



DOS PHOTO

THE MIDDLE EAST PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE ALUMNI NETWORK

Accelerating the Work of Reformers

“The people of the Middle East share the desire for freedom. We have an opportunity and an obligation to help them turn this desire into reality.”
— Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) was created to support the aspirations of people in the Middle East for greater freedom and opportunity. In its first five years, MEPI has done that by investing more than \$430 million in over 350 programs in 17 countries and the Palestinian territories.

The result? Thousands of participants in MEPI programs across the Middle East have personally benefited and have, in turn, made significant impacts on their families, communities, and countries. A few examples:

- MEPI participants traveled to the United States to learn new ways of doing business as they work to improve transparency, create jobs and boost economic growth in the region.
- Students learned about civic responsibility and citizenship and are now applying those principles to make a positive difference in their communities.
- Women formed legal and business networks, journalists acquired independent media skills, and electoral candidates learned how to communicate a vision for the future and run for elected office.

MANY PARTICIPANTS, ONE VISION

What unites hundreds of diverse MEPI projects is the goal of supporting people in the Middle East who are working to overcome the deficits identified by Arab experts in the U.N. Arab Human Development Reports.

Those deficits, which require political, educational, and economic reform, must be addressed urgently, as more than 50 percent of the region’s population is under the age of 25. This is a generation that is asking for — and cannot wait for — a voice in its future, empowerment for women, improvements in education, and development of economies.

ONGOING SUPPORT

To provide ongoing support to former MEPI program participants, the U.S. Department of State has launched the

Middle East Partnership Initiative Alumni Network. The MEPI Alumni Network, facilitated by the non-profit America-Mideast Educational and Training Services (AMIDEAST) through a grant from MEPI, is accelerating the momentum of those working to advance democratic reform in civil society.

This network, which has been launched in Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and Yemen, offers MEPI alumni opportunities to network with each other, organize training and development activities, and have wide-ranging discussions on issues such as unemployment, women’s empowerment, freedom of the press, and open elections.

PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

MEPI alumni from around the region have sharpened their communications and leadership skills, strengthened their professional qualifications, and been paired with mentors in their fields. This has made the network of civil society activists more sustainable through equipping leaders with the skills needed to advance reforms.

LOCAL LEADERSHIP

Because participants in MEPI programs range in age from school children to senior opinion leaders and represent all sectors of society, the MEPI Alumni Network is being created to support a wide range of participants and to encourage their interaction. This diversity is reflected in local alumni chapter steering committees, which provide mentorship, leadership and vision for the Alumni Network for many years to come.

ONLINE RESOURCES

The MEPI Alumni Network has a presence online, with a site in Arabic and English for use by alumni only. This allows members to find out about activities in their communities and to expand partnerships with fellow civil society activists from different countries and professions.