



# مركز هي لسياسات العامة

HEYA CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY



## Women Policy Center Program (HEYA) Final Report 2013 - 2016

Submitted To  
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Submitted By  
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## Acronyms

<b>AIDMENA</b>	Academy for International Development- Middle East and North Africa
<b>AJYC</b>	All Jordanian Youth Commission
<b>ANC</b>	National Constituent Assembly
<b>ARP</b>	People’s Representative Assembly
<b>AWO</b>	Arab Women Organization
<b>COTA</b>	An imposed percentage of seats or positions
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>CWSW</b>	Chechen Welfare Society For Women
<b>EFU</b>	Egyptian Feminist Union
<b>FC</b>	Field Coordinator
<b>FDA</b>	Families Development Society
<b>ISIE</b>	Higher Independent Election Commission
<b>JNCW</b>	Jordanian National Commission for Women
<b>MENA</b>	Middle East & North Africa
<b>MO</b>	Motive Officer
<b>MOSD</b>	Ministry of Social Development
<b>MOT</b>	Ministry of Tourism
<b>Motive</b>	Motivators For Training
<b>NC</b>	National Coordinator
<b>NDF</b>	National Development Foundation
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>NWC</b>	National Women’s Council
<b>PAR</b>	Participatory Action Research

<b>PCF-Yemen</b>	Participation for The Community Foundation-Yemen (main partner)
<b>PNGOs</b>	Partner Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>PP</b>	Public Policies
<b>PPF</b>	Public Policies Formulation
<b>RD</b>	Regional Director
<b>RM</b>	Regional Management
<b>RTDs</b>	Roundtable Discussions
<b>SC</b>	Steering Committee
<b>SIDA</b>	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
<b>UN</b>	United Nations Organization
<b>US</b>	United States
<b>WPC</b>	Women Policy Center
<b>YWB</b>	Youth Without Borders Association
<b>YWCA</b>	Young Women's Christian Association – Fuheis.
<b>YWLD</b>	Young Women's Leadership Development

## Executive Summary

Academy for International Development, Middle East & North Africa (AID-MENA), with funding from the Swedish International Development cooperation Agency (SIDA), has been identified and subcontracted to design and implement the three year regional Women Policy Center (WPC) program. AID-MENA started this regional program by identifying and subcontracting five non-governmental organizations as partner NGOs (PNGOs) to execute the WPC (HEYA) program's activities in each of the identified five countries (Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Yemen). The identified HEYA program's countries share similar characteristics in terms of patriarchy, cultural norms, religious ideals and the slim role of women in the public sphere decision making processes which ultimately shape a male dominating approach to governance.

The WPC is a regional program with national identities that aims at increasing women's active participation in public spheres in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region for sustainable and gender equitable changes in policies and practices to ensure that women's voices at all levels, including those who are living in the poorest and most marginalized setups, are heard, appreciated and considered. The main outcome objectives of the program are: (i) women in the MENA region have access to policymaking mechanisms and their voices heard; (ii) capacity of women leaders increased on governance and public policy areas in order to play an equal role with men in societal affairs; (iii) NGOs in the region are able to empower women leaders and to maintain the impact of WPCs; and (iv) Women leaders and their allies have increased interaction, mutual support and joint advocacy on women's public participation at the national and regional level.

This report covers the results and the interventions of the program during the duration from December 2013 until November 2016. During the years of the program various achievements have been acquired to reach the overall goal and objectives of the program. However, there was a major challenge during the implementation of the activities as results of the unstable political and security situation in the region as it will be demonstrated in the challenges sector in the report.

The program succeeded in addressing priority issues of the target communities within the context of the uprisings that hit most of the Arab countries. As a result of the unsettled political situation and the rising fundamentalism, women are experiencing exclusion from the public sphere. Hence, the program provided a venue for women to extend their participation to public arena through creating Women Policy Centers as a platform for women. Through their participation in the program activities, they had access to the new and unique knowledge and skills that they did not gain before in spite of the fact that a large number of them have previously participated in training programs and other activities. It also showed that the knowledge and skills gained from the program were completely appropriate to them and related to their needs and motives. This was also one of the important starting points and elements in enabling and integration of Arab women in public spheres. The AID-MENA efficiently succeeded in managing the partnership and relationship with regional NGOs in Egypt, Yemen, Tunisia, Lebanon and Jordan, as their relations are stable and characterized by good and constant communication as highlighted by the mid-term evaluation of the program.

The level of outreach was successfully extended to marginalized groups using multi-levels approaches including partnering with local NGOs and social media. The program was able to establish WPC to enable women access policy making mechanism. Accessibility of women to policy-making mechanisms entails ensuring the availability of policy-making facilities as venues for women to participate, voice their concerns and to act as catalyst between women and policy-makers. The establishment of WPC was associated with a number of institutional procedures took place to consolidate the WPC as facilities for women. On top of the procedures development and finalization of Policy and Procedures Manual. The process of development of WPC procedures manual was participatory in nature as it involved consultation with all regional and local NGOs. The program contributed in achieving a positive change on the performance and strategic orientations of the program's regional and local partner NGOs, where the program has contributed to add or support strategic orientations, methodologies and new fields of work, namely, "public policy, fostering democracy and governance, empowerment and support of women's participation in public affairs, advocacy and support attraction" for some of these organizations, some of which have never worked in these fields. Moreover, the program contributed in the expansion of the geographical scope of work of the regional and local PNGOs, so that they can operate on a wider geographical scale, where such organizations are working at the country national level and at the regional level rather than on a local and limited geographical level of the most organizations, particularly the local NGOs, as most of these NGOs have never worked on a regional or national geographical scale.

Indeed, the program contributed in building an institutional partnership and forming a consortium of (31) civil society organizations on the regional level and as well as on the local level in each country. Through this consortium, experiences and expertise are shared among PNGOs in the areas of public policy, fostering democracy and good governance, empowerment and support of women's participation in public affairs. The program contributed in supporting the networking mechanism and partnership among these PNGOs, some other civil society organizations and some of the government institutions involved in the relevant areas of the program.

Moreover, the program contributed in attracting many women leaders, who are the beneficiaries of the program and who occupy leading executive, community and political positions at the state level, to join regional and local partner NGOs in the implementation of the program. The program succeeded to outreach more than 3,600 women through the orientation meetings, promotion sessions, social media campaigns, etc. Throughout the first and second year of the program, the team sought to achieve this result and to overcome the arising difficulties. Such effort enabled the team in the five countries to train 3,398 female leaders during 133 training workshops in total. Furthermore, the project has succeeded to train 873 women on Advocacy and policy influencing as a second module for the policy processes trainings. The participants for this module were chosen from the active women whom take part of the first module, in addition to, working on drafting the policy papers during the first 18 month of the program.

The program team worked closely with the local partners and the women leaders in the local communities to reach the target of the policy papers. The HEYA center succeeded in producing 181 policy paper during the three years of the project. The policy papers are covering a broad

number of different developmental issues, including but not limited to; education, health, environment, economic development, nutrition, bureaucracy and government sector, political participation and women rights.

Finally, the Program contributed in creating opportunities and spaces for women leaders in order to achieve their motives and wishes represented in having an actual role for participation in public affairs and state public policy. The women were largely deprived of this space, especially in the stage of pre-Arab spring revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa. This was achieved through building and development of the capacities of women leaders in the five countries through women's participation in the training program activities on the formulation and analysis of public policies, participatory action research and BRIDGE training, as well as through the field participation in the application of action research and also through their participation in small working groups for the design and formulation of public policy papers. Further, the participation of women leaders' beneficiaries in some regional activities had a positive impact on building their capacity and changing the level of their thinking for working on regional and national issues instead of working only on small local issues.



## Introduction

Academy for International Development, Middle East & North Africa (AID-MENA), with funding from the Swedish International Development cooperation Agency (SIDA), and in partnership with other main five Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), implemented the regional program Arab Women Policy Center (WPC). Over the past three years (2013 – 2016) the WPC program aimed to increase women's active participation in public spheres in the MENA region for sustainable and gender equitable changes in policies and practices to ensure that the voices of women at all levels, including the poorest and most marginalized, are heard, appreciated and considered. The WPC program was rebranded to "HEYA" program (Arabic translation of She).

The main outcome objectives of the program included: (I) women in the MENA region have access to policymaking mechanisms and their voices heard; (II) capacity of women leaders increased on governance and public policy areas in order to play an equal role with men in societal affairs; (III) NGOs in the region are able to empower women leaders and to maintain the impact of WPCs; and (IV) Women leaders and their allies have increased interaction dialogue, mutual support and joint advocacy on women's public participation at the national and regional level. The WPC was designed and lead by AID-MENA in partnership with five Partner Non Governmental Organizations (PNGOs), in five countries in the MENA region: Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia, Jordan (which replaced Kurdistan region/Iraq due to the fragile security status in the country), and Yemen.

