



Youth for Change

Inspiring, Informing and Involving Arab youth as Agents of Change



A project implemented by: TakingITGlobal & Bibliotheca Alexandrina
Supported by: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

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<http://projects.tiqweb.org/youthforchange>



شباب من أجل التغيير



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"Youth for Change project made me realize that each one of us has the ability to make a difference & when you start your first step, you can move on through the others, trying to overcome the challenges instead of thinking they are obstacles"

Tina Al-Mukhtar, Focal Point, Iraq

Executive Summary

TakingITGlobal, in partnership with Bibliotheca Alexandrina launched the “Youth for Change” project in March 2008 to engage youth in cross-cultural dialogue as well as support youth-led development through local projects in 10 Arabic countries: Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Bahrain, Yemen, UAE, Iraq, Lebanon and Palestine.



The Youth for Change project utilized online and offline tools and spaces in order to support cross cultural dialogue between Arab youth on the local, regional and international levels. On another level, the project also provided mini-grants and online training to support 15 projects in the different priority countries, that focused on crucial issues facing young people in the Arab World such as

employment, education, environment, HIV/AIDS, health, culture & identity, cross cultural dialogue and human rights & democracy. The project also offered scholarships to 2 mini-grant winners from Egypt and Bahrain to attend the World Youth Congress 2008 in Quebec City, in order to receive additional support, training and access to international networks focused on supporting youth-led development.



Overall, the “Youth for Change” project succeeded in reaching out and supporting hundreds of Arab youth in the different targeted Arab countries:

- **9** active youth have been chosen as focal points to coordinate and promote the project activities in their countries.
- **9** host organizations supported and promoted the project. This promotion along with TIG and BA networks made it possible for over **360** youth to participate in the open forums and over **100** to participate in the live chats.
- We received **55** project applications for the mini-grants and **15** were chosen as winners.
- The number of TIG members from the MENA region increased from **5,500-6, 200**, which is a total of **700**, over the course of the project and these new members have been contributing highly to the different sections of TIG such as the discussion boards, blogs, Panorama and Global Gallery sections.



Project Components

The "Youth for Change" project has achieved its objectives through organizing a number of activities related to the following project components:

- 1- **Open Forums:** We conducted local "Youth for Change" Open Forum events where youth came together in order to identify key challenges facing youth and how they can be addressed by them.
- 2- **Online Engagement:** We facilitated ongoing cross-cultural dialogue through the use of online community tools and spaces including organizing online live chat events to encourage discussion among participants in the priority countries on the following themes:
 - 'Utilizing new media to promote dialogue across cultures'
 - 'Strengthening youth as community Agents of Change'
 - 'Social networks for Social Change'
 - 'New Media and Intercultural Dialogue'
- 3- **Mini-Grant Awards:** Supported youth-led action projects through Mini-Grant Awards and online training workshops that leveraged the TakingITGlobal Guide to Action which was translated into Arabic and featured quotes from active youth in the MENA region
- 4- **Conference Scholarships:** Two mini-grant winners received scholarships to attend the World Youth Congress in Quebec City allowing for additional support, training and access to international networks that focused on supporting youth-led development.

"To me Youth for Change wasn't just about youth changing; it was also about changing youth!! In fact through this project I had the opportunity to witness not only young people changing their reality and acting for a better world but also a networking and sharing, that is changing young people themselves!! (changing their negative passive attitude, giving them hope and inspiring them while trying to spread a new culture of young people taking their first step and getting more active."

Samar Mezghanni, YFC participant, Tunisia

Project Activities

A. Open Forums

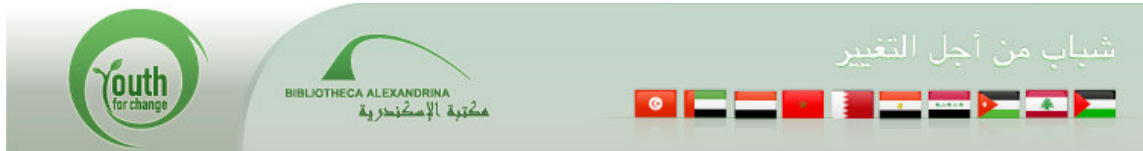
Main Outcomes:

- TakingITGlobal conducted **15** open forums in **9** of the priority countries, with over **360** participants
- Main recommendations for TIG were:
 - To organize more open forums in their countries
 - To support further youth-led development projects
 - To organize online trainings to build the capacity of youth in different areas
- TakingITGlobal facilitation guide for open forums was translated into Arabic and was utilized by the focal points as a main resource tool for the open forums
- Event pages and spotlights were created on TIG for each open forum
- Some open forums were covered in the media (local newspapers & radio)
- Total number of takingitglobal.org members from the MENA region increased from 5,500 to 6,200

During the months of March to December, the focal points in 9 of the priority countries with the support of the host organizations conducted open forums targeting active youth in their countries. The 2-3 hour open forums offered a space for the participants to discuss challenges facing youth in their communities as well as ways for youth to address these challenges.



Most open forums included guest speakers who shared their experiences about youth-led development. The forums were fully promoted on TakingITGlobal through spotlights on the homepage as well as an event page for each forum. They were also promoted on Arab InfoMall, which is a web portal under the umbrella of Bibliotheca Alexandrina and Arab Reform Forum. The forums targeted around 20-42 participants in each country and some were covered by & promoted through local newspapers and radio programs.



Lessons Learned:

- Hosting more than one open forum in different cities/communities in the same country allowed more youth to be introduced to the open space concept and have the chance to express their views about important issues related to their communities. It also allowed a greater opportunity for community building and networking between youth. This was evident in Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Yemen & Tunisia, as TakingITGlobal as well as the focal points and host organizations have seen the importance of this step.
- It was not possible to find a committed focal point in UAE, especially since there is less interest among youth towards civil society initiatives. There is also less support to these types of initiatives more broadly in the UAE and a greater focus on business oriented initiatives or charity work. Therefore in the future, it is essential to identify an existing civil society organization as a host partner in the early phase who can nominate their own focal point, or identify an alternative gulf country. Another solution could be to link with events that are already being conducted that target youth from the gulf and organize the open forum within their activity.
- Conducting open forums where youth from different countries can join is a good opportunity for Arab youth to interact and network with each other. The open forum which was organized with the Arab Thought Foundation in Lebanon offered this opportunity where youth from different Arab countries participated in the event.

