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Project Final Report Template

Project Title: Aqua-Med: Women of the Medjerda – A Network for Clean and Sustainable Water

Reporting Period: 1 December 2025 – 30 June 2026

Project Lead/ Coordinator: Mrs. Hassiba Belghith

Project Coordinator – Green Compass Association

Implementing Organization: Green Compass Association (Tunisia)

Project Partner:
IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation
Implemented under the **BRIDGE Initiative (Building River Dialogue and Governance)**

Local Implementing Partners:

- Regional Commissariat for Agricultural Development (CRDA) of Béja
- Municipality of Béja
- Municipality of Testour
- Rural Women Unit – CRDA Béja
- GDA Bit El Mouna (Testour)
- GDA Bawebet Medjez El Bab
- SMSA BioPunica (Slouguia)
- Voix des Jeunes Béja Association
- National Agronomic Institute of Tunisia (INAT)

Project Area: Governorate of Béja (Béja, Medjez El Bab, Testour and Slouguia), Oued Medjerda Basin, Tunisia

Project Duration: December 2025 – June 2026

Date of Submission: 15 July 2026

1. Key Achievements

Summarize the key accomplishments and progress made during the project. Highlight major milestones, outputs delivered, and positive impacts achieved.

During the project implementation period, Aqua-Med successfully established the foundations for a more inclusive and participatory approach to water governance in the Medjerda Basin by combining evidence-based research, capacity building, stakeholder engagement and community mobilization. Through close collaboration with public institutions, local organizations and rural women, the project contributed to strengthening dialogue around water governance while promoting the recognition of women as essential actors in the sustainable management of water resources.

1. Stakeholder engagement and partnership building

A strong multi-stakeholder partnership was established from the early stages of the project and continuously strengthened throughout implementation. Green Compass worked closely with public institutions, local authorities, agricultural organizations and civil society to ensure that project activities responded to local needs while reinforcing existing governance mechanisms.

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Partnerships were developed with the Regional Commissariat for Agricultural Development (CRDA) of Béja, municipalities, agricultural development groups (GDAs), the Société Mutuelle des Services Agricoles (SMSA BioPunica), local civil society organizations and community-based associations operating throughout the Medjerda Basin. These actors actively contributed to project implementation by facilitating access to rural communities, supporting field activities, mobilizing participants and participating in awareness and capacity-building initiatives.
This collaborative approach considerably strengthened institutional ownership of the project and fostered constructive dialogue among actors who do not usually work together on water governance issues. It also enabled the project to build trust within local communities, particularly among rural women living in socially conservative contexts, where partnerships with well-established local organizations proved essential for facilitating participation and encouraging open discussions.
Beyond logistical support, these partnerships created opportunities to establish long-term collaboration between public institutions, local organizations and rural women, laying the foundations for a more inclusive governance process extending beyond the project duration.

2. Successful organization of the Project Launch Workshop

The official launch workshop, organized on **23 January 2026 in Béja**, marked the formal beginning of the Aqua-Med project and represented an important milestone in establishing a shared vision among all stakeholders.
The event gathered representatives of IUCN, regional public institutions, municipalities, CRDA Béja, agricultural organizations, women's groups, civil society organizations, media representatives and other local stakeholders involved in water and environmental management.
The workshop provided an opportunity to present the project's objectives, expected outcomes and implementation methodology while positioning Aqua-Med within the broader BRIDGE Initiative and its vision of promoting inclusive and participatory water governance.
More importantly, the event initiated an open dialogue between institutions and local communities regarding the environmental challenges affecting the Medjerda Basin, particularly water pollution, biodiversity degradation and increasing pressure on water resources. Discussions also highlighted the often-overlooked contribution of rural women to water management and emphasized the importance of strengthening their participation in local decision-making processes.
The launch workshop therefore served not only as an official project presentation but also as the first platform for dialogue and cooperation among stakeholders who would remain actively involved throughout the project implementation.

3. Completion and analysis of the participatory survey with 100 rural women

One of the project's most significant achievements was the successful completion and analysis of a comprehensive participatory survey involving 100 rural women from the Béja Governorate, including the localities of Béja, Slouguia, Testour and Medjez El Bab, and their rural agglomerations.
Rather than serving solely as a baseline assessment, the survey constituted a central component of the project's participatory methodology. It generated valuable evidence on rural women's relationship with water resources while ensuring that subsequent project activities were directly informed by local priorities, experiences and knowledge.
The survey explored multiple dimensions related to water governance, including access to water, water quality, agricultural practices, waste management, biodiversity conservation, public health, institutional participation and women's leadership. In addition to quantitative information, the survey documented local knowledge, environmental perceptions and community-based solutions proposed by the women themselves.
The analysis revealed that rural women possess extensive practical knowledge regarding the evolution of water resources, environmental degradation and local agricultural practices. However, despite being among the primary users and managers of water within their households and agricultural activities, they remain largely absent from formal decision-making processes related to water governance.
The survey also highlighted several priority environmental concerns, particularly water pollution resulting from pesticides, untreated wastewater, household waste and industrial activities, while identifying significant opportunities for improving environmental awareness, strengthening local participation and promoting more sustainable practices.

