



MEDREGION UPDATE

Regional Office Tunis

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Eloquent Peasant	1
Proposals for Supporting Democratic Transition in Tunisia (APS)	2
Grant \$ at Work MEPI Representatives	2
MEPI: Enhancing Proper and Ethical Governance in Israeli-Arab Municipalities	3
A MEPI Local Grant Enhances School Pupils Education	3
MEPI Alumni Network-West Bank and Gaza Chapter	4
About MEPI	4

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

Editor-in-Chief:
Jed Taro Dornburg
Editor:
Khaoula Touati

Eloquent Peasant

MEPI grantee the Rural Studies Center (RSC) is empowering 90 local leaders and activists in rural areas of Egypt by training them on various topics, including; good governance, leadership, communication skills, and human rights in international covenants and internal legislation. These training sessions are part of the MEPI-funded project “the Eloquent Peasant”, which is designed to provide Egyptian activists in rural areas with knowledge and skills to effectively represent their communities politically.

RSC has organized a series of streets theatre plays that were performed in several villages in Egypt to raise awareness on political issues, and legal rights of peasants.

In response to the current political situation in Egypt after the revolution, RSC added new elements to the training content to focus on the recently issued law, which organizes political parties in the country. Participants were very satisfied by the new content. One of the participants commented on the workshops saying “it was a very illuminating experience”.

The RSC conducted a survey



Participants during one of the training sessions



to evaluate the level of knowledge gained after the training programs using pre and post evaluation questionnaires. The survey conveyed that 30 leaders out of 65 scored less than 60% at the pre-evaluation. After the training, 60 leaders scored more than 80% at the post

training evaluation.

The grant to RSC has also handled 100 peasants’ legal cases that represent common complaints of public interests using its lawyers.

The activates of the project were featured in several Egyptian newspapers. ■

Stay Connected with MEPI

E-mail: mepi-medregion@state.gov

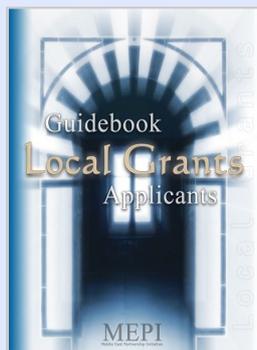
Website: medregion.mepi.state.gov



Proposals for Supporting Democratic Transition in Tunisia (APS)

MEPI announces a competition (Annual Program Statement) for innovative proposals to support Tunisia's democratic transition. MEPI is placing special emphasis on building and strengthening Tunisia's media sector, which must play a vital role in the country's democratic transition by communicating information to the public in a timely, transparent, and constructive way and by providing a diversity of views within the public sphere. These proposals must be received by 23:59 EST on July 10, 2011. For more information please visit the [Open Funding Opportunities](#) page for more details.

Submit Your Grant Applications Now!



Funding is available now for Local Grants. Please contact your country's U.S. Embassy MEPI Committee and see the guidebook available on our [website](#) for step-by-step instructions in English and Arabic.

www.medregion.mepi.state.gov



MEPI Representatives

By MEPI Grants Unit

We often receive a lot of questions reference the different roles and people who work with the organizations, so we wanted to write a short article clarifying some of your Project Representatives here at MEPI...

Once your application arrives to MEPI or the local American Embassy or Consulate, a local MEPI Coordinator and Administrator reviews each application and prepares all of them for review by a MEPI Committee in that respective country. The MEPI Committee consists of representatives from different sections of the Embassy. As a voting committee, they decide which applications to forward for consideration to a grant. The MEPI Coordinator and Administrator may also help support the Regional Office with negotiations, communication, and monitoring.

Once your grant is cleared and accepted by your respective Embassy or Consulate in your country, your application is forwarded to our Regional Office in Tunis, Tunisia. From there, our Program Team will assign it to a Program Analyst, who will work with you to develop a Statement of Work (SOW), which will form the basis for all of your activities, objectives, and measurable. Later, your Program Analyst will work with you, the project's participants, and the community to evaluate the success of your grant and its impact in the area.

You will also have a Project Officer (PO) assigned to your grant. This individual usually works at the American Embassy or Consulate in your respective country. The Project Officer will approve the final version of your SOW and will serve as the monitor for your grant on behalf of MEPI, visiting your organization and providing feedback about your activities. Furthermore, the PO will keep the local Embassy or Consulate informed on all matters relating to your Grant.

Once the SOW is finalized and approved by the PO, your application is forwarded to the Grants Unit at our Regional Office in Tunis, where we assign a Grants Officer Representative (GOR) to serve on behalf of the Grants Officer (GO). The GOR will negotiate the budget, make any necessary changes to the SOW, and sponsor your grant through the approval and clearance process at MEPI. Once approved, the GOR, will keep the Grants Officer informed on the status of your grant, review and approve all of your reports, and help process your Payment Requests. The GOR, if the opportunity arises, might also come visit your grant to conduct a monitoring visit and financial review. If you have any questions or concerns or need amendments, please contact your GOR right away. Your GOR will keep both the PO and the GO informed on all matters dealing with the grant. The Grants Officer (GO) is the ultimate approving authority on the award. S/he approves and signs the grant on behalf of MEPI and is the only person who can authorize changes to your budget, activities, or award. The GO is responsible to the U.S. Government for the money awarded to your organization and oversees all elements of the grant.