Main Challenges:

- In Tunisia, the number of open forum participants was low, therefore the focal point and host organization conducted a second open forum to give an opportunity for more youth to participate in such activities
- In Palestine-Ramallah and Iraq the focal points both tried to reach out to youth from different areas however the total number of participants was lower than expected due to travel related issues.
- The project partners initially chose Qatar as one of the targeting countries however it was difficult to find a focal point and host organization. It was decided to choose Bahrain instead, as it was easier to find a reliable focal point and host organization.
- The focal point in UAE dropped out during the project and it was difficult to find a replacement or someone who could organize the open forum there, however, our focal point in Morocco organized an open forum in Bahrain and it targeted youth from the Gulf and UAE particularly.

The participants in each country discussed different challenges related to their community and they were as follows:

Bahrain: Sayed Adnan - Focal Point & host organization coordinator

Host organization: Hawar Youth Centre
<http://events.tigweb.org/19725>

Outcomes:

42 Bahraini youth from different educational and professional backgrounds attended the open forum which was covered widely by local newspapers. The participants discussed the aspirations of Bahraini youth, and offered recommendations to a few Bahraini governmental organizations that work on youth issues, especially



regarding the "Youth Parliament" project. They also requested better promotion of the Bahraini youth projects through different media and demanded different non-routine programs, initiatives and events to be offered to youth, in order to attract more young people's attention. They also pointed out to the importance of an initiative from the Ministry of Information or private corporations to "establish a youth space channel with a goal that avoids the usual stereotypical view about similar youth channels." The participants were also interested with TIG activities and wanted to be more involved in TIG to benefit from its different services.

تجربتي مع مشروع او برنامج شباب من اجل التغيير قد
 اضاف لي الكثير من ناحية صقل مهاراتي في مجال
 القيادة. فالمشروع اتاح لي فرصة عملية لتطبيق القيادة
 والعمل المؤسساتي من خلال متابعة تطبيق البرنامج
 لدينا في البحرين. بشكل عام الاشتراك في البرنامج
 اضاف لي الكثير وأنا سعيد بأنني كنت جزء منه.

سيد عدنان، منسق المشروع، البحرين



شباب من أجل التغيير



Egypt: Nada Rady – Focal Point

Host organization: Sustainable Development Association- Mr. Abdallah Diwan

<http://events.tigweb.org/17709>

<http://events.tigweb.org/20197>

Outcomes:

Two open forums were conducted in Egypt within the Youth for Change project, one was conducted in March during the Arab Youth forum in Alexandria that was organized by Bibliotheca Alexandrina. Jennifer Corriero, TakingITGlobal Executive Director and Tala Nabulsi Arabic Engagement Coordinator & YFC project manager, facilitated this open forum which targeted 35 active youth from Egypt.



The participants discussed the following challenges:

- 1- Unemployment
- 2- Education
- 3- Stereotypes & Perceptions
- 4- Drugs and Illness

The main recommendations for TIG were:

- Provide e-courses through TIGed
- Offer scholarships for youth development
- Provide resources for youth in the MENA region



The second open forum was organized by our focal point and host organization in Alexandria. 26 participants attended this forum and were introduced to the concepts of Entrepreneurship and Social Entrepreneurship presented by 3 guest speakers from different organizations. The participants were divided into break-out groups to discuss 4 different case studies about "Social Entrepreneurship" and to identify some Opportunities and Challenges, an innovative idea, the Social and Business Aspects, and a SWOT Analysis of the 4 case studies introduced. The participants also expressed their interest for more similar activities to be conducted in Egypt.



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Jordan: Waleed Al Zyoud – Focal Point and host organization coordinator

Host organization: National Forum For Youth and Culture- Jordan Youth

<http://events.tigweb.org/18005>

<http://events.tigweb.org/19717>

Outcomes:

TakingITGlobal organized two open forums in cooperation with the National Forum for Youth and Culture-Jordan Youth and Al-Dustour newspaper.

The first open forum was facilitated by Tala Nabulsi, YFC Project Manager. 30 active youth attended this event and discussed the following challenges: Society perceptions of youth, Identity, Economic situation & Youth political participation, especially in political parties.



The participants came up with a few project ideas and their main recommendations for TIG and the host organization were :

- Offer skills and information for youth to start up their own projects
- To conduct workshops on political participation
- To feature active youth as role models as well as provide information on opportunities available for youth

The participants were also interested in posting articles and blogs on TIG, to discuss these issues further .

The second open forum had 25 participants and they discussed the following challenges: Economic situation, Volunteerism and Environment. They also came up with ideas for youth-led projects that could tackle these challenges, such as :

- Organizing a market for students in the different universities where a number of students can manage and sell products to their colleagues.
- "Know your country", a touristic project that aims at introducing youth to the different touristic areas in Jordan that they probably don't know.
- Friends of Environment: which includes regular visits to parks and gardens and assigning days to clean and take care of.

Their main recommendation for TIG and the host organization was to organize online training courses to build the capacity of youth to implement the project ideas.



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Lebanon: Maya Boutros & Zeina Karamah: Focal point & host organization coordinator

Host Organization: Arab Thought Foundation

<http://events.tigweb.org/19715>

Outcomes:

The open forum was organized in partnership with Arab Thought Foundation during the youth brainstorm session for Fikr 7 conference. The event included 30 youth from different Arab countries, mainly Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Morocco, Tunisia, Yemen, Palestine, Iraq, Bahrain, Mauritania, Algeria, Sudan, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. This forum was a great opportunity to gather youth from different countries to tackle the challenges that face them and share their view and thoughts about possible solutions.