The uprisings that took place in several countries in the Middle East demonstrated the need of these countries for freedom, equality and democratic reforms. Furthermore, it showed that women were not ignorant or bystanders to the plights of their countries as they stood side by side to men, supporting the same cause and exposed to the same consequence. Unfortunately, once uprisings lost momentum, the newly formed governments didn't give the women the required attention and the representations they deserve. Therefore, WPC program aims at addressing the root causes behind the women marginalization and lack of representation of women leaders in the political sphere. The program's strategy focuses on a multitude of policy issues, including but not limited to: governance and democracy, women and youth development, education, health and socioeconomic development, environment and natural resource, and public affairs. AID-MENA started this regional program by identifying and subcontracting five non-governmental organizations as partner NGOs (PNGOs) to execute the WPC program's activities in each of the identified five countries (Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Yemen).

The report highlights the carried out activities and their results over the past three year. The report is designed in a way to consolidate the work done and the progress of the program compared to the work plan over the 3 years. As well as, the report will shed the lights on the main challenges faced by the program team during the implementation process. Moreover, the success stories and the lessons learned from the program implementation to the various community levels.

## Program Results and objectives achievements

**Objective One: women in the MENA region have access to policymaking mechanisms and their voices heard;**

**Result 1.1: Women Policy Center is established and equipped. This center will serve as independent policy platform for women to engage in monitor and provide public policies in several development disciplines of their societies**

No doubt that building the capacity of women is crucial when it comes to formulating public policies where they transfer their knowledge and opinion in issues that affect their lives as citizens. However, building their capacities is only one part that should be complemented by connecting them to decision making circles in their governorates and on the national level as well. This has been accomplished during the three years of the program through a set of activities as will be shown further. The backbone of these activities is the establishment of HEYA Center for Public Policy that is assumed to gather all women concerned with participation in the public affairs. The center acts not only as a platform that is opened to women but also as a catalyst to stimulate the decision makers so that they start shifting their behavior and attitude towards active women leaders encompassed by HEYA center.

The program succeeded in establishing the Women Policy Center during the second year of the program. Several meetings and correspondents with all PNGOs (on both national and regional levels) have been conducted to settle down the issue of establishing the WPC. The outcomes were as follows:

- The brand name of WPC has been selected to be “HEYA Center for Public Policy”.
- The Bi-laws of the center have been developed by AID-MENA expert; and then presented and discussed among all PNGOs.
- An agreement among all PNGOs on the internal Bi-laws of the WPC was achieved.

Partner NGOs were regularly informed with the progress of the legal situation regarding the establishment of HEYA Center for Public Policy. They all emphasized the need to take the necessary appropriate legal action to this end. ***Measures taken to establish HEYA Center for Public Policy included:***

- All the regional partners meet with the local partners in order to agree upon the shape of registration in each country according to the national legal procedure. As well as, to discuss the developed internal policy manual and to utilize the manual with the local procedures in each country accordingly. The equipment of the center went through a participatory process between all the partners of the project in each country, where each center was equipped with training venue, laptops, cameras and other stationary materials that facilitate the work of the women in a safe space.

- The type of the legal registration for each local HEYA center for Public Policy was created according to the agreement between the partners in each country. For instance; the partners agreed in Egypt to have the center within the National Development Foundation (NDF) as one of its main activities of NDF. However, in Yemen and Tunisia, the partners agreed to register the center as a new NGO according to the laws. On the other hand, both Jordan and Lebanon registered the center as a non-profit Company according to the national regulations and laws. All the local chapters will be following the regional center that has been added under the registration of AID-MENA as a regional research center.



Figure 1: HEYA Center SCM Meeting in Tunisia

The partner organizations agreed that the center will be managed from the Steering committee from the partner NGOs, in addition to, the supporting team that have been formulated in each country from the women themselves, as well as, the main team of the program in each of the five countries. The supporting team, are playing a vital role in following up with the trained women, in order to engage them in the center ongoing activities such as (round tables, events, seminars, writing policy papers, analysis governmental policies and publish reports, etc.). The idea of having a voluntary supporting team from the trained women themselves, to take part of running the center was a successful step in the ownership of the women to the center.

Accordingly, the supporting team with the program team was responsible to develop a separated action plan for the center merging with the activities of the program during the third year. The center plan disseminated among the various stakeholders of the program to engage them in the center activities and promoting for the center mandate.

As part of the internal manual of the center, a referral system has been developed in order to recruited more women and NGOs to the activities of the program. HEYA referral system is a technical procedure which has been adopted by HEYA team work to achieve the following objectives:

- Disseminating the training materials that were produced by HEYA program which include three training manuals (Training on Analyzing and Formulating public policies – Training on Advocacy and Influence on Public Policies – training on Governmental Policies (in the process of preparation).
- Supporting as much women leaders in the program countries as we can through knowledge transfer and capacity building procedures.
- Boosting women to increase their participation in public affairs in cooperation with various NGOs that are concerned with women's participation in public policies.

### **Result 1.2:30 NGOs in the target countries have access to the WPC**

The project succeeded to establish an interactive online platform to publish the program and the center news articles, news letters, policy papers, policy briefs and researches. The online platform was successfully launched from the first year of the program, in which it contributed to promote the program and the center among other networks of civil society organizations and other institutions. Indeed, the online platform was regionally managed by AID-MENA according to the

difficulties of engaging every one of the local partners in the uploading of the web-content, however, all the produced publications from the five countries was sent by the PNGOs to the media unit at AID-MENA that were responsible for the technical aspects.

The online platform also contributed to build an effective online-dialogue between the women leaders in the five countries. Number of webinars have been conducted between the women leaders during developing the regional policy papers and the regional campaign for the third year. The online platform also used to promote the profiles of the active women with the center and the NGOs through publishing their bibliographies or their testimonials about the program.

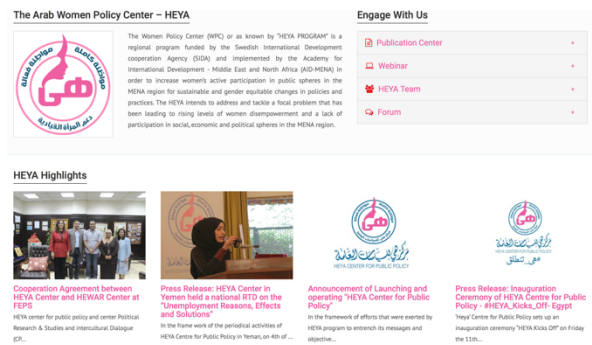


Figure 2: Screenshot of HEYA online platform

As part of this referral system, a strategic cooperation protocol with **Egyptian Feminist Union** from one side and HEYA program from the other side is considered HEYA program's first trial to apply the referral system in Egypt. The EFU - that consists of 200+ women NGOs in Egypt- knew about HEYA program through other associations which work in the field of women development and empowerment; and in the same vein, a meeting between both entities has been successfully conducted and resulted in a decision to conduct a one-day intensive training on Analyzing and Drawing the Public Policies to the EFU affiliated women from 3 governorates (Cairo, Alexandria and Qena). The trained women represented their development associations in their Governorates which add to HEYA network from NGOs inside Egypt. Moreover, in the third year of the program, another strategic partnership with the **Faculty of Economics and Political Science** (FEPS), Cairo university, was conducted as part of the referral system. Where the HEYA center conducted serious of training workshops for university students on public policy analysis and formulation for senior years' female students.

In addition, the referral system in Jordan was very active during year two and three of the program. The center in Jordan was successfully able to build a strong ties and strengthen the network between Government Organizations (GOs) and NGOs in Jordan. HEYA center facilitate serious of visits, meetings and built collations with these GOs and NGOs. Moreover, the partner organizations spread the program and its activities across different networks, such as AJYC that has 12 centers that spread across the Jordan; as well as the AWO which is hosting and coordination "Equality Network" (Mosawa) where 65 NGOs are members in this network. Furthermore, HEYA center in Jordan has been selected to be a member in the steering committee of the National Coalition (NC) to support women in elections. The NC was founded in 2010 aiming to support women in elections by promoting women's participation in parliamentary, municipal councils and the trade unions. As well as, **The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development** (OECD) for the MENA selected HEYA center to be a member in their Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) advisory group. The OECD runs the Transition Fund Project "Promoting Women in Parliaments and Policy-making" and HEYA team has attended the OECD and JNCW meeting on March 22, 2016 to develop an action plan for the Transition Fund Project "Promoting Women in Parliaments and Policy-making. HEYA center was a core actor on **"Eye on Election"**, a collation between

Motivators (PNGO) of WPC, Sisterhood is Global Institute (SIGI) Jordan and Hivos people unlimited to monitor the 2016 Jordanian parliamentary election from a gender perspective.