You may also be contacted by our Public Diplomacy (PD) Representative at MEPI, who tries to capture the great activities and success stories you have. S/he forwards these articles and pictures to our Washington, D.C. office and posts them on our website. Our PD Representative is also the link to our office on "You Tube," "Facebook," and the Internet. ■

MEPI: Enhancing Proper and Ethical Governance in Israeli-Arab Municipalities

The Movement for Quality Government (MQG) in Israel, an independent NGO and grassroots public watchdog organization, unveiled and sponsored litigation on several incidents of corruption and malfeasance in Israeli-Arab municipalities, through a project entitled “The Municipal Project: Making Israeli-Arab Local Governments Accountable and Transparent”.

MQG submitted various petitions on various malfeasance cases in Israeli-Arab local municipalities and promoted the exposure and elimination of corruption in governmental institutions, by informing the authorities, such as the State Comptroller and the Police, and demanding their investigation. In the case when these bodies provide no remedy, MQG considers appealing to the High Court of Justice. So far, it handled 44 legal cases by the project's staff and 103 cases by the legal clinic.

Through a series of workshops, training and legal clinics, (MQG) is providing



council members, elected representatives, and attorneys as well as other agents of change with fundamental legal and administrative knowledge and tools to fight corruption and generate change from within. During the last quarter, Advocate Nidal Hayek, the Director of

the Municipal Project, ran attorney training for 50 Israeli-Arab attorneys. The training sessions focused on internal controlling mechanisms in local government, external mechanisms for monitoring and controlling local government, access to

information regarding government actions, accountability of public servants and elected representatives, the role of civil society in monitoring government institutions, review of administrative law, assessment of and preparation for litigation in the supreme court and the administrative affairs courts, introduction to ethics for civil servants and public representatives, tips for effective use of the media for being a watchdog on local authorities, protection of whistleblowers, and common deficiencies in local government functioning.

The Municipal Project is widening the scope of its work to reach out to a wider public by generating public discussions on matters of quality government to enhance the public awareness and through media campaigns, public events, and a legal hotline and clinic. In fact, MQG runs a legal clinic and hotline, handling and initiating actual cases of government malfeasance. ■

A MEPI Local Grant Enhances School Pupils Education

As part of a local MEPI grant to Children Happiness Center (CHC) in Hebron, to support “I Read, Write and Play project”, CHC held an open day activity for kids and a graduation ceremony for the those who will be teaching kids Arabic, English, and math during the summer sessions having completed training.

Through the “I Read, Write and Play project”, CHC is increasing the active participation of university students in their society and raising their awareness and willingness to tackle the needs of their community. The training sessions target 150 elementary school pupils, from Hebron city, who suffer from learning difficulties. ■



Kids during the open day activity

Spotlight on MEPI Alumni

MEPI Alumni Network-West Bank and Gaza Chapter

As part of the MEPI grant to AMIDEAST to support the MEPI alumni in their efforts to contribute to their community, the Palestinian MEPI Alumni Network held a workshop on “Team Building and Leadership”.

The team, which included 16 MEPI Alumni from different MEPI programs, was led through a series of 30-45 minute activities, which included how to

maximize individual involvement, effective planning and best leadership and participation roles.

Team performance challenges were facilitated outdoors using different games.

Topics covered: communication, listening, teambuilding, time



management, and conflict resolution.

After each game, teams gathered to answer questions about sharing best practices, top down and bottom up leadership, and interpersonal dynamics.

Facilitators were careful to let the team draw their own conclusions (with some subtle direction) rather than “telling” the team what they are supposed to take away from the adventure. ■



Middle East Partnership Initiative

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), located within the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, is a unique program designed to engage directly with and invest in the peoples of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). MEPI works to create vibrant partnerships with citizens to foster the development of pluralistic, participatory, and prosperous societies throughout the MENA region. MEPI partners with local, regional and international non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academic institutions, and governments.

MEPI Regional Office, Tunis

Housed in the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, the MEPI Regional Office Tunis administers MEPI local projects in Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and West Bank/Gaza and accounts for more than \$5 million in program funding in 2010. In addition to coordinating with U.S. Embassies throughout the region, Tunis RO provides a variety of funding opportunities (such as the MEPI Local Grants program and Civil Society Grants) as well as supporting visits, seminars and training programs to advance the formation of communities for tomorrow.

Stay Connected with MEPI

Website: medregion.mepi.state.gov

E-mail: mepi-medregion@state.gov

Phone: +216 71 107 055

Fax: +216 71 107 436

MEPI Regional Office Tunis
U.S. Embassy
Les Berges du Lac— 1053
Tunis, Tunisia



Follow us @MEPI Medregion



<https://www.facebook.com/USMEPI>



www.YouTube.com/user/MEPIRO Tunisia

To subscribe or unsubscribe please send us an e-mail at: Mepi.medregion@state.gov