The main challenges discussed were:

- Employment opportunities for youth
- Empowering youth & women and strengthening their role in society
- Education and culture ramifications
- Local development and encouraging voluntary work
- The Arab culture heritage and how to deal with it
- Points of divergence and convergence between the Arab youth in various Arab countries.
- Arab identity and the clash of cultures

Their recommendations related to TIG focused on:

- Encouraging youth to utilize social networks and increase online Arabic content
- Building the capacity of youth and providing them with necessary skills
- Provide teachers and youth with tools related to online learning

The focal point also promoted the Youth for Change project and the forum through a program on "Voice of Lebanon" radio station and invited youth to discuss issues related to their community.

"Youth for Change project is not successful only because it is an international project that makes change in people's thoughts, but also because it gives confidence and support to whoever wants to donate some of his/her time serving society. That makes me proud of being involved in it." **Ahmed Haroon, mini-grant winner, Egypt**



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Iraq: Tina Al-Mukhtar – Focal point

Host Organization: Iraq Health Aid Organization- Ms. Nour Mousawy
<http://events.tigweb.org/19759>

Outcomes:

The 15 participants identified the following as main challenges facing youth in Iraq.

- Unemployment
- The lack of proper health management
- Education
- Women rights
- The lack of sufficient youth activities & entertainment facilities



Based on these topics, they were divided into groups to discuss the possible solutions and how TIG can raise awareness among youth about these challenges and how to take action to solve them

Their main recommendation for TIG were:

- To conduct more similar events in Iraq
- Facilitate training workshops and e-courses in the issues tackled
- Facilitate workshops for teachers on new teaching methods
- Provide ideas and funds for youth ideas and projects

"Youth for change" is considered a great example for projects that enhance the leadership role and the initiative of the youth. What distinguishes this project is that it offers youth an opportunity to initiate and change according to their needs and aspirations. Leaders Organization considers this partnership with TIG as a strategic partnership that we will work on further developing, we will also work on providing similar programs for the youth in Palestine." Shadi Atshan, Leaders Organization, Palestine

"شباب من أجل التغيير... هو بداية حقيقية لدور هام ظل ينتظره الشباب العربي فترة طويلة وها هو اليوم يتحقق لهم الدور الذي لطالما حلموا به. بالنسبة لي، كانت فرصة ذهبية كي أعمل بديناميكية رائعة مع فريق العمل الخاص بالمشروع حيث أتاح لي فرصة للتعرف على شباب يملئهم الرغبة الصادقة في تنمية مجتمعاتهم ورؤية عالم أفضل للجميع. " علاء الاغبري، منسق المشروع، اليمن



شباب من أجل التغيير



Yemen: Alaa Al-Aghbari- Focal point

Host Organization: Tamkeen Foundation for Rural Youth- Mr. Abdull-Muain Al-Hamati

<http://events.tigweb.org/19799>

<http://events.tigweb.org/21425>

Outcomes:

20 Yemeni young people attended the event and were introduced to the Youth for Change project and the opportunities available through TakingITGlobal

They were also introduced to the 2 mini-grant winners who showcased their development projects on the issues of HIV/Aids and Unemployment

A second open forum was conducted in Yemen, as both TakingITGlobal and the focal point were aiming for more Yemeni youth to benefit from these open spaces.

Outcomes:

20 youth representing different organizations attended this event and they discussed main challenges facing youth in their communities, which are: Unemployment, Poverty, Terrorism , Funding and supporting youth initiatives & organizations in addition to Education



They also discussed the possible solutions for these challenges and how TIG can assist youth in facing these challenges. Their recommendations were:

- To conduct similar events; especially that it was the first time for some of them to attend such type of event.
- Raise awareness on youth related issues and opportunities
- Offer more funds to youth led development projects
- Offer training courses for Yemeni youth in the issues discussed
- Implement development projects with local organizations in Yemen
- Prepare a guide for teachers on the new IT methods and offer them e-courses utilizing TIGed platform



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Palestine: Ehsan Naser – Focal point- Ramallah
Alaa Al Malfouh- Focal point- Gaza

Host organization: Leaders organization/Ramallah- Mr. Shadi Atshan
<http://events.tigweb.org/19529>

Host organization: Sharek Youth Forum/Gaza – Mr. Moheeb Shaat
<http://events.tigweb.org/19215>

Outcomes:

The 18 participants who attended the open forum in Ramallah discussed main challenges facing them mainly due to occupation and political affiliations. They were also introduced to one of the mini-grant winners, who gave them a presentation about his project and the different activities. This open forum was an opportunity for the participants who are representatives of local organizations to network with each other and discuss ways of cooperation.



Their recommendations for TIG were as follows:

- To support further youth-led projects in Palestine
- To facilitate communication between young people from Palestine and youth internationally
- To hold annual summer camps specialized in IT
- To assist in bridging the gap between youth in West bank and Gaza

Based on the recommendations of the focal point in Ramallah, the "Youth for Change" was promoted in Gaza and an open forum was organized there.

Outcomes:

37 active youth attended this forum to discuss common challenges and ways they can address them. The two main challenges they focused on were Unemployment as well as Isolation and Stereotypes. They looked into the reasons which cause these problems as well as recommendations for organizations working on youth issues. They also discussed how TakingITGlobal can have a role in helping out youth to solve the challenges discussed. The main recommendations for TIG were:

- To conduct more activities to develop the capacity of Palestinian youth.
- Support and assist initiatives and small projects
- Raise the awareness of youth issues in Palestine
- Guide Palestinian youth to work through the internet
- Offer many training and educational scholarships
- Provide exchange programs and live chats to enable Palestinian youth to communicate with other youth and enhance cultural dialogue.
- Help youth to express themselves and know about others
- Partner with local media to promote TIG youth programs and activities



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Tunisia: Tarek Belgith & Ilyes Zine- Focal Points

Host organization: ISOC Tunisia- Mr. Khaled Koubba

<http://events.tigweb.org/19637>

<http://events.tigweb.org/21981>

Outcomes:

Due to the fact that most targeted youth were busy with other activities during this time of the year, only 6 youth attended this forum. The discussions mainly were about the Youth for Change project and the partnership with ISOC Tunisia. They also discussed the possibility of cooperation between TIG local representatives in the MENA region in order to organize regional exchange programs, as well as enhance the "involvement of youth in social life" at an international level. The participants also exchanged their experiences about development work and international events they have attended.