In general, the referral system was a successful strategy for the HEYA center to disseminate its messages to the broader civil society networks and government organizations. Also, number of strategic partnerships were established by the center in Yemen, Tunisia and Lebanon. The referral system was an essential method for the recruitment of the beneficiaries of the program, as well as, it contributed in maximizing the impact of the center activities on the target groups, and build a concrete base in the targeted communities to promote women public participation.

**Result 1.3: 180 policy papers are drafted by women on development and societal affairs in the region**

The program team worked closely with the local partners and the women leaders in the local communities to reach the target of the policy papers. The HEYA center succeeded in producing 181 policy paper during the three years of the project. The policy papers are covering a broad number of different developmental issues, including but not limited to; education, health, environment, economic development, nutrition, bureaucracy and government sector, political participation and women rights.

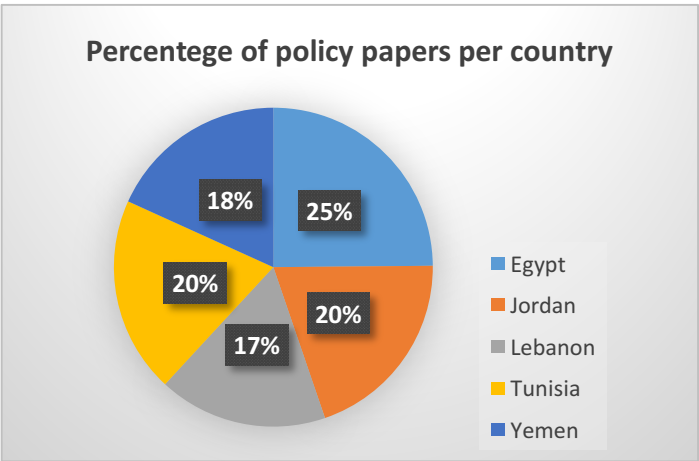


Figure 2: Distribution of produced policy papers among partner countries

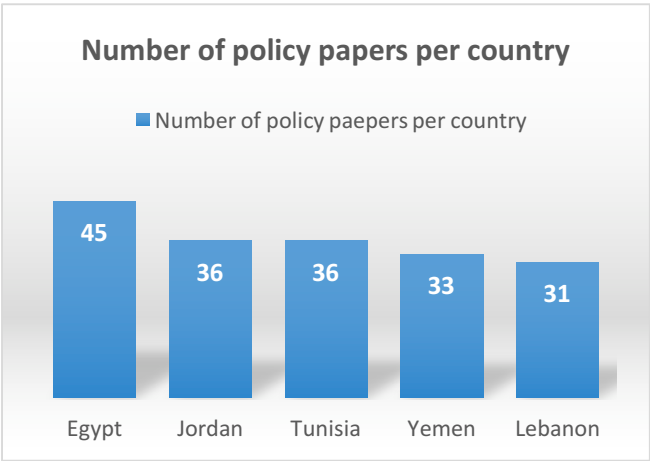


Figure 4: Number of produced policy paper per country

For instance, The HEYA women in Egypt have successfully produced 45 policy papers in various sectorial policies, where 11 policy papers were produced on women issues, 10 policy papers related to bureaucratic and governmental policies, 5 papers were produced focusing on the health sector, 4 papers focused on environmental issues, 4 papers focused on employment issue, and finally 4 papers focused on Children rights policies.

Issue topics	No. of public policies	% of public policies
Women's issues	11	22%
Governmental policies issues	10	21%
Education issues	7	19%
Health issues	5	11%
Environmental issues	4	9%
Employment issues	4	9%
Children's issues	4	9%
Total	45	100 %

*Table 1: Sectorial distribution of the policy papers in Egypt*

The process of identifying and writing policy papers by HEYA women went through different phases. In these phases, some steps were seen as success and others were more challengeable. HEYA team along with HEYA women were able together, through individual meetings and follow up and through the brain storming sessions with the PNGOs and women, to identify the topics that women decided to work on in drafting the policy papers. The procedures taken to identify the topics relied heavily on two main factors: (1) the need of the community to address such topic. The focus was on topics that irritate the local community and the larger society in general. This step was always backed by the different research studies that proved that the community (small and large) suffers from the consequences of the identified topics/issues. Examples include issues of unemployment, weak performance of Governmental employees, sexual harassment and weak participation of women in public affairs. (2) Was the personal interest of the women/women to work on a specific issue.

Most of HEYA women were eager to work on the issues that they know about through their work (official or volunteering work) or have knowledge about it through readings, media or personal interaction. Based on the step of identifying the topics of the policy papers, women were coached extensively by HEYA team to ensure that they follow the structure of writing the policy paper; and to lend them a hand in researching and editing parts of the policy paper if needed. Women were coached through the individual meetings with HEYA team and/or by the coordinator in their PNGOs. In general, HEYA team faced two main challenges in the step of coaching women. (1) Some women tend to deal with the policy paper as research paper. The team managed to clarify to them in several interactions the difference between a policy paper that is based on evidence policy research and a pure research paper. Not all women were able to modify their papers according to this clarification which put a burden on HEYA team to review the papers and most likely edit them after submission from HEYA women. (2) to what extent the alternatives that women present in their policy papers are creative.

In some topics, HEYA team engaged experts of these issues to take part in the discussions and open minds to the women regarding these issues. Most of the issues highlighted for the policy papers were discussed in brain storming sessions and round table discussions in their NGOs or through various events held by the program teams. The desire to engage female leaders in the selection of issues of the round table meetings and policy papers emanates from the fact that the women leader's



qualifications and interests vary from one woman to another and from one region to another. Such variety prompted the team to adopt this line.

The adopted line consisted in holding a number of working sessions (2 to 5) by each NGO in the presence of a number of leaders from every training group (8 to 14) in each session. Each of the partner NGOs was responsible to invite and engage their women in the process of the brain storming sessions, roundtable discussions and drafting the policy papers as well. Afterwards, each NGO chose major issues to work on during the first stage of policy paper formulation, with emphasis on the diversification of the areas and the avoidance of repetition. Eventually, the NGOs embarked on selecting the participant leaders, according to their desires and their academic and professional concerns, in order to form working groups made up of 6 to 10 each. Each of the main partner organizations had prepared a detailed general design for the formulation of the policy papers to be disseminated on the female leaders participating in this activity so as to help them carry out the necessary research and to standardize the outputs.

#### **Result 1.4: 180 policy analysis to monitor governments' policies in the region are drafted and published**

In addition to the formulated policy papers, the preparation to the policy analysis process to monitor governmental policies took place along the policy formulation process. HEYA team and the Centers SCs worked on collecting and documenting the published governmental policies in both local and national levels. The collection of the governmental policies was very crucial for the women leaders whom participated in the policy papers formulation; in order to provide them with the needed information and data regarding the issue of their paper.

The policy analysis reports are developed on two levels, first, during the introduction workshop, the participated women analyses number of governmental policies as part of the workshop activities. Afterwards, the partner organizations coach the trained women in writing policy analysis report and to be published in the center online platform. During the conducted workshops, the training team focused on analyzing the collected policies with the trained women. As well as, a national and regional committed reviewed the policy analysis reports produced by the women leaders after the end of the training workshops.

The program succeeded to produce 181 policy analysis report to monitor the governmental policies in different national levels. As well as, the policy analysis reports have been merged with the policy proposals reports to present the alternatives for the policy failures that have been documented by the women leaders during the policy analysis phase.

In Lebanon for instance, The policy analysis reports covered various topics, mainly: Women's right to nationality, through analyzing the policies that derail the Lebanese women's right to give the nationality to their children, Corruption in the real estate department in the Lebanese Ministry of Finance, Garbage crisis and the failure of the Lebanese government in the public procurement policies, lack of a civil marriage law in Lebanon, Women's participation in municipalities,

decentralization in Lebanon, Corruption in the Social security, the bad situation in Lebanese women prisons, *Litani* River pollution crisis and the failure of the industrial policies of the Lebanese government, the Rape and Article 522 in the Lebanese Penal Code, the right to work for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, reduction of UNRWA services in Palestinian camps, Women trafficking in Lebanon, the electoral policies and the women quota in Lebanese elections. Where a policy committee included the project's staff, RDFL's executive director and a board member from RDFL and its partners, and relevant experts, reviewed all policy analysis reports, in consultation with trained women. The main policy analysis reports were published and considered for advocacy campaigns.