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The complete survey analysis has been produced as a dedicated technical report and is submitted as an annex to this Final Report. Its findings provided the evidence base for designing the project's training program, awareness activities and advocacy efforts.

4. Capacity building on water governance and women's leadership

Building upon the findings of the participatory survey, the project organized a series of three training workshops dedicated to Water Governance and the Role of Rural Women, bringing together rural women from different areas of the Medjerda Basin.

The first workshop, organized on 24 April 2026 in collaboration with GDA Bewabet Majz El Bab, introduced 16 rural women to the concepts of water governance, stakeholder responsibilities and the importance of protecting Oued Medjerda as a strategic resource for agriculture, biodiversity and local development. Practical exercises and interactive discussions encouraged participants to reflect on their own role in protecting water resources.

The second workshop was implemented in partnership with the Rural Women Unit of the CRDA Béja and brought together 26 grassroots rural women from Sidi Ismail. Conducted as a field-based learning activity, it focused on the daily relationship between women and water, local water uses, environmental challenges and biodiversity conservation while strengthening participants' understanding of women's contribution to sustainable water governance.

The third workshop, organized in Testour in partnership with GDA Bit El Mouna, represented the most participatory phase of the capacity-building program. Through group discussions bringing together 32 rural women, civil society representatives and local institutional actors, participants collectively identified the main environmental challenges affecting the Medjerda Basin, analysed their causes and formulated practical recommendations. Particular attention was given to strengthening women's participation in local governance structures, promoting pollution prevention at its source and encouraging community-based environmental action.

Together, these workshops significantly strengthened participants' understanding of water governance while increasing their confidence to engage in local dialogue and environmental initiatives. They also demonstrated that rural women possess valuable local knowledge and practical solutions that deserve greater recognition within water governance processes.

5. Community awareness, communication and media outreach

Beyond the training activities, Aqua-Med placed strong emphasis on community awareness and public engagement to encourage behavioral change and increase public understanding of water governance issues. Throughout the project, Green Compass implemented an extensive communication campaign combining field activities, digital communication, local media and awareness messages adapted to different audiences.

Numerous awareness posts were published on social media addressing issues such as water pollution, biodiversity conservation, waste management, children's health, rural women's contribution to water protection and citizen responsibility towards Oued Medjerda. These publications generated continuous interaction with local communities and helped expand the project's visibility beyond direct beneficiaries.

The project also benefited from two radio interviews on local and regional stations, providing opportunities to present project objectives, discuss environmental challenges facing the Medjerda Basin and promote the role of rural women in water governance.

Together, these communication efforts considerably increased public awareness while contributing to a broader dialogue on the importance of protecting Oued Medjerda and strengthening community participation in environmental action.

6. Youth engagement and collaboration with the National Agronomic Institute of Tunisia (INAT)

One of Aqua-Med's innovative achievements was the development of a close collaboration with students and researchers from the National Agronomic Institute of Tunisia (INAT). This partnership created valuable synergies between academic research, community engagement and environmental communication.

Several meetings and field activities were organized with INAT students working on agroecosystems and water governance within the Medjerda Basin. Students actively contributed to documenting local realities, producing awareness materials and facilitating exchanges between scientific knowledge and

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local experience.
As part of this collaboration, the project also adapted one of its planned activities. While the original workplan included two pilot waste management actions in riverine municipalities, field observations revealed that rural women rarely participate in public clean-up campaigns, as these activities are generally perceived as the responsibility of men or public authorities. The project therefore engaged INAT students in these environmental actions, combining awareness-raising, field documentation and youth participation while maintaining the project's objective of promoting pollution prevention and protecting Oued Medjerda.
This collaboration also enabled rural women to share their knowledge directly with future agricultural professionals, while allowing students to better understand the social dimensions of water governance and biodiversity conservation.
The involvement of young people strengthened the project's sustainability by creating bridges between universities, local communities and civil society organizations.