Another open forum was organized in December and attracted around 25 youth.

The main challenges discussed were:

- Promotion of civil and volunteer activities within youth communities
- Partnership and cooperation between youth organizations locally and internationally
- How to make youth engaged and motivate them

The follow up action resulting from this forum, was to conduct another forum in 2009, during Tunisian Information Days.

"Change is what we need in our communities, and youth are the only people who can bring a positive change. It has been an interesting experience to bring youth to discuss about the best way for change during two Open Forums. Small grants were also an opportunity for good ideas as Youth Peer to be realized.

The Internet Society Tunisia as partner for the TIG Youth for Change project in Tunisia decided to organize the next yearly event Tunisian Internet Days with a main theme: "Internet and Youth".

Khaled Koubba, ISOC Tunisia- Host organization, Tunisia



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Morocco: Naoufal El-Hammoumi- Focal point & host organization coordinator

Host Organization: Association Tiflétois new life "ATNL MOROCCO"

<http://events.tiqweb.org/19525>

Outcomes:

Around 30 youth joined the open forum in Morocco and discussed challenges facing them, they can be summarized as follows:

- Unemployment and providing youth with job opportunities
- Illegal immigration
- Supporting youth ideas and creativity
- Youth participation in social development to combat poverty
- Education and improving the current curriculum



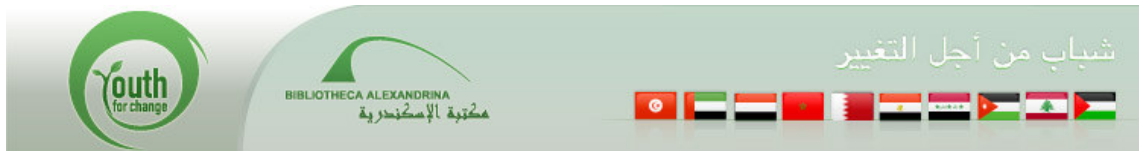
The focal point was hosted by a local radio channel in Morocco to conduct a 3 hour program where he promoted the "Youth for Change" project and activities. This program also served as an open space for youth to discuss different issues related to youth development and challenges facing youth. Also, through this program, the mini-grant winner from Morocco was able to promote his Environmental project and raise awareness about environmental issues among a wide number of youth audience.

The focal point in Morocco, also organized a meeting in Bahrain within a Gulf youth event organized there, in order to promote the Youth for Change project and reach out to more youth in the Gulf, especially those in UAE.

The main issues discussed were:

- The social participation of Youth in UAE
- The status of youth initiatives in UAE & the involvement of youth
- The lack of interest among youth to participate in development work

The participants expressed their interest in knowing more about the experiences of youth from other Arab countries in development work to help them encourage youth participation in UAE.



B. Online Engagement

Main Outcomes:

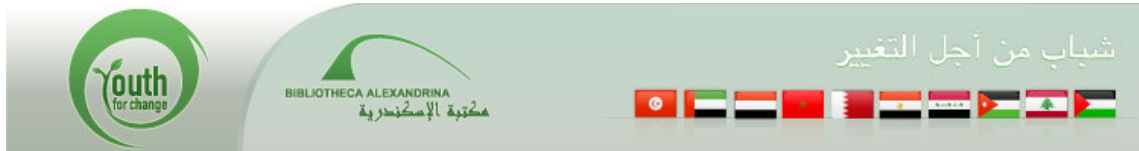
Four live chats were conducted with over 100 participants and 14 speakers from different countries. The live chats focused on the following topics:

- *Utilizing new media to promote dialogue across cultures*
- *Strengthening youth as community Agents of Change*
- *Social networks for Social Change*
- *New Media and Intercultural Dialogue*

An opportunity for youth in the MENA region and other countries to network and discuss issues of mutual interest. These live chats also encouraged the participants to discuss these topics further on TIG through the discussion boards and blogs

The "Youth for Change" project has focused on providing youth with the space to express their views freely and discuss the challenges and issues that affect them whether online, through discussion forums, live chats, blogs in both Arabic and English as well as the Panorama and global gallery sections or through open forums conducted in each of the targeted countries. More specifically the "Youth for Change" project page <http://projects.tigweb.org/youthforchange> provided similar tools such as blogs and discussion boards for the project participants to discuss issues related to the project. The project page was also used as an announcement board to update participants with the latest news, activities and related documents of the project and a communication tool to send them any important announcements and invitations to activities.

Based on the initial proposal, only two live chats were planned to be conducted, however based on the high interest among Youth for Change participants, another two live chats were organized. Each live chat was promoted on TakingITGlobal's homepage and a specific event page was created for each, to give further details about the live chat and to encourage the participants to register in advance. The content exchange between TakingITGlobal and InfoMall has not yet moved to the implementation phase, as it required more time & technical work than expected. To date, both teams exchanged technical requirements that can be followed up in 2009. The intention is to share the "databases of organizations and events" between the TakingITGlobal and InfoMall portals.



Lessons learned:

There is a strong interest in having further live chats organized in Arabic in order to facilitate networking and understanding between Arab youth themselves. In addition, there is a desire for further English live chats to be organized between Arab youth and youth from other parts of the world to promote cross cultural exchange. The follow up on the live chats should encourage extending the online discussions into offline actions by having teams of youth in different locations to work together and collaborate on projects.

Online training partners:

The successful implementation of the Youth for Change project attracted organizations to partner with TakingITGlobal on the national and regional level. In addition to the host organizations in each targeted country, TakingITGlobal was approached by OFOK NGO, which is a recognized non-governmental, non-profit organization operating in Egypt. OFOK offered free certified online training programs in IT and business skills for all the 15 mini-grant winners, and in exchange they have been featured as one of the Youth for Change partners on the project page.

