

NEWSLETTER

November 2014

2nd Edition



WOMEN POLICY CENTER "HEYA Program"

Active Citizen ... Full Citizenship



Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen, Jordan and Lebanon
2013 - 2016

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News Highlights

First Regional Conference

Academy for International Development – Middle East and North Africa (AID-MENA) in collaboration with the Arabic Union for Youth and Environment, Arab Federation for Environment Experts and “HEYA” umbrella and community based organizations in Egypt, Tunisia, Lebanon, Yemen and Jordan set the platform for organizing and launching the first Regional Conference on Sustainable Development by the local women leaders. The conference was hosted by the Arab League on September 24-27, 2014.



The Heya foundation workshops have attracted 1500 participants to date

1500 Women leader



HEYA participants observe the electoral process in Tunisia



HEYA Program Platform

Our new platform has everything you need regarding the HEYA program, starting with a timeline of all our latest news and events so you can stay up to date with all our activities; not only that, but you can now sync your calendars with ours by accessing our calendar section to know all about our future events. Our platform is designed in a way that is user friendly and provides access to all our information.

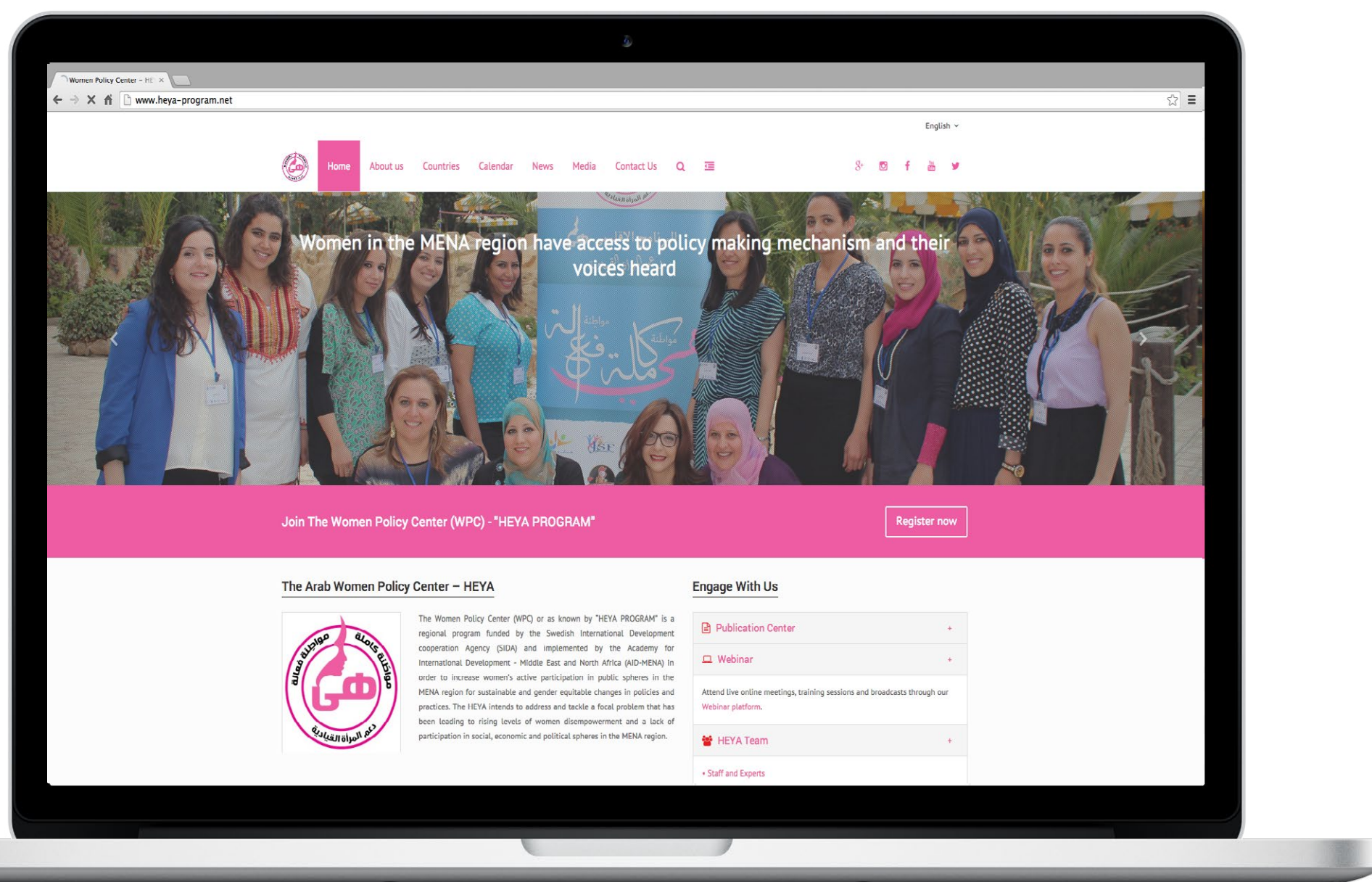
DEAR READERS,



WELCOME TO THE NEW HEYA PROGRAM PLATFORM

Where you can now connect, interact, get to know us and give us your feedback !

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<http://www.hey-program.org>

Our platform is designed in a way that is user friendly and provides access to all our information. All there is to know about what we do, from our goals, objectives, policy papers and researches and more, is found in the "about us" section. We are proud of our work with local and regional partners and have all our joined projects posted there as well. You can find pictures of all our events in our media section to get the full picture of our activities!

As you go through our website you can find our publication center, where our training manuals, policy papers, researches and reports are available. In addition to that you can submit a policy paper and apply for the HEYA Program. For the convenience of our partic-

ipants, readers and anyone interested from any country, we have designed a webinar! This is a place where you can be a part of online conferences, workshops, trainings and a common platform where experiences are shared. Have something to say and want to publish it? We give you the floor on our forum to publish your papers and have them be the heart of a lively discussion amongst all our online users. We care about you and want to hear back from you; through our contact information available at <http://www.hey-program.net/ContactUs>

You can also send us a message on our feedback form and be a part of our mission through your input. Finally, you can get to know the team behind all the work put in the

Heya program through the "Heya team" section! This is where you can find the Biographies of all our staff and experts, researchers, our women leaders and the impressions of all our participants. Thanks to the ease in accessibility provided in our platform, once you're in, you're only a click away from all of what we have to offer. So checkout our new Heya platform now and click away!