*Figure 5: Discussion event for the policy analysis report for the litani river pollution crisis and the government failure of the industrial policy at the University Antoinine*

**Result 1.5: 60 public events to disseminate women's policy proposal at national level are hosted.**

The dissemination of policy papers drafted by women leaders was a key goal for the third year of HEYA program. Indeed, it was a main activity for the HEYA center in all of the five countries of the program. The events offered an opportunity for further and deeper discussions of the issues tackled in the proposals. As well as, the dissemination events were an essential link between the women leaders and the decision makers. Where the public events were attended by member of parliaments, academics, political elites, government officials, and other civil society organizations. In addition to printing and distributing the policy papers across the decision makers and other stakeholders during the program duration, the center develop a periodical newsletter with the developed policy papers to be sent to all the stakeholders. Further, a booklet with all the policy papers have been developed with the selected policy papers from the five countries and have been distributed on several organizations, decision makers, member of parliaments, in order to promote the work that have been done by the women leader of the center. As well as, to strengthen the relation between the center and the other stakeholders in a base of trust and efficiency.

Overall, the program team succeeded to organize 59 disseminating event in the 5 countries of the program during the third year, the disseminating event was divided over the partner organizations. Each of the local partners were responsible to conduct 2 local events, where the women leaders affiliated to those NGO presented their policy papers to the audience and engage with them in the discussions and document their recommendations. 1,120 attendees took part of the dissemination events conducted by the LNGOs for the dissemination. Indeed, the dissemination event were successful for the advocacy campaigns established during the third year of the program, where the NGOs build a strong tie between the women and the decision makers and the officials. Also, the program and the center work was recognized by the MPs whom take part of the dissemination events, their highlighted the importance of the HEYA work to their efforts within the parliament.



**MP Sameh Habib** who took part of the dissemination event of the health sector policy papers in Egypt as part of their national advocacy campaign said that *“I’m really mindful of the amount of efforts and professionalism that the center and its women demonstrated in this papers, I encourage the center to complete their efforts for more policy proposals and from my side, I promise the women leaders here that I will present their policy proposals among my counterparts at the Parliament and push for this reform”*.



Figure 6: MP Sameh Habib discussing HEYA women leaders during a dissemination event for the Health sector policy papers in Egypt. The event conducted with partnership with the national journal "El Ahram"

Moreover, the first dissemination event in Tunisia was organized in Bizerte by Youth and Skills organization. The event was supervised by **Ms. Amna Bin Mohammad, a PM and a member of the parliamentary Committee on Women, Family, Children, Youth and the Elderly Affairs**. She took part of disusing a 5 policy proposals concerning Bizerte were presented as follows: 1. Handicraft sector; 2. Tourism and eco-tourism; 3. Developing and advancing promising sectors; 4. Challenges of the healthcare system in the health sector; and 5. Promoting the involvement of the youth in civic activism. During her closing remarks she highlighted that *“I’m grateful for the efforts of the women leaders in Tunisia for their great input they presented for the formulation of this papers, the diversity of the topics I saw today is a brilliant work and I believe in the essential role that CSOs work on fostering women rights in Tunisia”*

In Lebanon, with participation of Member of Lebanese Parliament and Head of Human Rights committee, MP Michele Moussa and Colonel Elie Al Asmar from the internal security forces, whereas there were participants who represented political leaders like MP Bahia Hariri, President Fouad Seniora, and President Nabih Berri. Two women leaders form the HEYA center, Suzanne Saadi and Dalia Ezz Eddine, presented the policy paper “Towards ending Women trafficking in Lebanon”. The main speakers emphasized on the role that the HEYA center play on linking between the grassroots organizations and the local communities with the decision makers in Lebanon. And the role that HEYA center is playing in making the voices of those groups are heard and delivered to the policy makers through the recommendations presented in the dissemination event.



Figure 7: MP Michele Moussa and Colonel Elie Al Asmar discussing the policy paper "Towards ending women trafficking in Lebanon"

**Objective Two: capacity of women leaders increased on governance and public policy areas in order to play an equal role with men in societal affairs;**

**2.1. 3,600 female leader identified in the target countries,**

Building the capacity of HEYA target women have been realized through using the snowball technique that has created a positive effect on many of them. Women started the process of capacity building with HEYA via the foundation training given on analyzing and formulating public policies. Afterwards some of them started building their own knowledge and experience about public policies and women's participation on their own way. By rolling the snow ball again and adding the element of drafting public policies by women; and through coaching them and conducting many brain storming sessions to discuss and identify topics of interest, the ball got bigger. As the ball rolls, it picks up more snow (knowledge and experience); and women gain more confidence and momentum.

A selection criteria developed by the team in order to recruit the active women in different communities to take part in HEYA activities by filling and submitting a primary registration application if they fulfill the program conditions:

***The selection criteria for the participants of these workshops;***

- Women between 21-50 years from the program's countries,
- A resident of the governorate where the training workshop is conducted, taken place,
- Actively involved in community-led programs and civic participation, and
- Candidates should be committed to attend the full training workshop and actively involved in different program activities

**The program and the partner NGOs utilized various promotional steps for the recruitment;**

- Preparing a simplified document for the program explaining its objectives and the most important activities.
- Publishing a document defining the program with civic associations and institutions of research and education as well as government institutions.
- Introducing the program via Internet and social networking and especially the official page of the partner associations and in a number of active pages and groups that deal with women or of the most important friends are women and girls.
- Introduction of the program through various media in a directly or indirectly way.
- Identification of the program through posters in a number of public places and the first forum of local partners represented an important opportunity to discuss the initial criteria set by the program and also the stages of the attraction plan proposed.

Several orientation sessions were conducted by the PNGOs and the local NGOs to promote and introduce the program in the identified communities for various women groups. This step assisted the program staff in identifying and selecting the best candidates for HEYA activities.

The selected participants were invited further to attend foundation workshops on public policies analysis and monitoring in the five countries since the inception of the program in May 2014. These training workshops are considered the backbone for the HEYA program because they provide women with the main knowledge and skills required for the women's understanding and engagement in all HEYA program activities.

The training workshops' methodologies and structures designed to:

- unify the terminologies of development, participation, public policies, economic concepts among participants; and
- Provide women with the skills and the knowhow of analyzing and formulating public policies that address several aspects of the development and public affairs.

## **2.2. 3,600 women trained and equipped with necessary skill, tools, and knowledge on policymaking and policy monitoring governance and public policy area**

The capacity building of all key actors involved with the HEYA program was essential to the high standard required of the HEYA program. This ensured that all those involved with the training of participants were well versed on the specific subject matter. Therefore, the AID-MENA team formed a selection committee of 3 outside consultants to assess all trainers who applied for the role of trainers in their respective countries. On this regard, each PNGO nominated a pool of trainers and consultants to be the lead trainers for the HEYA Program in the respective country. The selection committee from AID-MENA chose four trainers from each country in addition to the national coordinator to take part of a *regional training on public policy analysis and formulation* in Lebanon.

These trainers later attended Training of Trainer (TOT) workshop lasting 7 days from the 12th to the 18th of April 2014, to further build their capacity designed exclusively to train the HEYA participants, where they learnt about knowledge transfer, public policies and policy formulation. The main goal of the workshop was to unify the terminologies and content of the training toolkit for delivering the main workshop of the HEYA Program titled as "Introduction to Public Policy Analysis and Formulation".

The workshop was designed to be interactive and creative in its core where all the participated trainers had the experience and the exposure of the development work with a range between at least 6 to 20 years of field experience. The pool of the graduate trainers ensure the knowledge transfer process of the workshop's content using creative methodologies to equip the participating women of the HEYA with the skills and knowledge needed for analyzing community needs and problems in addition to formulating public policy papers. During the workshop the trainers along with the NCs designed and agreed upon the implementation methodology for the policy analysis training. Furthermore, this trainer with a supervision of the NCs worked together to develop the training toolkit (Trainer manual, Participant manual, and the activities guideline). Bringing this experience together from the five countries helped in producing the training toolkit to a good standard. Moreover, the training has been tailored to be conducted in three days for only the women participants from the five countries.

Further, the selected trainers were responsible for the delivery of the *Introduction to Public Policy Analysis and Formulation workshops*. The training methodologies were learner centered, participatory, interactive, engaging and accommodating the women's diversities in knowledge, skills and backgrounds to stimulate discussion and knowledge exchange and transfer processes. The workshops were well received by the participating women to highlight the importance of the training in creating a common understanding to the issue of public policies formulation and to their role in changing and creating new policies in future. The workshops were followed by a series of meetings among the graduated women to conduct public policy analysis process to address various development issues on both local and national levels. As well as, all the workshops were evaluated through sheets distributed to the women who attended the workshops to assess the knowledge, and the skills gained by the different sessions of workshops as well as the efficiency of the administrative aspects of the training.