OFOK was established in December 2005 by 15 active youth with a passion for community development and a mission to help communities empower themselves, and to help individuals develop their careers and find employment. Accordingly, OFOK decided to specialize in ICT training so that it would offer its students with training in advanced technology and thereby ensuring that all future youth ICT professionals trained by OFOK receive the very best education available. <http://orgs.tiqweb.org/29157>

"Ofok feels very privileged to have been part of the 'Youth for Change' project, and hopes to be part of it again in the future. We feel our professional softskills courses will make a valuable contribution for students to express their ideas and message in an effective and professional manner." **Moataz Sharawy, OFOK, Egypt**

" This project is really a great step towards the unity of youth activists all over the Arabic countries. It acts as an incubator that collects the whole Arab region, whether by interacting together through the E-course, live chatting, exchanging experiences and ideas and making further relations between Arab youth through TIG different platforms."

Ahmed Tammam, YFC advisor, Egypt



Following is a summary of the live chats. Please refer to the Supporting Documents for the full versions of live chat reports.

1- **"Utilizing new media to promote dialogue across cultures"**

This live chat was conducted on April 22nd, 2008 in Arabic. 25 participants from the different Arabic countries attended the chat. The live chat started with presentations from the three main speakers and followed with questions and comments from the participants. The speakers were:

- Saleem Habash- Palestine: a Master's candidate at the University of Missouri School of Journalism in Columbia, MO. Expert on youth and new media
- Mohamed A. Shehab El Din-Egypt: He is currently a consultant and trainer in the field of conflict resolution. He is also the co-founder of an Egyptian development NGO "*Nahdet El Mahrousa*."
- Ahmed Esmat-Egypt. He is a TIG member and completed his BA in Business/Faculty of Commerce. He also established his own company producing the first Agenda /Magazine in Alexandria, Egypt that aims at introducing culture for youth in an entertaining way

Outcomes:

- This is the first Arabic live chat to be conducted through TakingITGlobal and the participants were excited about this experience and found it a great opportunity for Arabic speaking youth to discuss the issues that affect them in a more interactive way.
- The speakers as well as the participants focused on the importance of dialogue between Arab youth and for them to understand each other better, before trying to understand the "Others"
- There was a request from all participants to organize more live chats in Arabic as they saw it was an important tool for networking and for avoiding the stereotypes that Arab youth have about each other <http://events.tigweb.org/18421>

2- **"Strengthening youth as community Agents of Change"**

This live chat was conducted in English on July 19th, 2008, and had 35 participants. The 5 guest speakers presented their perspectives about this issue and offered the participants advice on their own community work. <http://events.tigweb.org/19579>

Three of the speakers were mini-grant winners, and they had the opportunity to showcase their projects and give more details about their activities. The speakers were:

- Jennifer Corriero- Executive Director, TakingITGlobal
- Mohammed Arouki- Project Manager, UNDP- Palestine
- Nabil Chemli: Mini-grant winner- Tunisia
- Mazin Khalil- Mini-grant winner- Palestine
- Saddam Motea- Mini-grant winner- Yemen

Outcomes:

- The participants exchanged experiences and perspectives about the topic, both on a local and international level
- The participants also had the chance to get some advice regarding some of the challenges they are facing in their projects and initiatives.
- Three mini-grant winners had the opportunity to present their projects and their experiences in development work



3- **" Social networks for Social Change"**

This live chat was conducted in Arabic on November 1st, 2008. 26 participants attended from different Arab countries. <http://events.tigweb.org/21225>

The guest speakers were:

- Tamer Sabry- Head of Egyptian Association of Junior Scientists- Egypt
- Ahmed Youssry – Program Manager at Sustainable Development Association & an active Blogger- Egypt
- Wiaam Youssef -Youth activist, TIG member & virtual volunteer – Syria

Outcomes:

- Exchange of information about the different social networks, especially Facebook and TakingITGlobal as well as exchanging names of important Arabic bloggers who have utilized this social tool to focus on important issues affecting their communities
- Encouraging the participants to utilize these social networks and tools to promote local and global issues
- Different examples were presented to utilize these tools in an effective way, such as the US elections, Blog Action Days, etc.
- A survey conducted by Tamer Sabry on Arab youth and utilization of Social Networks was presented and the participants were invited to fill in this survey.

4- **"New Media and Intercultural Dialogue"**

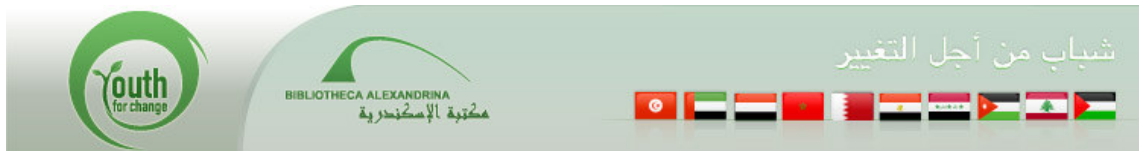
This live chat was conducted in English on November 29th where 18 youth from different regions participated to share their perspectives about this topic and to encourage cross cultural dialogue. <http://events.tigweb.org/21507>

The guest speakers were:

- Mai Ngo- Canada: Communications and Ontario project manager- Creating Local Connections, TakingITGlobal
- Saleem Habash – Palestine: Phd student at the University of Missouri School of Journalism in Columbia, Missouri
- Damian Profeta – Argentina: TakingITGlobal Spanish Language Engagement Coordinator

Outcomes

- Sharing the outputs of TIG Web 2.0 for Social Change guide, which is a resource tool that covers a wide range of online tools that can be utilized to initiate a campaign on important local and global issues. This guide is available at:
<http://www.tigweb.org/resources/toolkits/view.html?ToolkitID=2103>
- Focusing on the importance of the new media and a comparison between the US and Canadian elections was presented, which shows how Obama's campaign focused on the online tools and attracted more youth
- Stereotypes about Arabic and the West were discussed and one of the speakers presented a study he conducted between Arab and American youth using facebook that helped minimize the misconceptions and prejudices
- Examples of different projects and initiatives that utilize online tools for cross cultural dialogue were presented



C. Mini-Grant Awards

Main Outcomes:

- 15 active youth have been chosen to receive the project mini-grants. The winners were from : Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Iraq, Bahrain, Yemen and Palestine and their projects focused on different topics such as: Education, Health, Environment, HIV/Aids, Employment, Democracy and Human Rights, Cross cultural dialogue and Culture & Identity.
- Through TIGed, TakingITGlobal resource for educators and based on TIG guide to action, the winners were provided with material and guidance over 6 weeks to cover the different stages of their projects
- The TakingITGlobal Guide to Action, which serves as an important tool for youth-led development action projects, was translated into Arabic and posted on TIG.
- Interviews with active youth from the MENA region were conducted and quotes have been chosen and added to the guide to action

The mini-grants were announced in early May 2008, through posting an announcement on TakingITGlobal and InfoMall. An application form was designed for this purpose in both English and Arabic and distributed among the different networks. Two live chat sessions on preparing project proposals were conducted by Ahmed Tammam, and moderated by Tala Nabulsi to provide the applicants with tips on writing proposals and filling in the applications. Over 40 participants attended both sessions.

