



THE MIDDLE EAST PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE: *U.S. Support for Freedom and Democracy in the Middle East*

"Here in the Middle East, that same long hopeful process of democratic change is now beginning to unfold. Millions of people are demanding freedom for themselves and democracy for their countries."

—Secretary of State Rice, June 20, 2005

Since its launch in 2002, the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) has received \$293 million to fund initiatives that support freedom in the Middle East. MEPI concentrates its efforts in the areas of democracy promotion, economic reform, quality education, and women's empowerment in the region.

MEPI PROGRAM EXAMPLES

Democracy and Civil Society

- In Lebanon, supported pre-election polling and nationwide discussions on electoral law.
- In Morocco, trained party members from 11 political parties on constituency building and media outreach.
- In Egypt, supporting civil society organizations in domestic election monitoring, training youth to develop advocacy skills and voter education in anticipation of fall elections.
- In Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian territories, and Tunisia, training journalists and new media outlets on journalistic standards and techniques for covering elections.
- In Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, and Yemen,

MEPI FACTS

- 225 programs in 14 countries and the Palestinian Territories.
- Supporting over 70 civil society organizations from the Middle East.
- Of the total received, 22% increase in proposals from indigenous organizations.
- Over 75% of MEPI funding supports civil society and non-governmental organizations. The remaining MEPI funding supports country reform technical assistance.

working with parliamentarians and their staffs to strengthen skills in representing constituents.

- In the Gulf, working to develop Alternative Dispute Resolution programs to help alleviate the backlog of court cases.

Economic Reform

- In Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco, trained 1,000 bank staff on providing capital to small and medium size enterprises. As a result, one Egyptian Bank plans to make 12,000 loans in the next year.

- In Morocco and Bahrain, helped prepare the country for Free Trade Agreement negotiations.
- In Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the U.A.E., assisting to reach compliance with international obligations in agriculture, labor, intellectual property rights, customs, etc.
- In Oman, helping its only law school establish a commercial law curriculum.

Quality Education

- Beginning in Bahrain, Jordan, and Lebanon, providing over 5 million children's books translated into Arabic.

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- Throughout the region, providing English-language scholarships with the goal of reaching more than 13,000 disadvantaged youth.

- In Jordan, developing new interactive technology solutions to large-scale education problems.

- Providing leadership and problem-solving training to more than 120 youth.

Women's Empowerment

- Provided more than 200 Arab women with political campaign skills.
- Provided 42 young women internships in U.S. businesses and law firms. Five alumni have now started their own businesses.
- Funded Freedom House's first ever comparative study of Women's Freedom in the Arab World.

- Building networks among activists across the region who are working for women's full legal, political, social and economic empowerment.

MULTILATERAL PROGRAMS

- Working with G8 and regional partners, established the Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) initiative as a multilateral framework for democratic reform in the region. The BMENA centerpiece, the Forum for the Future, is an unprecedented international venue to support the reform voices in the region. Business and Civil Society Dialogues parallel the Forum; MEPI will help with a Civil Society rule of law conference in 2005.
- Among the BMENA initiatives supported by MEPI are two entrepreneurship training centers, civil society programs under the Democracy Assistance Dialogue, support for entrepreneurs and micro-enterprises, and a region-wide education portal.

MEPI CONTACT INFORMATION

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