old	