By end of May, we received 55 applications from the different targeted countries and these applications were reviewed by an evaluation committee consisting of Tala Nabulsi- Project Manager, Ahmed Tammam- YFC advisor, Maged Hassan- Arabic Translations Coordinator/TIG, Naoufal El- Hammoumi- Morocco focal point and Alaa Al-Aghbari- Yemen focal point.

The applications were reviewed on a 1-5 scale, based on the following criteria:

- Relevant to major challenges/problems in the community, such as health, education, employment, participation in society, environment.
- SMART objectives and tangible activities
- Anticipated direct results / outcomes (measurable results directed towards the target group and society)
- Creativity and uniqueness- Innovative
- Number of beneficiaries and impact
- Level of youth contribution and participation in the project
- Utilization of TIG tools in project activities + posted their project on TIG



- Budget: Items specified for funding must be realistic and with no duplication
- Professional Writing and complete application

15 projects were chosen covering the following countries: Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, Yemen, Tunisia and Morocco. Their projects were focusing on different important issues such as: Education, Health, Environment, HIV/Aids, Employment, Democracy and Human Rights, Cross cultural dialogue and Culture & Identity.

The mini-grants offered by Bibliotheca Alexandrina ranged from \$ 300-650 USD and were sent to the host organizations in the different countries for the winners to pick them up.

As part of the project management, contracts were prepared for each winner to govern the relationship between each winner and project partners. It also included details of the project activities and deadline for completing the project and submitting the final report.

During the course of their projects, a 6 week e-course was conducted utilizing TIGed tools and the materials provided were based on TIG guide to action. Each week the participants were introduced to a section of the guide and were given a related assignment. The material was prepared by Tala Nabulsi, Project Manager and Ahmed Tammam, YFC advisor.

Also, one live chat session was conducted to give the opportunity for the winners to share experiences, challenges, best practices and lessons learned. The winners were followed up regularly through e-mails, phone calls and progress reports. The focal points from each country were also in contact with the winners, following up on their activities and attending some of their activities.

During the project period, the TakingITGlobal Guide to Action was translated into Arabic and provided to the mini-grant winners during the e-course, as well as posted online for other Arabic speaking youth. This guide has been created by young people who have worked to achieve their goals and initiate positive change in the world. Offering this guide in Arabic gave the opportunity for a wider segment of Arabic youth to utilize it in their community and development projects. This guide was also tailored for the MENA region and included a few quotes from active youth in the region, who have been interviewed for this purpose.

<http://www.tigweb.org/action/guide/>



Summary of Mini-Grant projects

Project Overview	Key Achievements
<p>Bahrain: Rashed Al-Ghayeb Project: Democracy and Human Rights club http://projects.tigweb.org/dhc The project aims at introducing youth to the concepts of democracy and human rights through training workshops, as well as introducing them to the roles of different governmental organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising awareness and training 20 Bahraini youth on the concept of democracy, human rights, international conventions and lobbying - Introducing the project participants to the different governmental organizations and the process of developing policies - Cooperating with Parliamentarians to develop youth related of policies - Creating a core group of youth who can work on raising awareness about local issues
<p>Egypt: Asma Abdel Gawad Project: Kick HIV/AIDS out http://projects.tigweb.org/KickAIDSout The project aims at training and building the capacity of young activists to work on the issue of HIV/Aids as well as raising awareness about this issue to youth and general public that will help in changing attitudes towards people living with HIV/Aids</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motivation of 25 young activist to work in the issue of HIV/AIDS - Promoting the issue of HIV/AIDS in Egypt among 250 persons - Building great networks between (International organizations "WHO" – Civil society "5 NGOs"- Governmental institutions "National AIDS program" and youth themselves) throughout the activities implemented in the project. - Introducing TIG community to project participants - Active participation of the project participants through voluntarily counselling and testing for HIV at Al-Azhar Park in a youth event targeting people living with HIV.
<p>Egypt: Younna Al-Khattam Project: Be the change http://projects.tigweb.org/bethechange The project aimed at organizing a capacity building program for youth that is specially tailored according to iEARN Needs and Resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 30 trained volunteers in different teams, IT, Media & PR, Fundraising, Facilitators & logistics. These volunteers will be able to re-activate major iEARN projects - Creating Fundraising and Media & outreach strategic plans for the iEARN program - Creating action plans for two major projects of