HEYA WOMEN LEADERS TAKE PART IN THE "PAR" WORKSHOPS AND FIELD RESEARCH



Iman Abd El Hady , Egypt

"I had discovered the HEYA Program through a post on Facebook; and at this point, I recognized that HEYA is an absolutely unique program due to the variety of the program's activities. My participation in the Participatory Action Research workshop was a valuable opportunity for me to be more familiar with research tools and techniques for community needs assessments from a public policy perspective. I found great success contributing to the formulation of the first policy paper related toward environmental sustainability in Egypt, especially with other Egyptian women leaders "



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In order to keep the workshop organized and efficient, it was divided into five stages. We started by the introductory stage in which the participatory action research method was introduced to the participants. Following that, was the practical training led us to the third stage, designing a research plan. After this is complete the actual field research begins; and last but definitely least, the analysis stage is in gear; in this stage the field research results are analyzed and discussed. All these stages are designed to both help in the comprehension of the participatory research method and to engage the participants through interacting with each other as a team.

During this workshop there were practical steps taken to practice this methodology in the working field.

Amongst these steps was the identification of the two main causes to be studied which are; women's empowerment and environmental sustainability.

In addition to that, designing a research action plan to estimate the size of the problems and conducting a field research.

The training methods employed were interactive and engaging which helped the participants comprehend the topics of discussion and therefore led to the success in accomplishing the goals set for the workshop. Furthermore, it eased the way to the exchange of experiences amongst the participants.

These methods included brainstorming, role playing and sessions that were held at the end of each day to discuss all aspects of the workshop and to strengthen the bonds formed amongst the participants in the duration of the workshop.

In hope of resolving poverty and facing the community development challenges to meet up with the sustainable development goals agenda, and its subsequent problems on the community, in third world countries; a lot of institutions and governmental bodies invest a lot of efforts and attention into community participation. One of the most important research methodologies introduced in the recent present is the Participatory Action Research which relies entirely on community participation in every aspect of the research from setting goals to presenting the final results. Rather than having community participation as just a research method, this methodology promotes it to become a way of life amongst all segments of the community.

In that regards a workshop was carried out in five countries (Yemen, Egypt, Lebanon, Tunis, Jordan) with 25 participants from each country, in the aim of developing Heya's trainees' skills at utilizing the participatory research methodology. In addition to that, build up their training capacity in order to apply the methodology within their geographical regions.