7. Creation of the Women of Oued Medjerda Network
One of the project's most important achievements was the establishment of the Women of Oued Medjerda Network, designed to ensure continuity beyond the project's duration.
The network initially emerged through a WhatsApp group bringing together the most active women identified during the survey and training workshops. As participation grew, the initiative evolved into a dedicated Facebook community (https://www.facebook.com/groups/756191834219202), which rapidly expanded to more than 255 members while maintaining a committed core group of approximately 20 highly engaged rural women expected to lead future community initiatives.
The network provides a permanent space for exchanging experiences, sharing environmental information, promoting local initiatives and strengthening solidarity among women living throughout the Medjerda Basin.
By establishing this community, Aqua-Med laid the foundations for a sustainable platform capable of supporting future awareness campaigns, advocacy actions and collaboration with local institutions long after project completion.

8. Production of communication and advocacy tools
The project produced several communication tools aimed at documenting local realities and amplifying rural women's voices.
In collaboration with INAT students and local partners, a short awareness video was produced featuring a rural woman farmer from Medjez El Bab, highlighting the importance of Medjerda Basin for agriculture, biodiversity and local livelihoods while illustrating women's everyday relationship with water resources.
Additional field documentation was carried out with professional communication partners, producing visual materials, environmental challenges and local testimonies. These outputs now constitute valuable advocacy resources that can continue to support awareness and education efforts beyond the project's lifetime.
The combination of scientific evidence, community testimonies and visual storytelling has considerably strengthened the project's communication impact while contributing to a more inclusive narrative on water governance in Tunisia.

2. Status of Activities

Provide an update on the implementation status of activities as per the workplan.

Output	Activity	Planned Timeline	Current Status	Remarks
Project launch and partners mobilization	Initial meetings, stakeholder outreach, and	December 2025 – Month 2	Completed	Extensive field visits and bilateral meetings conducted with key stakeholders (CRDA Beja,

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	partnership building			municipalities, GDAs, SMSAs, local associations). Strong ownership and engagement ensured prior to official launch. Continuous coordination to be maintained throughout the project.
	Organization of Kick-off workshop	January 2026 (Month 2)	Completed	Kick-off workshop successfully held on 23 January 2026 in Béja with active participation of institutions, civil society, rural women, and media. Strengthened multi-stakeholder dialogue and alignment with BRIDGE principles. Follow-up engagement with participants ongoing.
Participatory survey report	Conduct participatory survey with 100 rural women	January – February 2026 (Month 1–2)	Completed	Survey conducted with 100 rural women from diverse profiles living in the Medjerda basin. Data collected on water access, pollution, health, agriculture, biodiversity, and governance. Provides strong baseline for project implementation.
	Data entry and structuring	February - March 2026 (Month 2–3)	Completed	All questionnaires were encoded, cleaned, validated and organized into a structured Excel database, ensuring data consistency and reliability for analysis.
	Data analysis and production of the survey report	March – April 2026 (Month 3 - 4)	Completed	Quantitative and qualitative analyses were completed. A comprehensive survey report was produced, providing evidence-based recommendations that informed the project's training, awareness-raising and advocacy activities. The report is submitted as an annex to this Final Report.
Capacity Building on Water Governance	Training Workshop 1 – Water Governance and the Role of Rural Women (Medjez El Bab)	24 April 2026	Completed	First training workshop organized in partnership with GDA Bawebet Mjez El Bab, introducing rural women to water governance, stakeholder roles, biodiversity conservation and the importance of Medjerda Basin. Interactive discussions and practical group exercises strengthened participants' understanding of inclusive water
	Training Workshop 2 – Water Governance and the Role of Rural Women	19 May 2026	Completed	Second training workshop organized in collaboration with the Rural Women Unit of CRDA Béja, gathering 26 rural women. The field-based session explored women's relationship with water

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	(Sidi Ismail, Béja)			resources, sustainable water use, biodiversity protection and women's participation in local decision-making.
	Training Workshop 3 – Water Governance and the Role of Rural Women (Testour)	15 June 2026	Completed	Third participatory workshop organized with GDA Bit El Mouna. Through thematic group work involving rural women, civil society and local institutions, participants identified key environmental challenges affecting the Medjerda Basin and developed practical recommendations on pollution prevention, women's leadership and participatory water governance.
Awareness Raising, Communication and Community Mobilization	Awareness campaign and dissemination	April – June 2026	Completed	Awareness campaign implemented through community activities and social media. Educational content promoted water governance, biodiversity conservation, pollution prevention and the role of rural women in protecting the Medjerda Basin.
	Collaboration with the National Agronomic Institute of Tunisia (INAT)	March - June 2026	Completed	A partnership was established with INAT researchers and students through field meetings, knowledge exchange and joint awareness activities. Students contributed to documenting local realities, producing communication materials and implementing two pilot waste management actions, strengthening links between academic research, youth engagement and community action.
	Creation of the Women of Oued Medjerda WhatsApp Network	April 2026	Completed	A WhatsApp group bringing together 17 highly engaged rural women and local stakeholders was established to facilitate communication, exchange experiences and coordinate project activities. This network later evolved into the Women of Oued Medjerda Facebook Group (https://www.facebook.com/groups/756191834219202), ensuring broader participation and long-term sustainability.
	Field documentation and filming	June 2026	Completed	Field filming sessions were organized with a professional communication team, local partners and rural women to document environmental challenges, local