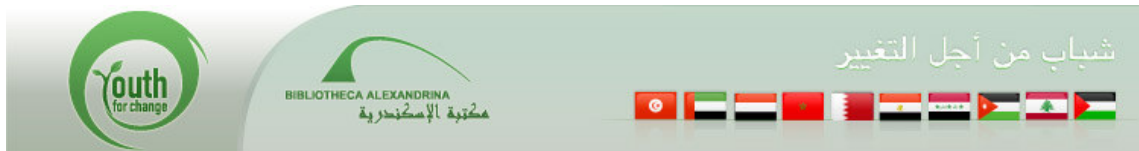
	<p>iEARN, (YouthCAN and MDG)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing a wide range of NGO network who are interested in Education & IT
<p>Egypt: Ahmed Kamel Project: Our health in our food http://projects.tigweb.org/bader The project aims at raising awareness about the importance of a healthy meal in our daily life among women and families in the rural areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising awareness and reaching out to 400 women through direct activities and more than 2000 people from the targeted village about the importance of a healthy meal - Training 20 women on different skills to become volunteers in the project and help implement activities in the village - Participating in a radio program to raise awareness about the project and preparing 3 wall magazines/promotional material to be distributed in local clinics - Preparing educational material about the importance of a healthy meal and medical facts as well as examples of healthy meals to the target group and volunteers
<p>Egypt: Ahmed Haroon Project: Restoring the colour green http://projects.tigweb.org/green The project aims at raising awareness about the environment through different activities ranging from recycling and awareness raising campaigns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Created a website for the project www.rgccampaign.net - Partnering with different local organizations to help implement the project activities - Creating promotional material for awareness raising campaigns - Conducting lectures and recycling campaigns in different universities
<p>Jordan: Ameeneh Yaqoob Project: My environment is my world http://projects.tigweb.org/lovelygarden The project aims at raising awareness about the environment through direct visits to clean and plant flowers in public gardens in different governorates in Jordan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cleaning 6 public gardens in 3 governorates in Jordan, by removing litter and planting small trees/flowers - Creating a team of volunteers to work on the project
<p>Morocco: Fayssal Mahjoub Project: The environment is our</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participating in a radio program to promote the project and environmental awareness

<p>responsibility http://projects.tigweb.org/env-tiflet The projects aims at raising awareness about the environment with a focus on children and youth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organizing drawing session for children on the theme of environment - Participating in 4 camps where discussions on environmental issues were organized - Planting trees and cleaning some areas - Raising awareness about environmental issues - Using artwork as a means of awareness, through 4 wall drawings
<p>Palestine: Samer Abu Eisha Project: Artwork for the city of Jerusalem http://projects.tigweb.org/wallpaintingjerusalem The project aims at promoting the city of Jerusalem as the cultural city of 2009 through artwork</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating two 3 * 3 wall drawings painted by 9 young artists and the second by the public - Creating a spirit of volunteerism among youth from different areas in Jerusalem - A performance by young dancers was held to raise awareness about the project
<p>Palestine: Rafat Khalifa Project: Youth and Children for development and change http://projects.tigweb.org/khalifa_rafat The project aims at building the capacity of youth and including them in voluntary activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducting capacity building training for around 35 youth - Training the participants on the concepts of democracy and human rights - Volunteering in a youth camp to encourage the participants on the concept of volunteerism and train them on the necessary skills to work in such activities
<p>Tunisia Nabil Chemli Project: Peer Education for Youth Leadership and HIV/AIDS prevention http://projects.tigweb.org/Y-PEER_Tunisia The project aims at building the capacity of youth working on HIV/Aids issues within the Youth Peer network</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 peer education trainings were conducted: 49 young scout were trained in Bizerte, 18 young members of the Tunisian association Against STI's/AIDS – Sousse Section- and 11 peer educator from the SCORA team (IFMSA Tunis) were trained in Sex workers peer education, - A small amount for the grant was used for the National Y-Peer Theatre based Training supported by UNFPA, 23 young members of various NGO in Tunisia were trained in theatre techniques and peer education. - 101 Young new young peer educator were trained within the Youth for Change project - Strengthening the capacity of 5 trainers of peer educators: allowing them to use the skills learned by designing and implementing the training sessions (3 for the peer education

	<p>trainings, and 2 during the Theatre Based Training)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthening the capacity of the Y-Peer focal Points in project management
<p>Yemen Amal Al-Yaheiry Project: Combating Aids in the rural community http://projects.tigweb.org/countryside The project aims at building the capacity of a group of youth to work on the issues of HIV/Aids as well as increasing awareness about HIV/Aids in the rural communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training 24 young volunteers to raise awareness about how to prevent HIV/Aids - Distributing promotional material related to HIV/Aids - Organizing a workshop about HIV/Aids - Raising awareness about HIV/Aids among young and older groups of society - Strengthening the participation of youth in voluntary work

Lessons Learned

- The timeframe of the project was partially centered around the dates of the World Youth Congress in Quebec City. Mini-grant winners were provided with a 3 month initial period to implement their projects; however this time frame proved to be limited. In the future, it is recommended to allow at least 6-9 months for the project to be completed, commencing the time that mini-grant winners receive their initial instalment. Ideally, the mini-grant would be broken into two segments, the second payment upon completion of the final report.
- Having an evaluation committee with a representative from each country proved to be an effective model for identifying mini-grant winners however in most cases, it was the project focal point and not the host organization. In order to increase accountability, communication and support between the host organization and mini-grant winner, it is recommended that a representative of each host organization serve on the evaluation committee.
- Having the TakingITGlobal Guide to Action translated into Arabic proved to be a valuable resource for mini-grant winners. Over 2008, TakingITGlobal has developed an online ecourse called Make it Happen which provides online project management skills to youth working on development projects. In the future, this ecourse can be adapted and offered to mini-grant winners as a pre-requisite to receiving the mini-grant in order to provide capacity building and training support to project leaders.



Challenges:

- Due to the delay in sending out the grants, some winners were delayed in starting their projects as they did not have enough personal funds to invest in projects as part of up-front costs.
- Most projects activities were also delayed during the month of Ramadan from September 1st to October 1st and therefore most projects required an extension.
- Due to the fact that the winners are active youth leaders who are either in school or employed, additional commitments caused some delay in finishing their projects on time or completing their project activities.
- Two of the selected projects were not implemented in Iraq and Gaza and another two projects were not fully completed in Gaza and Yemen due to a combination of personal reasons related to the winner or the political situation in the country.

"If it weren't for Youth for Change Project or its facilitators, I don't believe we would have made this tremendous success in our own project " be the Change " which is a capacity Building program for iEARN Volunteers, It was the announcement of the Mini grants that is provided by Youth For Change that initiated the idea in our minds and hearts and with the support of the facilitators we believed in beating the odds! Thanks to TakingITGlobal and Bibliotheca Alexandrina, we are working on our reactivation process with steady steps! iEARN Volunteers will be able to tour the 100 schools all over Egypt to plant the seeds of professional development , ICT , respecting differences and mutual understanding." **Younma El-Khattam, Mini-grant winner, Egypt**

"Firstly I was really happy when the application for our project was accepted, although it is a mini-grant but the recognition of our effort by the TakingITGlobal and its partner is without value.