HEYA WOMEN LEADERS OBSERVE THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IN TUNISIA

Tunisia continued their endeavors for the realization of a democratic state by holding their first parliamentary election since the Arab Spring in 2011. As a result, Youth Without Borders (YWB) were accredited by the Independent Higher Electoral Commission to observe the Assembly of Peoples Representatives Election.

YWB is a leading organization in the field of Elections in Tunisia, and as such, were swiftly recruited to join the HEYA program in co-operation with AID-MENA as a Partner NGO in its respective country where they have since implemented workshops in BRIDGE (Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections) for 25 women leaders in June of 2014.

YWB vice president, Ahmed Allouch, was assigned Election Observation Project Assistant, where he coordinated the activities of 229 observers accredited under the name of YWB and divided amongst 160 polling offices in 7 different electoral constituents (districts): Tunis 1, Tunis 2, Manouba, Ben Arous, Ariana, Bizerte and Sfax1. Other YWB staff members working from the HEYA program were Mondher Hamdi, Media Responsible and ISIE Coordinator; Ahlem Rabahm, Coordinator for the Ariana district



and Nedja Chahbia, "Observer".

20 participants from HEYA Program were also present in the observation process. Their training details and role in the electoral observation are detailed here: 7 participants from the BRIDGE workshop:

Rym Bouhlel (Election Observation Project Coordinator), Karima Amirat (Tunis 2 Coordinator), Khouloud Boulsaien (Bizerte Coordinator), Rachida Zribi (Observer), Eya Sinen (Observer), Amel Chikh (Observer), Nadia Chahbia (Observer). 8 participants from the Public Policy Training workshop:

Emna Mabrouk (Tunis 1 Coordinator), Khawla Aouini (Observer), Ben Ameer Ibtissem (Observer), Meriem Amdouni (Observer), Rym Klibi (Observer), Hend Klibi (Observer), Rania Klibi (Observer), Soumaya Zaddem (Observer).

5 participants from the PAR training workshop:

Hajer Toumi (Observer), Marwa Ferchichi (Observer), Douha Braa (Observer),

Fatma Karoui (Observer), Tasnime Bouthina (Observer). The HEYA program would like to congratulate all those involved in the observation of the recent elections, whose contribution to maintaining the practice and legitimacy of democratic elections in the MENA region demonstrates the core principles of AID-MENA and the HEYA program. We wish Tunisia the best of luck for their future, and hope through HEYA's continued efforts in promoting good governance and transparency in political activities that AID-MENA's other partners can have a similar impact in their country.



"FROM AMMAN TO TUNIS"

THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS THROUGH THE EYES OF HEYA PARTICIPANT - BANAN ABO ZAIN ALDEEN

“Living graciously and making a difference in others’ life, makes each of us have a value and an impact in the society and the environment around him. Our standing desires to create changes and development make us visionaries to others; and make each of us consistently seek further development and changes. Accordingly, I gave more consideration to humanitarian issues as I did not save any efforts that would provide any basic needs to others; due to the faith in the principles of living graciously and faith in spreading such principles in a larger scale.

In furtherance of these principles, I choose the voluntary work and also the humanitarian work, which mainly concerns with human rights in order to make changes and further developments. My motivation was a core supporter and I truly believe that we deserve what we work hard for; therefore, I strove for powerful means that would support me to achieve my ambition. I undertook training on monitoring elections, where I was a local observer of Jordanian elections. I also undertook the “Introduction to the electoral system” training workshop according to BRIDGE methodology, which has been organized by the Women Policy Centre “HEYA Program”. Such trainings made significant change in my career, where I was nominated to be an observer at an international level and a member of the Election Network in the Arab World, through which I had the honorable opportunity to observe the Tunisian parliamentary elections.



It was an honour to have my first experience as an observer of elections at an international level, through which I have witnessed the achievement of fair and democratic elections according to the laws. I have witnessed the electoral process, where a suitable environment was provided for voter to facilitate voting and arriving to the polling centre. I have also witnessed other valuable aspects which include adoption of Standards of the International secrecy and directness of the ballot; providing equal opportunities for all to participate in the ballot; providing full transparency about the instruction and procedures of the electoral process; facilitating the task of voting for persons with special needs; and the participation of local and international civil society organizations in the monitoring of elections process, which are all positive signs of improvements of the electoral process and reaching the international standards for successful elections.