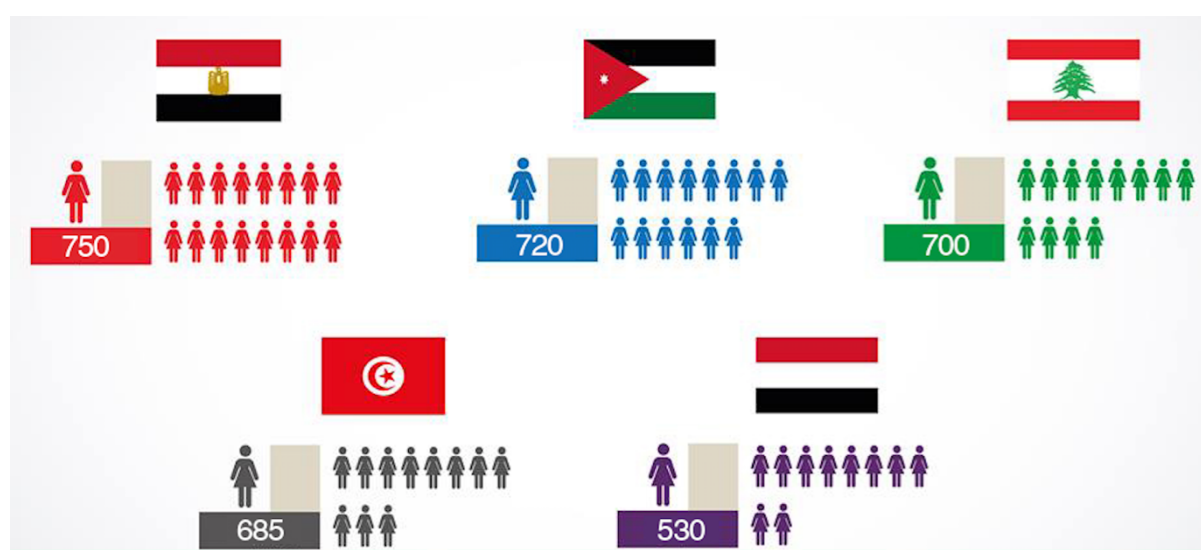


Figure 8: Number of trained women on public policy analysis and formulation in the five countries

Throughout the first and second year of the program, the team sought to achieve this result and to overcome the arising difficulties. Such effort enabled the team in the five countries to train 3,398 female leaders during 133 training workshops in total. The program team in Egypt particularly worked to attract as many locations and backgrounds to the program targeted women. The team worked to widen the scope of the workshops and to cover six governorates in Egypt. Alexandria governorate was at the first place with total trainees of 243; however greater Cairo which includes both Cairo and Giza comes at the second place with total number of 214 trainees. In Contrast, 121 women took part of the workshops in Behira governorate; another 136 women attended the workshops in Qena governorate; as well as, 21 women participated in the program workshops from South Sinai governorate. In Jordan, there was diversity for the educational backgrounds of the trained women. The highest segment of the participated women was for the high education holders, for instance, the representation of the Bachelor degree holders was 63%, then, the Master's degree holders with 18%, and the PhDs holders with 12%. However, 7% only of the participated women were from the intermediate education level holding diplomas. Furthermore, there were also

diversity in the age range, 45 % of the trained women aged between 40 to 50 years old, 43% were between 30 to 40 years old, 11% of the participated women were between 21 to 30 years old and only 1% of the participants were above 50 years old. Lebanon also had diversity for the educational backgrounds of the participants. Almost, 249 women hold an intermediate educational certificate, 373 women obtaining higher educational certificates, and 148 women holding a post-graduate degree. Despite the exceptional circumstances being run in Yemen, the political crisis of 2014, and military operations led by the Arab coalition since March 2015, the program was able to implement a number of training workshops for Public Policy which was attended by a number of women leaders who gained skills and knowledge on how to formulate and draft policy papers. Through documentation of training and pre/post tests analysis, it is noted that women's awareness of the importance of their participation in handling public affairs is high increased and impacted positively in finding out practical solutions. Yemen team have succeeded to deliver “Introduction to Public Policy Analysis and Formulation” to almost 530 women leader from different location in the capital Sanna. Furthermore, the project has succeeded to train 873 women on Advocacy and policy influencing as a second module for the policy processes trainings. The participants for this module were chosen from the active women whom take part of the first module, in addition to , working on drafting he policy papers during the first 18 month of the program.

On the same line of result 2.2, a total number of 119 participants from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Yemen attended the **BRIDGE workshops** over a 5-day period. AID-MENA with its PNGOs led the process of identifying and selecting the participants from the WPC beneficiaries, covering different partner NGOs. Participants came from many different CSOs and governance institutions who are involved in public affairs in their countries.

BRIDGE as a professional development tool primarily affects participants at the individual level. The BRIDGE workshops use an activity-based approach that maximizes retention of knowledge and skills learned. In addition, the workshops were designed to promote or reinforce professional confidence, ethics, understanding of principles of best electoral practice, and access to networks of peers. BRIDGE has the potential to trigger change at an organizational level: broader understanding of an organization, morale, and cohesion within the organization. Workshops encourage participants to reflect on improving their organizations, providing comparative examples and alternative approaches, and generating blueprints or support for organizational reform.



*Figure 9: HEYA participants from Egypt during BRIDGE workshop discussing the electoral cycle.*

The facilitation team discussed the most suitable topics that would better serve the purpose of the workshop. The training sessions of the workshop were tailored to meet the objectives set forth, mainly demonstrating the unique methodology and comprehensive content of BRIDGE. The training course was designed to cover the following main topics such as, introduction to Election, Electoral Systems, Voter Registration, Gender and elections, and Post-Election Activities. The agenda was designed to cover the main topics in the election process, and the modules were chosen

in order to give the participants a global overview about the election. The following agenda illustrates the topics discussed during the workshop:

**DAY 1** Introduction, fairness, gender and election, election and democracy

**DAYS 2 & 3** Gender and electoral Systems, International Standards of free and fair Elections, the choices and their consequences with some comparative experiences especially from Tunisia

**DAY 4** Women representation, quota and principles of representation and electoral reform, Voter registration and types of voter registries

**DAY 5** Electoral cycle, observations and election logistics

The participants were given BRIDGE evaluation forms to convey their viewpoints on the effectiveness and relevance of the BRIDGE methodology to their long term ambitions. The majority of the participants expressed their satisfaction with the workshops, and took part with all the activities with enthusiasm and passion with some participants even suggesting that to maximize their learning capacity.

Further the implementation of the BRIDGE workshops and within the framework of general goals and this objective of "HEYA " in intellectually supporting as well as cognitively empowering women leadership by understanding and analyzing the public policies- in particular-and the political process led to the decision making, in general; HEYA program provided the opportunity to its 50-female trainee to participate in monitoring the parliamentary election 2015 in Egypt. Achieving equality of opportunity concept, HEYA program cooperatively and effectively put into consideration with its local partner associations the equal number of female participants from all governorates: Alexandria, Beheira, Qena, Thor Sinai and Cairo in election monitoring. The participants paid different visits to a large number of polling stations and prepared reports on running the electoral process that are being gathered to submit to the Supreme Election Commission. At the same level, HEYA program believe the female participation in the election process monitoring paved the way to a wider, felicitous and functional presence in political life, hence, legislation. Through the successful involvement of female participants, they could acquire more trust to feat their fears, concerns and worries of breaking into public life, especially, some of them were members in election campaign teams of a number of nominees while the others have actually run the parliamentary election 2015. In this case, HEYA program optimistically anticipate extensive women participation in the next local council elections.

**Result 2.3: 5 national need assessment studies to assess and identify development needs and problems facing women in the 30 target communities in the five countries.**

One of the most important research methodologies introduced in the recent present is the Participatory Action Research (PAR) 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 style



across different segments of the identified communities. In that regard, a workshop was carried out in the five countries of the program, with 25 participants from each country to develop and enhance the HEYA's trainees' skills in utilizing the participatory research methodology and to build-up their training capacities in this field, so they can field this research in their respective geographical areas. The following part of the report summarizes the training details in each country and formulating local research teams that takes part afterward in formulating various public policy papers.

### ***Egypt***

The PAR training was conducted from the 23<sup>rd</sup> till 25<sup>th</sup> of August 2014 for a group of 32 women representing the 6 partner NGOs in Egypt. The training was conducted by one of the WPC consultants who have considerable experiences in participatory research methodologies. The training lasted for 3 days and ended by producing a research plan that women relied on in their interviews with the community members and with decisions makers and providers of secondary resources. The trainers were focused on creating an action plan at the end of the workshop when women were split in groups; (7 groups) and were assigned specific research tasks.

### ***Lebanon***

The PAR training was conducted from the 20<sup>th</sup> till the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August for 20 HEYA participants chosen by the partner NGOs. All the partners have contributed in making this workshop a success. Dr. Majdi Qorom the WPC consultant conducted this workshop. The participants chose to work on two issues: The pollution of the sea shore in Lebanon and the Gender issue. Taking the outputs of this workshop into consideration, the participants agreed to utilize the outcomes of the workshop in studying these two issues in order to formulate a vision that drives the developing of a political paper that could make a real change in their communities.