"For the new born Y-PEER Tunisia network it was our first fund collected without the usual support of the UNFPA. The grant allowed us to train 101 peer educators, they will be an agent of change in their community by sharing their knowledge about HIV/AIDS prevention and skills to strengthen the positive attitude among their peers." **Nabil Chemli, Mini-grant winner, Tunisia**



D. Scholarships – WYC 2008

Main Outcomes:

- Two of the mini-grant winners from Egypt and Bahrain received a full scholarship to attend the World Youth Congress in Quebec City 2008
- Dr. Ismail Serageldin received the Champion of Youth award at the WYC
- Interviews were conducted with the Mini-grant winners
- A MENA region roundtable was conducted where 20 active youth from different Arabic countries as well as England and Canada attended this meeting to network and discuss the challenges that youth face in the MENA region.

Online interviews were conducted with all 15 winners and based on their responses and nature of projects, 5 were selected to attend the World Youth Congress 2008, in Quebec City.

The winners were:

- Nabil Chemli -Tunisia
- Mazin Khalil - Palestine
- Asmaa Abdel Gawad - Egypt
- Rashed Al-Ghayeb- Bahrain
- Saddam Motea- Yemen

*"The Youth for Change project gave me the opportunity to participate in the World Youth Congress and I learned a lot from this experience. The Youth projects I heard about motivated me a lot and I will apply new ideas and techniques in my youth project in Bahrain."***Rashed Al-Ghayeb- Mini-grant and scholarship winner, Bahrain**

Unfortunately due to the visa refusal of three of these winners, only those from Egypt and Bahrain were able to attend. The two participants had the chance to network with other youth from around the world and promote their projects widely among representatives of organizations and UN agencies. They also received training and orientation in different topics related to youth-led development. The two mini-grant winners were interviewed for the World Youth Congress website and book.

Based on TakingITGlobal nomination, Dr. Ismail Serageldin received the Champion of Youth award at the World Youth Congress and was invited to be one of the speakers at the opening plenary session. Also, three of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina staff attended the World Youth Congress and conducted a workshop on "Utilizing New Media to Promote Dialogue across Cultures".

In response to a recommendation by TakingITGlobal, a MENA region roundtable was conducted as part of the World Youth Congress activities. 20 active youth from different Arabic countries (Jordan, Egypt, Bahrain, Morocco, Iraq and Algeria) as well as from England and Canada attended this meeting to network and discuss the challenges that youth face in the MENA region and the opportunities that can be foreseen as well as prepare their recommendations on these issues to governments' representatives.

During the session which was moderated by Tala Nabulsi, YFC project manager, an overview about TakingITGlobal and the Youth for Change project was presented. Furthermore, the participants were asked to identify the challenges and opportunities for youth-led development in their region and areas of interest in addition to three recommendations to governments to support youth-led development.



The major recommendations from this session were:

1. To provide opportunities for inter-youth communication and understanding by:

- a. Increasing exchange programs
- b. Establishing pen-pal curriculum in schools.
- c. Increasing second language learning emphasizing on other national languages.

2. To encourage youth to change public images and prejudices through:

- a. Establishing youth-led media
- b. Increasing youth assemblies with public opinion to be voiced and taken into consideration by the government.

3. To promote health and environment by:

- a. Allocating the efforts of the Ministries of Health and Environment to support the successful youth projects as well as raising awareness campaigns towards health and environment in associations, organization and youth initiatives.
- b. Intensifying the teaching of environmental programs in schools in the framework of the educational system in the field of environment and health

"Being one of the mini-grant winners from the Youth for Change project enabled me to bring my ideas into action. It also gave me the chance to participate in the World Youth Congress 2008 which was a great opportunity to learn new ways of tackling our community problems from sharing experiences with youth activists all over the world. Now my project team and I have more new ideas and more energy to face our challenges. Thanks a lot for the Youth for Change project staff for their support".

Asmaa Abdel-Gawad - Mini-grant and scholarship winner, Egypt



Conclusions and Next steps

TakingITGlobal would like to sincerely thank Bibliotheca Alexandrina and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation for their support of this project that has helped youth in the MENA region be more inspired, informed and involved in issues that affect them.

The Youth for Change project has gone beyond geographic boundaries and encouraged cultural dialogue and networking between youth from different Arabic countries through the range of online tools, training and support offered. The open forums conducted in each country have provided the opportunity for active youth to discuss freely their challenges and different ways of addressing them, and has helped to grow a network of youth at the local level, who aim at creating positive change in their communities. This project has also encouraged youth from the MENA region to interact and share experiences with youth from all over the world, in an attempt to promote the concept of dialogue between people- to address misconceptions or prejudices, to prevent conflicts and, most importantly, to foster a culture of peace and understanding.

The mini-grants along with the technical support & guidance that were provided to the mini-grant winners from the different Arab countries, was a highlight in this project, as it opened the doors for youth to work on action projects affecting social and environmental change at the community level. In some cases, this level of support was the first opportunity for youth leaders to have a chance at transforming ideas into actions in order to address crucial issues ranging from HIV/AIDS to human rights and democracy, and that targets different groups in their communities.

Moving into 2009, TakingITGlobal is very interested in the possibility of implementing a next phase of the project in cooperation with Bibliotheca Alexandrina, in order to support further the cross cultural dialogue between youth from the MENA and support youth-led development projects. Given the interest generated from the project among youth from other Arabic countries, we are hoping that a second phase could involve additional countries, as well as build upon the initiatives and momentum established in the first phase with our initial pilot countries. Our goal for Phase II would be to offer additional mini-grants in conjunction with an ecourse that leverages the materials and methodology of the TakingITGlobal Make it Happen ecourse.

(<http://www.tigblog.org/group/makeithappen>)

Finally and based on the experiences of the two scholarship winners who attended the World Youth Congress in Quebec city 2008, we are hoping that the next phase could include a scholarship component allowing youth to attend an international conference that offers training and networking opportunities. The next World Youth Congress is scheduled to take place in Turkey 2010 and can serve as another opportunity for partnership!



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