I would like to emphasize that the Women Policy Center “HEYA” Program is credited to this success through the various activities and training workshops that me and my colleagues have undertaken. HEYA Program supported our leadership progress in all areas in our life.” – Banan Abo Zain Aldeen, Jordan HEYA Participant

DISCOVER

"LEARNER –CENTERED MURAL APPROACH®"

DEVELOPED BY AID-MENA

Influencing human behavior is a difficult and tricky matter that needs planned and strategic efforts to attempt to change. Recognizing this, the Academy for International Development – Middle East and North Africa (AID-MENA) adopted the science of BC (Behavior Change) through organizing a three-day country based workshop program, in Jordan and Egypt, to introduce the concepts, strategies and approaches for behavior change to different audi-

ences and beneficiaries of the HEYA program. The goal of these workshops was to introduce Behavior Change concepts and strategies and integrate its activities in the operational plan of the HEYA program. In addition to that, this training program was vital in strengthening the organizational capabilities of the partner organizations in this field and in raising their capacity towards community behavior change.



HHEYA seeks to influence the behaviors of women and their respective organizations and communities through a range of organizational approaches, policy tools, and community based activities. In many areas of public policy, the range of traditional tools to influence behaviors works well, however, for some social policy problems influencing human behaviors is very difficult and complex and needs strategic and synchronized efforts and interventions.



Our aim is to, create a positive supportive social norm where the new behaviors can be adopted and practiced within a safe environment. Also we aspire to establish an enabling environment where the legislations and policies will be conducive to the promoted behaviors.

The total of the 35 participants who attended these interactive workshops engaged in stimulating presentations and discussions, which resulted in the creation of a mural which identifies and clarifies the key stages of developing a BC component within the HEYA program actions.

This mural identifies the ingredients needed to create the recipe of successful BC interventions such as: the role of the community and its families in setting the desired social norm for the promoted behaviors, creating an enabling environment of policy and decision makers, identifying the desired behavior/s for each program's audience within the HEYA program's goal and the proposed activities that can be conducted within the program to promote and endorse the identified behaviors. The Learner –Centered Mural Approach® was the tool used to shape this mural. This approach is one of the new training methodologies that were adopted by AID-MENA to serve the

HEYA program's BC goals and objectives.

This BC workshop does not end here; it is an ongoing process that will only prosper through the combined efforts of our participants and their feedback and suggestions. That being said, our participants presented recommendations for the next steps towards our mission. Some of these recommendations include, conducting the BC training workshop in Tunisia, Yemen and Lebanon; in addition to that, developing customized packages, tailored to each country's situation, to promote and advocate for the program's activities.



CAIRO - SEPTEMBER 28TH, 2014

“HEYA” LAUNCHED ITS FIRST REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Since its launching in December 2013, the “HEYA” program succeeded in building up an accelerating momentum and a critical mass of women who are sensitized, trained and motivated to participate in public policies formulation and monitoring.





The Academy for International Development – Middle East and North Africa (AID-MENA) in collaboration with the Arabic Union for Youth and Environment, Arab Federation for Environment Experts and “HEYA” program and community based organizations in Egypt, Tunisia, Lebanon, Yemen and Jordan set the platform for organizing and launching the first regional conference on Sustainable Development by the local women leaders. The conference was hosted by the Arab League on September 24-27, 2014.

“HEYA” is a multi-channel three-year integrated program that aims at increasing women’s active participation in public spheres in the MENA region for sustainable and gender equitable changes in policies and practices ensuring that the voices of women, especially those who are living in less ad-

vantaged communities are heard and considered in the policy and decision making processes.” Said Ahmed Abdel Wahed, Chairman of AID/MENA.

Five trained women representatives of each of the HEYA program countries involved worked collaboratively with technical assistance and guidance -from the environment experts of the Arabic Union of Youth and Environment and Arab Federation for Environment Experts -and developed five local and country based public policy statements that address the most pressing environmental issues in their respective countries.

“This regional opportunity provides me and all my women colleagues with a great opportunity and venue to develop partnerships and practice what we have trained on by

“HEYA” program’s activities to serve our communities and countries.” Said Ms Rasha Bazaiech one of HEYA’s trainees in Jordan.

Although the nature and burden of the environmental problems in each of the five countries vary, the issue of environmental sustainability remains a common pressing issue in all the five countries and started to attract more attention through the active women leaders and local organizations.

