



# MEDREGION UPDATE

AUGUST 2013



MedRegion Office, Tunis

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## Promoting Coexistence by Engaging Lebanese Youth in Civic Activities



In partnership with MEPI, the Voice of the Lebanese Woman Center (VLW) engaged 100 Lebanese youth aged 15 to 24 in a series of training courses and civic activities to promote coexistence and interaction between Muslim Shiite and Christian communities. Through the “Youth and Tolerance” project, VLW

paved a common ground for tolerance and co-existence which has fostered the idea of inclusive citizenship among the participants.

The activities introduced a series of seven training courses on volunteerism, democracy, citizenship, advocacy campaigns, dialogue and acceptance, the

role of youth in civil society, and theatrical performance. In April, VLW led a three-day environmental campaign with the participation of 96 youth and their families and the cooperation of schools, NGOs and municipalities. Youth worked together on



this campaign toward a clean community. ■

## Building the Palestinians Journalists' Capacities to Tackle Social Issues

MEPI continues its support for free and independent media as a means of promoting democracy and human rights in the MENA region. With MEPI support, Ma'an Network, a non-profit media organization, recently completed a project that empowered and built



the capacity of young journalists to have an active

role in their communities. As part of the MEPI-funded “Combating Gender-Based Violence in the Palestinian Territories” project, ten young Palestinian journalists produced seven documentary movies to tackle the social issue of gender-based violence in their society.

*(To be continued on page 2)*

MEPI MedRegion Update Newsletter is produced by the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) MedRegion Office at the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, Tunisia.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions!

## Empowering Youth Through Entrepreneurship Training

MEPI partner Middle East Education through Technology (MEET) brings together Arab Israeli and Israeli youth through the MEPI-funded “Technology and Entrepreneurship Program”, empowering them to bring about positive change in their communities. As part of this project, 30 participants completed the Summer Program held from June 23 to July 8.

The two-week intensive Summer Program focused on technology, business, teamwork, and leadership skills. The summer session also included academic courses on computer science, entrepreneurship, and project management skills.

Participants acquired



advanced technology skills such as reading and writing from files and

embedding audio and video in a graphical user interface (GUI). A total of

four bi-national teams worked together on real world issues and professional development activities. Each project team completed a business plan and marketing strategies for their projects.

MEET concluded the Summer Program by establishing a Venture Lab that serves as a joint space for Palestinian and Israeli MEET alumni to co-create and develop entrepreneurial ventures.

During the Venture Lab Demo Day, participants presented their projects to local business experts and investors. Participants practiced public speaking and received important feedback on their projects from experts in the field. ■

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Ma'an cooperated with CSOs to train journalists to produce the eight-to-20-minute-long documentaries.

The participating journalists took part in a series of training workshop on women's rights, fostering open debate about gender-based violence, and incorporating these themes into journalistic stories for short documentary films on

gender-based violence. Ma'an distributed training manuals including basics on documentary film production as well as legal background and cases of women's rights in the occupied Palestinian territories. The documentaries were scheduled to be broadcast in the first week of August on the Ma'an Satellite channel.

MEPI staff in West Bank attended the screening of three movies. The first, “Minas: Killed Twice,” discusses the topic of female murders, including the specific case of a young Bethlehem woman who was murdered and dumped in a West Bank wadi. Another film, “Why Me,” depicts the story of a woman harassed and abused by her father and brothers for years and features personal

interviews with the victim, something virtually never filmed in Palestinian society. Each film was 15 to 20 minutes in length, and their final versions will be aired on the Ma'an Network and affiliate networks, as well as linked to from the Ma'an website and social media pages in the coming weeks. ■

## Peer-to-Peer Training to Promote Participation and Prosperity

MEPI supports CSOs' ability to serve their community and advocate for their issues of concern. In Jordan, MEPI is helping CSOs to expand their impact, sustain their efforts and learn from each other's experiences.

Through the "Women's Empowerment and Entrepreneurship" project, MEPI grantee The NGERA Cooperative for Social and Charitable Causes partners with emerging cooperatives in Jordan and builds their capacity through participatory training for women and youth. The project provides peer-to-peer trainings in organizational development, management and technical skills; consultations and support activities between established and budding women's cooperatives.

NGERA assists the development of partnering NGOs, while developing a new capability for the NGERA Cooperative as

peer trainers and consultants.

NGERA cooperated with the Al-Rahmanya Association for Social Development, Mawakeb Al-Noor Women Cooperative for Charitable Causes, Al-Khudair Women Cooperative for Social Development, and the Muharib Cooperative.



The partnering NGOs

Workshop sessions



held a series of workshops aiming at building the capacity of their own members.

included fundraising and proposal writing for potential projects, identifying potential funding organizations and

donors, networking sessions to get in touch with donors, grants proposal submission, cooperative management, good governance practices, introduction to community development projects in Jordan and constrains facing NGOs in Jordan, and marketing for dairy products. ■

### Stay Connected with MEPI

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## Spotlight on MEPI Alumni

### Social Entrepreneurship Workshop



In collaboration with the American Cultural Studies Department in Ben M'sik Faculty of Arts, the Moroccan Chapter of the MEPI Alumni Network held a Social Entrepreneurship Workshop on July 7, 2013.

The aim of the workshop was to raise awareness about social entrepreneurship among students who live in underprivileged areas in Casablanca, and to promote an environment that encourages social

enterprise. The workshop kicked off with an introductory



session during which students shared their understandings of social

entrepreneurship and their motives for attending.

The MEPI Alumni Coordinator moderated the session and presented participants with a definition of a social entrepreneur.

The session tackled a wide range of topics, including good governance,

illiteracy, sexual harassment, and civic education, and shed light

on the vital role NGOs and CSOs play in social change.

The workshop empowered participants by encouraging them to have an active role in the development of their communities. At the end of the workshop, the trainer introduced MEPI's areas of focus and projects supporting women and youth across the region and in Morocco in particular.

The workshop concluded by delivering MEPI Local Chapter certificates to students for their active participations in this workshop. ■



### Middle East Partnership Initiative

#### MEPI Regional Office, Tunis

Housed in the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, the MEPI Regional Office Tunis administers MEPI local grant projects in Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and West Bank/Gaza. Each year, MEPI provides a significant number of local grants directly to local organizations based in the Middle East and North Africa. These Grants promote reform and civic activism at the local and national levels in the Middle East and North Africa, build the institutional capacity of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and strengthen civil society.

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