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				knowledge and women's experiences. The resulting visual materials strengthen advocacy and support future awareness campaigns.
	Media outreach and radio interviews	April – June 2026	Completed	Two radio interviews (one local and one regional) were conducted to raise public awareness about water governance, biodiversity conservation, pollution prevention and the role of rural women in protecting the Oued Medjerda Basin.
	Creation of the "Women of Oued Medjerda Network" Facebook Group	June 2026	Completed	A dedicated Facebook group, "Women of Oued Medjerda Network" (https://www.facebook.com/groups/756191834219202), was created to bring together the most committed women involved throughout the project. The group serves as a long-term platform for exchanging experiences, sharing information, promoting environmental awareness and maintaining collaboration between members beyond the project's lifetime. It represents one of the project's main sustainability mechanisms, ensuring that the network of women continues to grow, exchange knowledge and engage collectively in protecting the Medjerda Basin.

3. Delays or Challenges

Describe any implementation challenges, delays, or obstacles encountered. Include reasons, mitigation measures, and any support required.

Although all planned activities were successfully completed and the project achieved its expected outputs, Aqua-Med encountered several operational, social and institutional challenges that required continuous adaptation throughout implementation. Rather than slowing down implementation, these challenges generated valuable lessons that strengthened the project's participatory approach and informed its recommendations.

One of the main operational challenges was reaching and mobilizing rural women living in geographically dispersed communities throughout the Medjerda Basin. Many women combine agricultural work, household responsibilities, livestock management and childcare, leaving limited availability to participate in project activities. Furthermore, in several rural communities, prevailing social norms continue to restrict women's participation in public meetings or initiatives led by external organizations. To overcome these constraints, Green Compass adopted a proximity-based approach, relying on trusted local partners, including Agricultural Development Groups (GDAs), SMSA BioPunica, the Rural Women Unit of the CRDA Béja and local civil society organizations, which played a key role in facilitating contact, building confidence and encouraging women's active participation.

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These social realities also influenced the implementation of the two pilot waste management actions initially planned by the project. The team observed that rural women rarely participated in community clean-up campaigns, as such activities were generally perceived as the responsibility of men. To ensure that these pilot actions could still achieve their awareness-raising objectives while respecting local realities, Green Compass implemented them in collaboration with students from the National Agronomic Institute of Tunisia (INAT). This adaptive approach successfully combined youth engagement with environmental awareness and demonstrated the complementary role that young people can play in supporting community-based environmental action.

Another important challenge was ensuring meaningful participation rather than simply reaching participation targets. The project deliberately invested time in creating safe spaces where women felt comfortable expressing their experiences, concerns and ideas. This required flexible planning, repeated field visits and facilitation methods adapted to local realities. Although this approach demanded additional time and effort, it generated richer discussions, strengthened participants' ownership of the project and produced evidence that accurately reflected local realities.

The project also highlighted several structural challenges affecting water governance in the Medjerda Basin. Throughout the survey and training workshops, participants repeatedly emphasized that, despite being among the principal users and managers of water in their households and agricultural activities, rural women remain largely absent from local governance structures. Their knowledge, priorities and daily experiences are rarely reflected in decisions concerning water management, environmental protection or local development.

Environmental challenges identified by participants extended beyond water pollution itself. Women stressed that environmental action is often perceived as the responsibility of public authorities or men, limiting community ownership of environmental protection. Discussions also revealed that interventions frequently focus on cleaning pollution after it occurs rather than preventing pollution at its source through improved waste management, waste sorting, environmentally friendly agricultural practices and greater public awareness. In addition, participants highlighted institutional constraints, including insufficient human and financial resources available to public authorities responsible for environmental monitoring, enforcement and water management.