The HEYA program is funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) within its regional initiatives to empower women and provide a regional platform for experience sharing and skills transfer.

“Over the past nine months, HEAY program managed to develop partnerships and working relationships with more than 30 local organizations and reach more than 3000 women” Said Ahmed Al Assal – HEYA Regional Coordinator.

Mrs Manal Samrah - the National Coordinator in Egypt emphasized on the importance of the HEYA program efforts in providing capacity building and institutional strengthening activities to support the local implementing organizations in developing more activities in this field beyond the life of the project.

“HEAY program is developed to be sustained by local women, local organizations and structures as a region-

al comprehensive formula to change the norm, nature and effectiveness of women’s participation in political life in the MENA region” added Abdel Wahed.



Participants Reflections on their participation in the Regional Conference



➤ Afaf Khalil, Lebanon

“It has been a privilege for me to participate in Heya’s Regional Conference for Women Leaders and to be a part of such an important initiative that aims to increase women’s participation in the political sphere in a time when it is most needed in the Arab world. I am grateful even more so because here, we are dealing with one of the major challenges that is facing the world in our time, the environment; a challenge that is helping the world to better understand the need for global governance where everyone has a vital role in solving the problem that is threatening his or her future. I have learnt much during the past few days; about the environment and projects for sustainable development as well as about our abilities as women to help decrease the negative effects of these environmental issues through our participation in the formation of public policies, and by knowing the ‘insides and outs’ of such policies. But, I believe the most important thing I have learnt is that change can and must be made and that silence is no longer acceptable” – Afaf Khalil, Lebanon

➤ Hagar Yasien, Egypt

“The Regional Conference addressed the environmental policies from five women leaders of the five involved MENA countries, discussing different issues related to desertification and coastal environment. The diversity of the selected participants added a positive impact to the success of the workshops and achieving the targeted outputs” – Hagar Yasien, Egypt

➤ Ensam salem, Yemen

“The exchange of expertise and experiences, and to acquire many of these experiences, academic knowledge and skills in the field of drawing local, regional and international public policies increased my knowledge of the important basics that build on public policy formulation. Skills that were taught about closing international and regional policy gaps, as well as feedback of information, experiences and skills that I have received in the field of women’s leadership. The conference was one of the most important conferences that assessed the level of the Middle East’s interests with regard to Arab Women Leadership that displays different ideas and experiences.” - Ensam salem, Yemen.

➤ Salma El Rigi , Tunis

“My participation within the activities of the Regional Conference for Women Leaders on “public policy to ensure environmental sustainability in the areas of desertification and coastal environment” was a very important opportunity to discuss the coastal environment and desertification issues. The conference has truly been a great benefit thanks to the various lectures given by lecturers and professors about the dangers that threaten the Arab areas due to increased rates of pollution and encroachment on the environment. On the practical level, the benefits were great in the sense that we were able to produce a policy paper on the problem of the Tunisian coastline pollution. Starting by defining the problems, then identifying the causes of these problems, and finally determining strategies to solve them.” – Salma El Rigi , Tunis.

➤ Amal Shabsough, Jordan

“The HEYA Program represents, for me, an important link between Arabian women, who have developed themselves in academia and increased their knowledge on political practices in order to take part in civic participation, and other community members. My participation in the regional conference for women leaders has had a great impact on my knowledge and skills related to environmental sustainability in the MENA region. The most important aspect of this conference is that the women have an accessible platform to participate in formulating and writing public policies whilst not being considered a taboo. Applicable for any woman leader who want to take part in developing her country, the HEYA program gives women the tools in monitoring and analysis to be an active citizen within her nation” - Amal Shabsough, Jordan.



The HEYA foundation workshops have attracted 1500 participants to date

Six months since the launching of the capacity building component of HEYA Program, more than 1500 women leaders from the five countries have taken part in participating in the HEYA foundation workshop entitled as “Introduction to Analyzing and Formulating Public Policies”. HEYA partner organizations are still delivering the foundation workshop, one of the core capacity building activities of HEYA program, which will continue until May 2015. The workshop aims at equipping the women leaders with the necessary skills and knowledge required for monitoring and formulating the public policies for their local communities.

Women who participated till now have been selected according to the program criteria, taking into consideration the diversity of women and the locations. Reaching out to different locations and women enriched the program and maximized the learning of the HEYA family.