### ***Yemen***

The PAR workshop in Yemen was conducted from August 30<sup>th</sup> to September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014 and attended by 25 participants from the partner NGOs in the country. The participants selected carefully, according to the selection criteria to ensure the participants' capabilities in achieving the workshop's goal and developing a successful PAR field based research afterwards.

The workshop was managed by the PCF the main partner of the program in Yemen and was lectured by Mr. Khaled Kamal, a consultant at the WPC. Mr. Kamal worked hard with the participants to provide all necessary information related to PAR and designed some practical approaches to make them close to the reality. After completion of the workshop, two groups of PAR field research were formed with collaboration and supervision of the Trainer. Group A was assigned to study Desertification Phenomena and Group B was assigned to investigate and study the Woman's empowerment issue. The two groups began working in the field with the advent of September 2014 with full support from the national coordination office which provided the facilities required for the completion of the research.

### ***Tunisia***

In Tunisia, a national training workshop on PAR was conducted, on 29-30 and 31 August for 24 women from the six associations, under the supervision of the WPC Trainers to introduce the participants to the skills and approaches of applying PAR on public policies analysis and formulation. YWB along with its partner NGOs in Tunisia were very keen about selecting the

participants whom have a good academic and research skills, especially with particular focus on environment and women empowerment. The three days of the workshop were characterized by a high level of participation and interaction between the participants who most of them gained a good experience in the field of participatory researches, especially in the areas of the environment and women's empowerment.

### *Jordan*

In Jordan, the PAR workshop was conducted on August 29-30, 2014 for 25 participants representing the 6 PNGOs by Dr. Majdi Al Qurom. During the workshop the participants were divided to two groups. Each group worked on one assignment: desertification phenomena in Jordan and the gender equity. After the 3-day workshop, a research plan was developed and each team was assigned specific field-based activities. On September 13, 2014 the two teams gathered in a meeting to review their achievements and to discuss the results and report content.

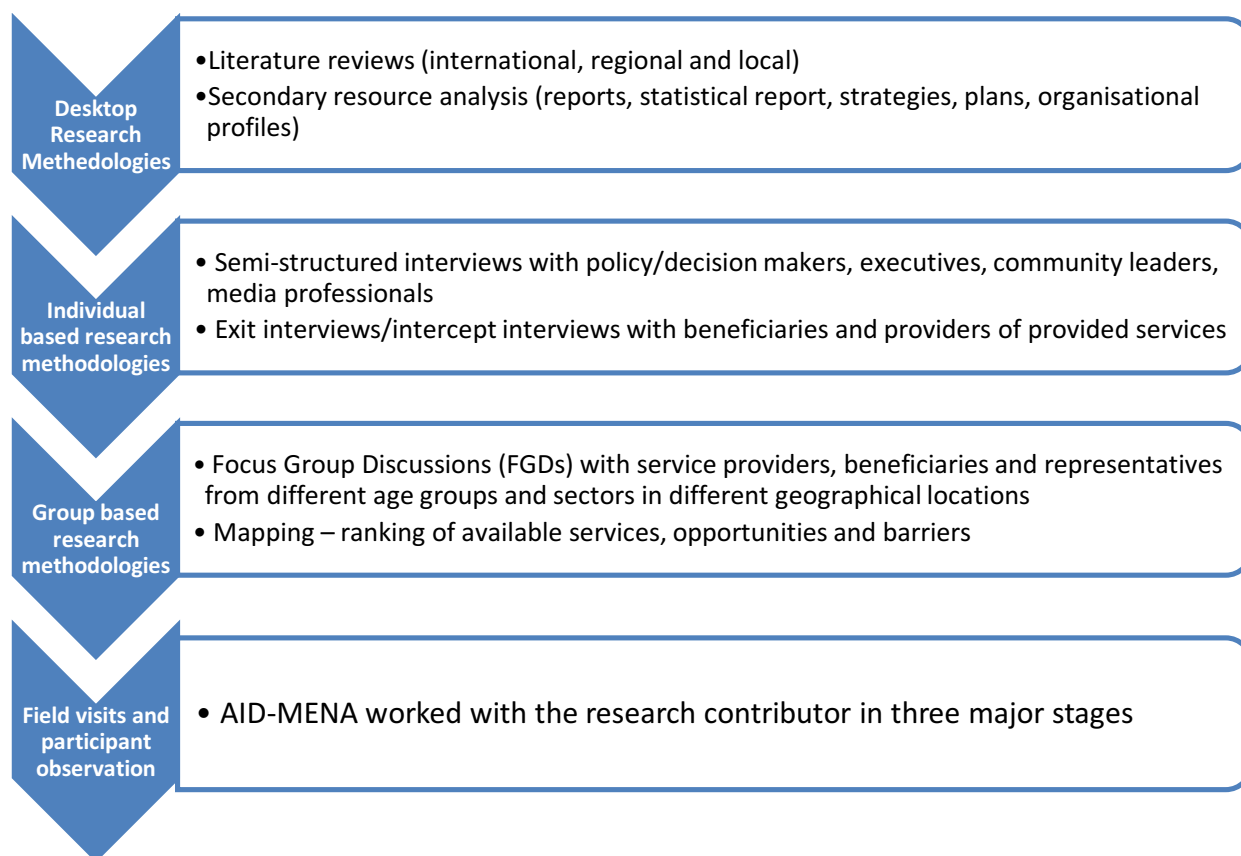
### *Description of research methodology:*

AID-MENA examined the organisational and operational capabilities of the participant countries to identify the best and suitable options in each country that would enable working with the team of national and local researchers. AID-MENA developed research methodologies based on the triangulation approach, which is a powerful technique that facilitates validation of data through cross verification from more than two sources.

Triangulation is a method-appropriate strategy for credible qualitative analyses; as such it becomes an alternative to traditional criteria like reliability and validity and is currently the preferred line within the social sciences. It refers to the application of a combination of different research methodologies, different sources of data and different researchers in the study of the same phenomenon. Combining multiple observers, theories, methods and empirical materials contribute in overcoming the weakness or intrinsic biases and the problems that come from single method, single-observer and single-theory studies.

Several research methodologies were considered and discussed with the research team and in the research plan according to the geographical location, audience profile, time available, and type of the information/data required such as:





➤ **The three stages of the field visits:**

Concept and methodology development	Information collection	Data interpretation and Dissemination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To agree on research objectives, concepts, the mix of methodology design, approaches and the plans for these.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where the research teams take the research plan into the field as designed to collect and generate data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To focusing on data comparison and interpretation so as to identify the major findings and produce the relevant reports on these findings.</li> </ul>

*Rationale for selected research methodology*

The use of triangulation in social and political studies originated through the idea of “multiple operation-ism” in validating research results. The identified research methodologies allow an in-depth examination of the issue, not to be limited to rigidly defined objectives, but enable the examination of different complex aspects/values of the question and a secure, safe and comfortable environment for information sharing.

The strength of qualitative research is to provide complex textual description of how people experience a given research issue. It provides elaborate information about the relevant behaviors,

beliefs, opinions and relationships of individuals. Qualitative methods are also effective in identifying intangible factors, such as social norms and socioeconomic status, whose role in the research issue may not be readily apparent. When used with appropriate quantitative methods, qualitative research methodologies can help to interpret and better understand the complex reality of a given situation and the implications of quantitative data.

### **Objectives:**

1. To conduct original and secondary research, evaluation and analyses in Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen, Lebanon and Jordan on Environmental problems (Desertification and coastal pollution and erosion) and Gender equality.
2. To strengthen the capabilities of the project participants on the public policy making and formulation.
3. To produce policy papers on environmental problems and Gender equality that not only addressing the problem, but also reaching realistic and practical solutions and recommendations.
4. To present the proposed policy papers to authority members, policy makers and decision makers in order to be taken into consideration for future implementation.

### **Anticipated outcomes:**

1. Detailed research plans using the triangulation approach
2. Detailed analytical reports in each country on environmental problems and Gender equality
3. Proposed policy papers from all participant countries that not only offer an analysis of the main problems but also on identifying and recommending solutions for policy makers.

### **Major Results of PAR Field Research and formulated Policy Papers in the five countries**

#### **Egypt Participatory Action Research**

The PAR research addressed two main topics: (a) Coastal Erosion of the sea shores in Egypt; (b) Women's political empowerment.

Teams were assigned different tasks in different research topics. The plan was:

- Teams from Behira Governorate- worked on both research topics
- Teams from Alexandria Governorate - worked on Coastal Erosion of the sea shores in Egypt topic
- Teams from Cairo& Giza Governorates- worked on - worked on Coastal Erosion of the sea shores and Women's political empowerment topics
- Teams from South Sinai Governorate - worked on women's political empowerment topic.

After the end of the desktop review and field work, the consultant gathered all the data from women (clean and organized/classified) and then produced a final report on both research studies.