Another challenge identified by the project concerns the sustainability of women's participation beyond short-term interventions. While women demonstrated remarkable motivation and commitment throughout the project, transforming this engagement into long-term leadership requires continued mentoring, stronger links with local institutions and greater opportunities for women, particularly educated young women, to participate in local associations, Agricultural Development Groups (GDAs) and municipal decision-making processes.

Despite these challenges, Aqua-Med successfully completed all planned activities and achieved its expected outputs. More importantly, the project demonstrated that combining evidence-based research, participatory capacity building, local partnerships and continuous community engagement can strengthen women's confidence, promote dialogue with institutions and lay the foundations for more inclusive and sustainable water governance in the Medjerda Basin.

Support required

No additional external support was required during project implementation. The strong commitment of local partners, public institutions, academic collaborators and participating rural women enabled Green Compass to successfully address implementation challenges and deliver all planned activities. However, sustaining the project's achievements will require continued collaboration among local stakeholders to support the Women of Oued Medjerda Network and further strengthen women's participation in water governance beyond the project's lifetime.

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4. Changes to Workplan and Updated Activities

Outline any revisions made to the original workplan, including newly added or adjusted activities. Explain the rationale for changes and implications for project delivery.

The project was implemented in line with the approved workplan, and all planned outputs and activities were successfully completed. No changes were made to the project's objectives, expected outcomes or overall implementation strategy.

Throughout implementation, however, Green Compass adopted an adaptive management approach, allowing the project team to respond to emerging opportunities, strengthen partnerships and enhance the quality, visibility and sustainability of project activities. Rather than modifying the workplan, these adjustments enriched implementation and increased the project's overall impact while remaining fully aligned with the objectives of the BRIDGE Initiative.

1. Survey findings used to guide project implementation

Although the participatory survey was originally planned as a baseline assessment, it became the project's main evidence base. Rather than moving directly from data collection to implementation, Green Compass decided to complete the survey analysis before designing the training program and awareness activities.

This decision ensured that all subsequent interventions reflected the priorities identified by rural women themselves. The survey findings shaped the content of the three training workshops, awareness campaigns, communication materials and advocacy messages, resulting in activities that were highly contextualized and directly responsive to local realities.

2. Expansion of partnerships and institutional collaboration

During implementation, collaboration with local institutions became considerably stronger than originally anticipated. Public institutions, municipalities, Agricultural Development Groups (GDAs), SMSA BioPunica, the Rural Women Unit of the CRDA Béja and local civil society organizations progressively became active implementation partners rather than simple stakeholders.

Their involvement extended beyond participant mobilization to include co-organization of workshops, facilitation of field visits, identification of beneficiaries, technical contributions and support for local dialogue on water governance. This strengthened ownership of the project and increased opportunities for future collaboration beyond the project's duration.

3. Integration of academic institutions and youth engagement

An additional component emerged through collaboration with the National Agronomic Institute of Tunisia (INAT). Students and researchers participated in field visits, exchanges with rural women and awareness activities, creating valuable links between academic research and community knowledge.
This collaboration culminated in the production of an awareness video highlighting the experience of a rural woman farmer from Medjez El Bab. INAT students also supported the implementation of two pilot waste management actions in riverine municipalities, promoting youth engagement in environmental protection and community awareness. Together, these activities fostered intergenerational knowledge exchange while increasing the project's visibility.

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4. Strengthening communication and long-term sustainability

During implementation, communication evolved into a strategic component of the project. Beyond the awareness activities initially planned, Green Compass developed a more comprehensive communication strategy combining social media campaigns, radio interviews, awareness videos, field documentation and community storytelling.

To ensure continuity beyond the project, the team also established the **Women of Oued Medjerda Network** (https://www.facebook.com/groups/756191834219202), initially through a WhatsApp group bringing together the most committed participants and later expanded into a dedicated Facebook community. The network has become a permanent platform for exchanging experiences, sharing environmental information and encouraging collective action for the protection of Oued Medjerda.

Implications for project delivery

These adaptive measures significantly strengthened the quality, relevance and sustainability of project implementation without affecting the original objectives or expected results. They reinforced evidence-based decision-making, expanded institutional ownership, improved community participation and increased the long-term visibility of project achievements.

Overall, the project demonstrated how adaptive management can enhance implementation by remaining responsive to local realities while fully respecting the original workplan and the principles of the BRIDGE Initiative.