Janat Nasrawy from Tunisia stated “Participating in the HEYA Program was a great opportunity for me to get trained on formulating policy papers as well as monitoring public policies and addressing the real needs within our communities in the MENA region. The program allowed me to build strong networks and connections amongst other women leaders from Egypt, Yemen, Lebanon and Jordan.”



AID-MENA with WAY and its Local Partners Launched HEYA Program in Lebanon



On November 28th, 2014, the HEYA Lebanese team in participation with their local partners under the umbrella of the Academy for International Development – Middle East and North Africa (AID-MENA), conducted their launching event of the HEYA Program at the Jinan University in Lebanon.

The event was sponsored by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Rashid Derbas, which was attended by representative authorities, community public figures, and civil society organizations (CSOs); including Ms. Nada Mikati represented by Prime Minister Najib Mikati, President of the “Forum of solidarity” Amer Arslan, Ahmed Abd El-Wahed the director of the HEYA Program, Joseph Fadel Dean of the Institute of Political Sciences in Jinan University and Amar Yakin the dean of Jinan University, as well as various interested parties.

The event began with the National Lebanese Anthem, followed by the University Anthem, and then Ms. Mouna Baroudy welcomed the attendees. Representing WAY, MR. Fadi Jamal delivered a speech to the attended guests outlining the launch of the pilot program to prepare women to draft and write public policy papers on educational and social issues. He praised the role of the Minister of Social Affairs, Derbas, and stressed that the Assembly “is betting on the program as a responsibility to the society in which we seek to be the best, and we find present and future challenges.”

Furthermore, Mr. Ahmed Abd El-Wahed, the HEYA program manager, gave an explanation about the HEYA Program saying that “ it targets women leaders in the participating countries, including Lebanon, in the areas of raising capacity and awareness, and have access in decision-making circles.” He also explained that “the overall objective of the program is to increase the active participation of women in public areas in the Middle East and North Africa in order to reach sustainable, fair and equal changes in policies and practices for both sexes to ensure that women’s voices are heard at all levels.”

Remarkably, the Minister of Social affairs, Derbas added his words emphasizing that the event will “enable women to begin their role in society as leaders of their communities.” He added, “The role of women is not a gendered role, we as a society supposed to stand by and support these women.” By the end, The HEYA participants have been honored for their accomplishment of the foundation workshop in monitoring and formulating public policies; furthermore, they received their program certificates by Mr. Derbas and the program management. Moreover, both AID-MENA and WAY honored Mr.Derbas the HEYA Shield for his contribution in the success of the program so far.



HEYA’s Women Leaders Submit the First Policy Paper to the Minister of Environment in Lebanon



In September of 2014, the HEYA program conducted its first regional conference on environmental sustainability, attended by 25 women leaders from Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Yemen and Tunisia. During the conference’s sessions and round table discussions, the participants succeed in writing five local policy papers and one regional policy paper on two main issues regarding environment sustainability (desertification and costal sustainability)

On the 25th of November, three HEYA participants succeeded in meeting with the Lebanese Minster of Environment, Mr. Mohamed El Mashnoq, to deliver the policy paper, titled “Addressing the problem of coast pollution in Lebanon.” The Minister made assurances that the Ministry of Environment in Lebanon would be unable to achieve a solution to many of the environmental problems without the support of the civil society. Furthermore, the minister promised to disseminate HEYA’s policy papers on a national level through publishing the paper on the ministry’s online platform and to take their recommendations into consideration.

As well as showing support for the HEYA program by highlighting prominent women leaders in local communities, Minister El Mashnoq also encouraged more women to engage in policy paper formulation so as to address their community’s needs.

The HEYA Program is focused on equipping women with the necessary skills and knowledge needed to increase their active participation in the decision making process. HEYA

participants therefore go through a full cycle of policy formulation training to make their voices heard and effective, as seen below:

Step one: Attending the foundation workshop on monitoring and formulating public policy papers.

Step Two: Attending a workshop on the Participatory Action Research method and designing the research plan for PAR study on women empowerment and environmental sustainability.

Step Three: Conducting desk and field research to address the problem of environmental sustainability on a national level.

Step Four: Presenting the results and recommendations in the women’s regional conference on environmental sustainability.

Step Five: Participating in round-table discussions and introduction sessions to get broad knowledge on the core aspects of the problems and challenges with guidance from environmental experts.

Step Six: Working with national groups to write and review policy papers.