In general, women who participated in the PAR experience gained a lot of confidence in identifying the needs and the public problems that face their communities as an important stage before coming up with the solutions and public policy alternatives.

#### **Policy Papers**

The first policy paper drafted by women affiliated to HEYA program came to address the public problem of Coastal Erosion in Abu-Qeer shores in Alexandria seashore. The research study that

tackled Coastal Erosion in Egypt was conducted as part of the PAR study came as an important resource that provided women, who shared one round table with the conference facilitator, with the background information, legal framework, description of the problem and the community and organizations' efforts to solve this problem. The coastal erosion problem was discussed by the five women who participated in HEYA first Regional conference for Women Leaders that was conducted in Cairo and Sharm El-Shiekh cities in the period from the 24<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2014. With the guidance from the regional conference speakers and facilitators, women were able to produce the first public policy in Egypt that addressed the issue of coastal erosion on Abu Qeer shores for Alexandria to Egypt.

#### *Lebanon Participatory Action Research*

Based on the PAR training and research outcomes, a group of HEYA participants have decided to work on the Lebanese seashore pollution problem to develop a policy paper they can lobby on its implementation. The first group of participants encountered several round tables with policy makers and environmental experts where they did establish the main component of the paper. The second group continued working on the legal writing of the paper where they also have met with the famous environment Lebanese judge Nabil Sari who reviewed their work and gave them precious comments.

#### *Policy papers:*

The women participated in the conference held in Cairo, Egypt, where they presented the Lebanese paper entitled "Lebanese seashore pollution prevention". A group of WPC Participants have decided to work on a policy paper that encounters women engagement in policy making in Lebanon. The second submitted policy paper aimed to formulate policies to face the recession of contribution of Lebanese women in decision-making and problem-interference in Political and public life, and that through the presentation of the causes and effects of this problem in order to reach realistic and practical solutions to address this problem.

#### *Yemen Participatory Action Research*

After the completion of workshop of PAR, two groups were formed to conduct the field research on both decertification and women's engagement issues. The two groups planned to carry out 20 individual interviews and 5 group discussions to answer questions of the research set by pool of consultants. Two groups worked for four days in the first phase and 3 days in the second phase under the supervision of the program management in Yemen, which facilitated the work of the two teams. The two teams conducted separate meetings to finalize research drafts; the meeting was attended by the national coordinator of the program in Yemen. The final research draft was forwarded to the regional management of the program at the end of September 2014.

#### *Policy papers:*

In line of supporting of the Regional Alliance of the program, and strengthening the communication between lead women in the five countries, AIDMENA has held a Regional Conference for the Lead Women under auspices of the Arab League, the Arab Union for Youth and Environment and the Federation of Arab Environment experts between the 23<sup>rd</sup> – the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2014 in Sharm El Sheikh - Egypt.

Despite the security instability in the country and logistical problems in flight booking, a delegation of 5 lead women from Yemen participated according to a principle of equal opportunities. Before travelling, coordinative meetings were held to introduce conference and its objectives. The delegation arrived in Cairo on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September and departed to Sharm El-Sheikh on the 24<sup>th</sup> of September. The delegation effectively participated in drafting the policy paper concerning the issue of desertification with technical assistance by Dr. Mohamed Draj - international expert in the environment and Mr. Khalid Kamal - General Supervisor of Action Research participate in Yemen.

### Tunisia Participatory Action Research

On the final day of the training workshops on PAR, the detailed plan of research was discussed and the participants were divided into two work groups to conduct two types of research.

- Research about the impediment depriving Women to participate in the political life and to handle political functions.
- Research about the effects of the Tunisian coast pollution on surrounding communities.

Several women leaders have expressed their fear of inability to complete all the required meetings during the six days set for the research (at least 10 to 15 field meeting for each research, at least) due to the geographical spacing of women leaders who belonged to three different provinces, and also of their busyness to their jobs and their studies throughout the week allocated for field research. Despite this concern, we have seen a great enthusiasm by all women leaders of this new and innovative type of research that any of them have never touched it beforehand and it was a very successful research.

The participants started in completing the two selected research according to field research plan developed during the last day of the training workshop.

### **The participants were divided into two groups:**

The first group composed of 10 women leaders have chosen to complete the research under the title: "The effects of Tunisian coast pollution on the surrounding communities" in the governorates of Tunis and Sfax, which suffering from many environmental problems.

The second group composed of 12 women leaders from the governorates of Tunis, Sousse and Bizerte have chosen to complete the research under the title: "Women's participation impediments in political life".

### Policy Papers:

Five Tunisian leaders participated in the "women's leadership Regional Conference" which was organized in Sharm el-Sheikh on the 25<sup>th</sup> - to the 27<sup>th</sup> of September, 2014, in the presence of 25 leaders of all the partner organizations from the five participating countries. The conference represented an important opportunity to enhance the regional dimension of the "HEYA" program to support the women's leadership. The PAR report dealing with "the effects of Tunisian coast pollution on the surrounding communities" under the supervision of a group of experts in the environment field was discussed during the conference. At the end of the conference, a policy proposal paper was reached on the "Tunisian coastline of the country, for sustainable development".

The paper discussed the problem of the coast pollution, its causes and impact on the local community with a focus on the three heavily affected provinces (Sfax, Gabes and Bizerte) with an indication from the governmental authorities concerned with this problem. The paper concluded by exposing a set of proposals to activate the policy on the protection of the coastline divided into legal, political, administrative and technological proposals.

The second policy paper was on the “Impediments depriving Women from handling political functions.” Leaders of this research, from three distant provinces (Tunis, Bizerte and Sousse) started by forming a closed group on Facebook to facilitate communication between themselves. The group work focused on two main themes:

- Tunisian women condition in the political scene in Tunisia.
- The reasons of depriving Women from handling political leadership functions (Political, economic, social, legislative reasons).

Leaders have been able to hold 16 field meetings focused on a group of Tunisian women with different experiences. A group of men was also interviewed to discuss their vision towards women condition in political life, such as Member of Parliament and journalist. Two focus groups were also organized:

- The first on the 6<sup>th</sup> of September in Tunis in the presence of 17 girls and women, the discussion was conducted by 2 leaders.
- The second on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September at the headquarters of Youth and Skills Association in the Governorate of Bizerte in the presence of 15 girls and women from the association pioneers in order to discuss the social causes that deprive women from participating in political life.

#### Jordan Participatory Action Research

Two PRA reports and two policy papers were developed by the PRA participants on the following topics; desertification and gender equity in Jordan. Under the supervision of Dr. Majdi el Qorom the WPC consultant, the trained women worked into two groups to conduct two PAR reports on the two issues mentioned above. Moreover, during their participation in the regional conference in Sharm el Sheikh the participants succeed in formulating two policy papers based on the findings of the PAR outcomes.

#### **Result 2.4: 5 national roundtable discussions on identified topic that affect women participation in the target countries in which women recommend and provide doable actions for policy change.**

The program’s five countries organized two Round Table Discussions (RTDs) in each country with total of 10 national round table discussions. These discussions provided a good venue for the speakers, facilitators and participants to come together to discuss and exchange ideas regarding women’s active participation in both social and political issues. The events were also an opportunity for all attendees to examine particular researches that the WPC were involved in.

RTDs were a convenient platform for women from all different backgrounds, including governmental officials, socio-political activists, heads of political parties, officials at local councils, public servants, women working in the media, civil society leaders and teachers to come together and discuss/share common issues and interests. This allowed for different perspectives to be expressed, discussed and analyzed to serve the participating women's interests and shape their perceptions on the women's participation in political activity. The RTDs were a valuable experience for the HEYA participants to practice the policy formulation full cycle, and furthermore, to be more engaged with different stakeholders in discussing the recommended policies to be presented. Some of the topics discussed during the conference included, environmental sustainability, unemployment, and women empowerment. Moreover, the participation of HEYA women in these RTDs helped them to formulate their ideas and thoughts while developing their policy papers.

For instance, in the third year, a five policy papers were presented and discussed in the national roundtable event for Egypt center. The papers discussion revolved around the current status of the health sector in Egypt, and set a number of recommendations aiming at creating and sustains improvement. The event took place at Al-ahram Newspaper premises, one of the largest, popular and well established government presses in Egypt. 29 people attend the event including a member s of the Egyptian Parliament. It worth noting that, it took two months of communication and face-to-face meetings to enable HEYA management team to access such institution. Following the event, HEYA media consultant Dr. Mahmoud Bakra (a journalist with Al-Ahram weekly) published a full page on Al-Ahram Weekly covering the event, presented a summery on the policy papers, in addition to an interview with HEYA national coordinator Dr. Hiam Elgousi highlighting on the vital role played by the Center, its objective, aims, achievements, and future plans. The interview published online and paper copy of the newsletter in English language.