Implemented Adaptation	Reason for the Adaptation	Implementation Period	Responsible
Participatory survey used as the evidence base for project implementation	To ensure that all training, awareness and advocacy activities responded to the priorities identified by rural women	February – April 2026	Green Compass with local partners
Strengthened collaboration with local institutions and community organizations	To reinforce local ownership, facilitate community mobilization and strengthen institutional dialogue	Throughout the project	Green Compass, CRDA Béja, Municipalities, GDAs, SMSA BioPunica and local CSOs
Integration of INAT students into project activities	To connect academic knowledge with local experience and strengthen youth engagement and communication	March – June 2026	Green Compass and the National Agronomic Institute of Tunisia (INAT)
Expansion of communication and media outreach	To increase public awareness through social media, awareness videos, field documentation and radio interviews	April – June 2026	Green Compass with the support of project partners
Establishment of the Women of Oued Medjerda Network (WhatsApp & Facebook)	To ensure long-term networking, knowledge exchange and sustainability beyond the project's lifetime	June 2026	Green Compass with the support of local partners

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5. Sustainability and Follow-up beyond the Project

Describe planned actions, priorities, and key deliverables for the project.

Although Aqua-Med has reached its planned conclusion, considerable effort was devoted throughout implementation to ensuring that its outcomes continue to generate positive impacts beyond the grant period. Rather than ending with the completion of project activities, Aqua-Med has established a number of mechanisms that will support the long-term sustainability of its results through strengthened local ownership, institutional collaboration and continued community engagement.

One of the project's principal legacies is the participatory survey report, which provides one of the first comprehensive assessments of rural women's perceptions, knowledge and priorities regarding water governance, biodiversity conservation and environmental protection in the Oued Medjerda Basin. Beyond serving the project's immediate needs, the report constitutes a practical evidence base that can support municipalities, the CRDA, civil society organizations, researchers and future development initiatives working on water governance, gender equality and biodiversity conservation. The report provides a valuable reference for future planning and advocacy by documenting both challenges and locally identified solutions.

The project also established strong and productive partnerships with public institutions, municipalities, Agricultural Development Groups (GDAs), SMSA BioPunica, local civil society organizations and academic institutions. These relationships have created a collaborative framework that extends beyond the project's duration and offers opportunities for future joint initiatives related to water management, environmental protection, climate adaptation and women's leadership.

A key sustainability mechanism is the "**Women of Oued Medjerda Network"**, initially created as a WhatsApp group and subsequently expanded into a dedicated Facebook community. The network now provides a permanent platform where rural women can continue exchanging experiences, sharing environmental information, promoting local initiatives and supporting one another in addressing common challenges. Green Compass will continue facilitating this network as part of its ongoing commitment to strengthening women's participation in environmental governance and community action.

The collaboration established with the National Agronomic Institute of Tunisia (INAT) also represents an important long-term outcome of the project. Aqua-Med demonstrated the value of combining scientific knowledge with local experience by connecting rural communities with students and researchers. Beyond contributing to the production of awareness materials and the implementation of pilot environmental actions, this partnership created opportunities for future research, environmental communication and youth engagement, while contributing to greater recognition of community knowledge within academic and professional environments.

Perhaps the project's most significant achievement lies in changing perceptions of rural women's role in water governance. Throughout the project, women were not approached as passive beneficiaries but as knowledgeable resource users, environmental stewards and potential leaders capable of contributing to local decision-making. By strengthening their confidence, documenting their knowledge and creating opportunities for dialogue with

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institutions, Aqua-Med has laid important foundations for more inclusive governance processes in the Medjerda Basin.

The experience gained through Aqua-Med also demonstrates the relevance of its participatory methodology, combining evidence-based research, proximity-based community engagement, institutional dialogue and continuous communication. This approach offers a practical and replicable model that can be adapted to other river basins and rural territories facing similar challenges related to water governance, biodiversity conservation and women's participation.

Overall, while the project has formally concluded, its legacy continues through strengthened partnerships, an active women's network, increased institutional awareness, documented local knowledge and a stronger foundation for future initiatives promoting inclusive water governance, biodiversity conservation and the meaningful participation of rural women in the Oued Medjerda Basin.

6. Communications and Visibility

Summarize communications efforts, outreach, media engagement, and visibility actions undertaken (e.g., press releases, social media, publications).

Communication and visibility were integral components of the Aqua-Med project, serving not only to document project activities but also to raise public awareness about water governance, biodiversity conservation and the essential role of rural women in protecting the Medjerda Basin. Throughout implementation, communication was conceived as a tool for environmental education, advocacy and community mobilization, transforming scientific and technical issues into accessible messages rooted in the daily realities of rural communities.

The communication strategy combined field documentation, digital communication, media engagement and community storytelling. Every major project activity, including stakeholder meetings, the launch workshop, the participatory survey, the three training workshops and field visits, was documented through photographs, videos and testimonies. This visual documentation illustrated both the environmental challenges affecting the Medjerda Basin and the practical solutions proposed by rural women and local stakeholders.