Step seven: Make women’s voices heard through delivering the policy paper to various decision making mechanisms. HEYA will fully concentrate on increasing women’s representation both on the micro and macro level, and hopefully share their success with them in the future.

AID-MENA in Cooperation with the PCF and its Partners Launched the HEYA Program in Yemen



24 On November 18th, 2014, the HEYA Yemeni team in Participation for Community Foundation (PCF), along with their five local partners; (Awaam Foundation for Development, My Vision NGO, Shaher Foundation for Consultancy and Marketing, The Third Eye Foundation, Tanwaa Foundation) and the regional umbrella organization , Academy for International Development – Middle East and North Africa (AID-MENA), launched their first press conference at the Saba Hotel in Sanaa, Yemen.

Despite the deteriorating security situation in Yemen, the event was attended by community public figures, civil society organizations (CSOs) and more than 20 media bodies that included radio and television news channels, newspaper journalists and various online platforms to highlight the role of Yemini women during the democratic transition.

Guest speaker of the press conference, Mr. Amin Goman, the Capital Secretary Assistant reiterated HEYA’S intentions, claiming that “in order to achieve the outputs of the national dialogue, we have to work closely with all women alliances to increase the role of women in monitoring and formulating public policies and to take part of the decision making process in Yemen”

Additionally, Mr. Ahmed Abd El-Wahed, HEYA program manager, said “At the beginning of the program,

we thought applying the HEYA program in Yemen would be a very hard task due to the norms and traditions that may have excluded Yemeni women from the decision making process. Afterwards, we noticed that Yemeni women have the will and the capacity to make a positive contribution to accomplish both political and social change”

“Women’s National Committee of Yemen is supporting Yemeni women to reach decision making positions and are working closely with the HEYA Program in Yemen, nominating women leaders and sponsoring the program’s activities to foster the program’s impact. Dr. Shafiq Saied, the Head of Women’s National Committee of Yemen, stated that “the WNC is contributing on formulating and drafting public policies aimed at enhancing the state of Yemeni women”.

The success of the launching event highlighted the HEYA program’s activities in Yemen and attracted further partners and stakeholder into the program framework. HEYA is delighted with the outcome of Yemen’s first press release and wish them the best on all their future activities.

Via RTDs, HEYA Participants Formulating Two Policy Papers Related To The Theme of Women’s Political Empowerment in Egypt

As part of HEYA’s activities in year one, HEYA’s team in Egypt conducted two Roundtable Discussions (RTDs). The sessions were unique opportunities for participants to get together in an informal setting to discuss, exchange ideas and examine two particular issues related to the theme of women’s political empowerment in Egypt. The two roundtables have been excellent venues for giving and receiving feedback, engaging in in-depth discussions, and meeting women with similar interests and passion for the theme of women’s political participation in Egypt.

The two RTDs have been conducted with women affiliated to two PNGOs at Alexandria Governorate. The first RTD was conducted on the 3rd of November 2014 at “Al-Qalaa Charity Association” and the second RTD was conducted on the 4th of November 2014 at “Women and Development Association.” Both RTDs were facilitated and steered by Dr. Magdy Allam, Expert in the field of women’s participation and political empowerment and a consultant to the Minister of Environmental Affairs in Egypt. There was no formal agenda for the round tables sessions; however women participants raised the agenda items they wished to discuss; and worked with the facilitator to agree to the top issue, from their points of view, relevant to the theme of women’s political empowerment.

The facilitator then led the small groups’ discussions and together with all participants moved with the flow of the session and reached valuable outputs (mainly a clear outline stuffed with ideas for drafting two policy papers).

20 Women, 10 from each PNGO participated effectively in the two RTDs. The event started by a one hour presentation

delivered by Dr. Allam to open the minds of participants to the issue of women’s political empowerment in Egypt. The presentation included an overview on women’s political participation, the legal framework and laws regulating women’s political participation, the global perspective of the issue and finally the Egyptian perspective with highlights to successful models of women leaders in the MENA region.

The RTDs brought together women who work as governmental officials, socio-political activists, heads of political parties, officials at local councils, public servants, women working in the media, civil society leaders, teachers,...etc. Different ideas related to the theme of improving the status of women with regard to her participation in the political sphere emerged. Based on the discussions and on the decisions and interests of women in each PNGO, women identified two public policies to formulate regarding the issue of women’s political empowerment. The first public policy was produced by women affiliated to Al-Qalaa NGO entitled as “the Public Policy related to Local Councils Laws”; and the second public policy produced by women affiliated to “Women and Development NGO” entitled as Women’s Rights in Work.