Digital communication was primarily carried out through the Green Compass Facebook page, where regular publications highlighted project activities while raising awareness about water pollution, biodiversity conservation, sustainable agriculture, waste management, children's health, climate change and women's participation in water governance. Rather than simply reporting project events, these publications sought to stimulate public discussion by linking environmental issues to the everyday lives of rural families and encouraging individual and collective responsibility for protecting Oued Medjerda.

To further strengthen community engagement, Green Compass established the **Women of Oued Medjerda Network**, first through a WhatsApp group bringing together the most active participants, and subsequently through a dedicated Facebook group that now serves as a permanent community platform. The network enables women to exchange experiences, share environmental information, disseminate opportunities, discuss local challenges and continue mobilizing around water governance and biodiversity conservation beyond the project's lifetime. By the end of the project, the Facebook group had grown to more than **255 members**,

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including a committed core group of women actively engaged in environmental protection and community awareness.

Media outreach also played an important role in increasing the project's visibility. Green Compass representatives participated in **two radio interviews** (two local stations and one regional station), presenting the project's objectives, discussing the environmental challenges facing the Oued Medjerda Basin and highlighting the contribution of rural women to sustainable water management. These interviews helped extend the project's reach beyond direct beneficiaries and encouraged broader public dialogue on water governance and biodiversity protection.

The project also developed innovative communication and youth engagement partnerships. In collaboration with the National Agronomic Institute of Tunisia (INAT), students participated in field activities, awareness campaigns and pilot environmental actions, while contributing to the production of communication materials, including a short documentary video featuring a rural woman farmer from Medjez El Bab. This collaboration demonstrated the value of combining scientific knowledge with local experience, fostering intergenerational dialogue and encouraging young people to actively engage in environmental protection and inclusive water governance.

In addition, Green Compass collaborated with a professional audiovisual team to produce field footage documenting the environmental realities of the Medjerda Basin and showcasing the voices, knowledge and experiences of rural women. These visual materials constitute valuable advocacy resources that will continue to support future awareness campaigns and institutional dialogue beyond the project's completion.

Communication activities consistently emphasized the close relationship between water quality, biodiversity, public health and local livelihoods. Awareness messages encouraged pollution prevention at its source through improved waste management, waste sorting, sustainable agricultural practices and stronger community participation. Particular attention was also given to promoting women's leadership in environmental protection and to encouraging greater participation of young women in local associations and decision-making processes.

Overall, the communication strategy considerably enhanced the visibility of Aqua-Med while creating lasting tools for awareness, networking and community engagement. By combining local knowledge, personal testimonies, scientific collaboration and institutional dialogue, the project extended its impact well beyond its field activities and established a strong foundation for continued advocacy in support of inclusive water governance and biodiversity conservation in the Oued Medjerda Basin.

Communication Activity	Result
Facebook awareness campaign	Regular publications throughout the project highlighting water governance, biodiversity and women's leadership
Women of Oued Medjerda Network	WhatsApp group created, later expanded into a Facebook community with more than **255 members**
Radio interviews	2 interviews (1 local, 1 regional) promoting the project and environmental awareness

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Communication Activity	Result
Awareness video	1 video produced with INAT students featuring a rural woman farmer from Medjez El Bab
Pilot waste management actions	2 community clean-up and waste awareness actions implemented with INAT students in riverine municipalities.
Field documentary footage	1 documentary produced with a professional audiovisual team documenting local realities and women's testimonies
Photo and video documentation	Coverage of all workshops, field visits and stakeholder meetings
Community storytelling	Testimonials and local success stories shared through Green Compass communication channels

7. Events and Participation

List and describe key project events, meetings, or workshops held during the reporting period. Include participation details.

Event Title / Description	Date	Location	Number of Participants (Men)	Number of Participants (Women)	Total Participants
First meeting of Sarra Melki with the Commissioner of Agriculture at CRDA	05 Dec. 2025	Beja	1	3	4
Meeting with the General Secretary of Beja Municipality and the General Secretaryof Testour	12 Dec 2025	Beja	2	3	5
Meeting at Voix des jeunes association in Beja with Rym Jabri and colleagues	18 Dec 2025	Beja	1	2	3
Meeting with Asma Rouissi, President of GDA Bit El Mouna	18 Dec 2025	Testour	2	1	3
Meeting with Mohamed Bahrini, active Member of SMSA BioPunica	24 Dec 2025	Slouguia	1	2	3
Meeting with Aida Trabelsi, President of GDA Bawebet Mjez Elbeb	15 Jan 2026	Mjez ElBeb	2	3	5
Aqua-Med Project Launch Workshop	23 Jan 2026	Beja	6	18	24
Participatory Survey with Rural Women (5 field missions)	January – February 2026	Béja Governorate (Béja, Slouguia, Testour & Medjez El	15	110	125

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		Bab)			
Meeting with INAT Students at BioPunica SMSA	6 April 2026	Slouguia	8	13	21
Filming on the Ground with Arafet Communication Team	7 April 2026	Slouguia	6	18	24
Training Workshop 1 – Water Governance and the Role of Rural Women	24 April 2026	Mjez El Beb	1	16	17
Creation of the WhatsApp Group "Women of Oued Medjerda"	April 2026	Online	4	13	17
Radio Interview – Regional Radio	April 2026	Beja	2	1	3
Field Documentation with INAT Students	25 April 2026	Beja	3	2	5
Training Workshop 2 – Water Governance and the Role of Rural Women	19 May 2026	Sidi Smail - Beja	5	26	31
Training Workshop 3 – Water Governance and the Role of Rural Women	15 June 2026	Testour	2	32	34
Awareness Video Production with INAT Students	25 June 2026	Mjez El Beb	3	4	7
Launch of the Facebook Group "Women of Oued Medjerda Network"	June 2026	Online	Ongoing community		255 members
Radio Interview – Regional Radio	June 2026	Beja	2	1	3

8. Expenditures overview

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Budget Item	Budget (CHF)	Description	Total Expenditures (Dec 2025 – Jul 2026) (CHF)
Personnel	4,500	Project staff and coordination	**4,502.06**
Travel & Logistics	2,000	Travel, transport and logistics	**1,705.28**
Training/Workshops	3,000	Training sessions and workshops	**3,751.90**
Materials & Supplies	1,000	Equipment and training materials	**1,274.22**
Communications & Outreach	2,000	Communication and visibility activities	**1,501.14**
Monitoring & Reporting	1,000	Monitoring, evaluation and reporting	**750.00**
Other (Office rent / Overheads)	1,500	Office rent and administrative costs	**1,280.29**
Total	**15,000**		**14,764.89 CHF***)*

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Working through trusted local organizations, including GDAs, agricultural cooperatives and local associations, proved essential for building confidence and encouraging meaningful participation. Beyond facilitating access to communities, these partnerships created an environment where women felt comfortable expressing their concerns, experiences and aspirations, leading to richer discussions and stronger ownership of project activities.

The survey and training workshops also highlighted that the main challenges facing the Medjerda Basin extend beyond technical issues of water management. Water pollution, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation are closely linked to social behaviors, governance gaps and limited citizen participation. Participants repeatedly emphasized that environmental action should move beyond cleaning polluted sites towards preventing pollution at its source through better waste management, more sustainable agricultural practices and stronger environmental education.

Another important finding concerns women's participation in water governance. Although rural women are among the primary users and managers of water resources within their households and agricultural activities, they remain largely absent from formal decision-making structures. The project therefore reinforced the need to strengthen women's representation within local organizations, including Agricultural Development Groups (GDAs), civil society organizations and local councils, enabling their knowledge and priorities to be better reflected in decisions affecting water resources.

The project also highlighted the strategic role that educated young women can play in strengthening environmental governance. Combining technical knowledge, openness to innovation and strong links with their communities, they represent a valuable bridge between scientific approaches, local knowledge and community action. Encouraging their engagement within local associations and public life could significantly contribute to the long-term sustainability of environmental initiatives.

From a communication perspective, the project demonstrated that storytelling rooted in local realities is a particularly effective awareness-raising tool. Giving visibility to rural women's voices, experiences and everyday challenges generated stronger community engagement than conventional awareness campaigns and contributed to building a broader sense of shared responsibility for protecting the Medjerda Basin.

Finally, one of the project's valuable achievements is the establishment of the **Women of Oued Medjerda Network**, which creates favorable conditions for continued dialogue, peer learning and collective action beyond the project's duration. Maintaining and strengthening this network will be essential for ensuring that the knowledge, partnerships and momentum generated through Aqua-Med continue to support more inclusive and sustainable water governance in the Medjerda Basin.

The experience of Aqua-Med demonstrates that effective water governance requires more than technical interventions. It depends on recognizing local knowledge, strengthening community ownership, fostering collaboration between institutions and citizens, and ensuring that rural women are acknowledged as legitimate partners in protecting water resources and biodiversity. These lessons provide a strong foundation for replicating similar initiatives in other river basins across Tunisia and the wider Mediterranean region.