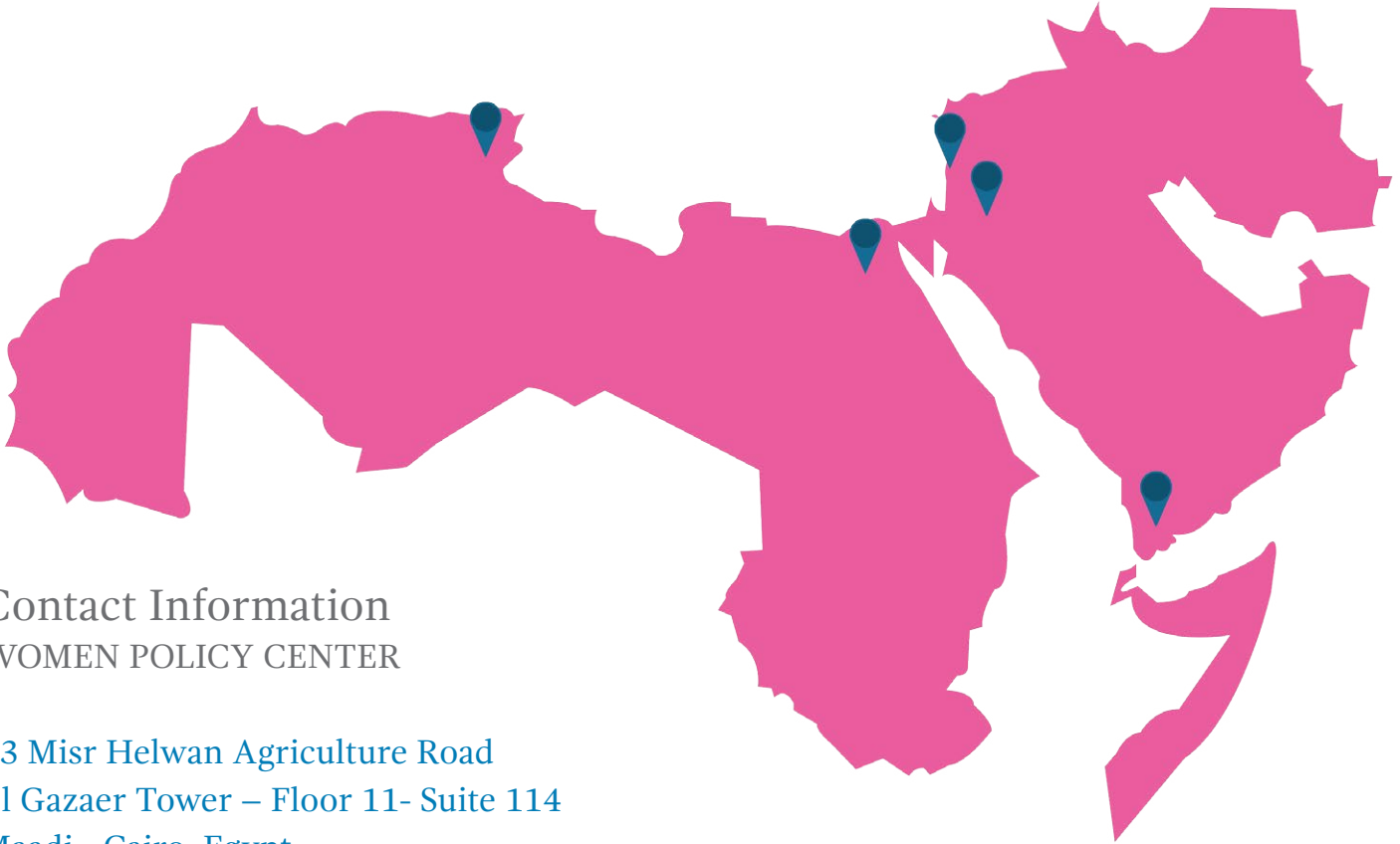
The HEYA team and the facilitator received multiple positive comments after the end of the RTDs, such as “this is what learning should be like” and “all women were willing and eager to share their experiences and aspirations as well” and “We wish to build on the outputs of the RTD today and draft a proper public policy that addresses our concerns from the local councils laws.”





HEYA Program

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