Figure 10: Full article for HEYA work in Egypt on El Ahram newspaper followed the national roundtable discussion held on the health policies in Egypt.

In Tunisia, HEYA center held two roundtables to discuss and to publish the PRA research's. During these roundtables the research report on the impediment depriving women to participate in the political life and to handle political functions was discussed and which was conducted after the PAR training in late August 2014. The roundtable was attended by 9 leaders from the research group on "the impediment depriving Women to participate in the political life and to handle political functions" in addition to the 6 leaders from the coast of pollution research group" and also two leaders from the five who participated in the regional Conference on women's leadership, in addition to the local and regional decision maker and Civil society actors. The round table was divided into two main parts; (I) The first part focused on the discussion of the research report on the effects of the coast pollution on the surrounding communities which was presented during the Regional Conference and especially about policy paper that has been reached at the end of the conference. (II) The second part focused on the discussion of the final PAR report about « the impediments depriving Women to participate in the political life and to handle political functions and trying to reach public policy Proposal on this issue. The round table was characterized by a



high participation and positive interaction between all participants in the PAR groups, which enabled them to give their opinions about the final reports of the research and to contribute to the preparation of a systematic policy paper on women and policies. This roundtable represented an opportunity for the leaders who participated in the PAR to meet again and exchange positive and also negative impressions about the progress of the search.

Another, national round table was held in Lebanon, Tripoli on the identified national issue which was *early marriage legislations*. Participants who took part in this event were stakeholders, decision makers and empowered women groups who had a chance to present the policy paper they worked on through two representatives of the group Outaiba Merhbi and Motiaa Hallak. Speakers in the round table were Dr. Atef Attiah, who spoke from an expert and researcher point of view about the sociological effects of early marriage, Judge John Azzi, who highlighted the importance of having a civil law in Lebanon that identifies the age of marriage by



*Figure 11: National Roundtable discussion held in Lebanon discussing the draft law prepared by the women participants and in partnership with the partner NGOs on the Early marriage campaign*

18 and protect the children, and Dr. Salwa Hamdash, who talked about early marriage effects on women's and baby's health. An interactive discussion followed the interventions, where participants emphasized the importance of organizing such activities outside Beirut, since women in Tripoli and other rural areas are in need for more awareness raising and support.

**Objective Three: NGOs in the region are able to empower women leaders and to maintain the impact of WPCs;**

### **Result 3.1: Identification and selection of 25 partner local NGOs, 5 NGOs in each target country**

The program succeeded to identify and outreach both the 25 local partner and the other main 5 partner organizations during the first year of the program. The first and most crucial element of HEYA's first year activities were to screen, identify and recruit five local NGOs in the predetermined governorates of each country by each of the NCs of the PNGOs. The PNGOs were identified and subcontracted in each country by the AID-MENA team with the exception of Jordan which was brought in to replace Iraq – Kurdistan region.

NGOs from Lebanon, Tunisia and Egypt worked under AID-MENA in previous projects and have proved competency which enable them to be partners with AID-MENA in managing HEYA program's activities in their respective countries. NGOs in Yemen and Jordan fulfilled the selection criteria to join HEYA program such as satisfactory financial and human resources system and the ability to handle the political pressures that come with the issues that HEYA will address. Once all formalities with the PNGOs have been managed, MOU's were signed between them and their

respective NCs and the Program Director of AID-MENA. An inception meeting was held to bring all NCs of each PNGO together, introduce and explain their NGO's field of work and to partake in a round table discussion over the Year 1 Action Plan. All aspects of the implementation of the program, including the technical, financial and logistical were presented and addressed by the regional director and the program consultant.

One of the main activities of the PNGOs was to select the 5 local NGOs that would support the PNGOs in the program implementation. Each country had to go through a stringent selection process to analyze whether the selected local NGOs were capable to undertake such a large project as the HEYA program. Specific conditions included being a registered NGO by their respective countries, have previous experience in the same fields and activities as the HEYA program and be based in locations convenient for the PNGOs to travel to. As a result, all NCs conducted field visits to the prospective NGOs.

The selection of the right local NGOs was extremely important to the AID-MENA management, as well as to the stakeholders, to make sure that the selection process was carried out as diligently as possible, NGOs are able to take on all legal and administrative and human resources issues required to implement the HEYA program according to the standards required. NC's took around 2 months researching and evaluating prospecting local NGOs before making final decisions. The identified NGOs were informed of the importance of women's active participation in civic activities, the concept of organizational development and qualities of accountable, credible and active organizations, the organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and the importance of promoting collaboration among direct based CSOs.

Therefore, the selection process was designed to both initiate the PNGOs process with the participating CSOs and buildup a consensus on the purpose of WPC program and its strategies and activities. *The expected outputs from this selection process for CSOs are presented in the following table:*

No.	Phase	Activity	Out-Put
1	Orientation	Introduce WPC program to CSOs sector at district level. Prepare a list of active and interested CSOs Develop a short list of CSOs who participated in YWLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exposure to WPC</li> <li>Advocacy on women's public participation at the national and regional level</li> <li>Analysis of the organization</li> </ul>
2	Application - Assignment and Short listing	Present an overview of the capacity of potential counterparts and their representatives. Develop a list of short-listed CSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity building on analytical skills.</li> <li>Develop awareness about the WPC and AID-ME and its partner NGO.</li> <li>Linkage to other CSOs.</li> </ul>
3	Field visit & Assignment	Conduct a situational analysis of the potential CSOs to provide sufficient information for final selection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase capacity for internal analysis.</li> <li>Better understanding of the SWOT in the NGO.</li> <li>Improve sensitivity on the quality of the organization</li> </ul>



4	Final Selection	Prepare and agree on the final list of CSOs which are willing to work with PNGO and AID-MENA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Selected for WPC program and committed to participate.</li> <li>– Required capacity building identified</li> </ul>
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The feedback received from the partner NGOs in the five countries at different phases confirmed that the expected outputs at the NGO level were appreciated by the CSOs. The process was considered a good opportunity to understand WPC goals and objectives at the national and local levels as well as being capacity building for the PNGOs' individuals as well as for the organizations. For the WPC, the process realized all of its expected outputs.

When the selection process was agreed upon, the PNGOs started in finding the available suitors to join the HEYA program. Once again, an Eligibility Criteria Evaluation Matrix was designed to make sure that the most suited NGOs were selected for the program.

#### *a) Eligibility Criteria and Evaluation Matrix*

Criteria for CSOs selection were developed by AID-MENA and agreed upon by the partner NGOs to achieve the objective of identifying appropriate CSOs with the interest, motivation and baseline capacity to participate in the program and agree to serve as implementing associate at the local level. The criteria were used to screen CSOs that would be an appropriate fit to meet the WPC objectives

The eligibility criteria were:

- Registration: Must be registered and have valid permits as an NGO/CSO at the concerned governmental agencies (or ells) according to governing laws and regulations of the respective country.
- Young Women Leadership Development (YWLD) experience: Successful participation in YWLD program is preferable.
- Have confidence in Program Conception: CSO should have confidence in increasing women's active participation in public spheres.
- CSO Mission and Vision: The mission and vision of the selected CSO should be linked to women empowerment and /or political and election mindfulness.
- Dominion: Should be within the domain of the identified local communities
- Competent Institutional and Financial Capabilities: Demonstrate a reasonable capacity in its organizational programming, vision, human and financial resources. Competent board, staff and volunteers in programs' planning and management were crucial in the selection criteria.

#### *b) Ineligibility: CSOs will not be eligible for HEYA program if they:*

- Have political and/or a religious identity.
- Are supported by or implementing similar projects.
- Are not democratically operated.

#### ❖ *Selection Phases:*

The CSOs selection process went through several structured sequential process to ensure proper assessment and selection of the local CSOs to ensure effective implementation and management of the program's activities within the assigned timeframe.

#### **Orientation Phase:**

Once these criteria were finalized, PNGOs in each country were assigned to compile a list of the active CSOs in their targeted districts and disseminate information about the program and the eligibility criteria. A date was set for the orientation meeting in each district, and all CSOs who fulfilled the selection criteria were encouraged to contact the PNGO to be enrolled in the screening process.

#### The objectives of this orientation were:

- To publicly announce the inception of the WPC project in the targeted districts.
- To disseminate program information to the district authorities and CSOs.
- To highlight the potential role and responsibility of CSOs
- To promote WPC concepts within targeted districts through the establishing of women centers in targeted communities.

Applications were reviewed, and CSOs were assigned scores based on the documentations received. Seven to ten CSOs with the top scores were selected from each country, and to progress to the next phase of selection.

#### **Field Visit**

The main purpose of the field visit was to have a close view of the work of the organization and to assess their reputation at district as well as at community levels. The field visits using pre-prepared checklist provided a clearer picture and more realistic assessment of the internal organizational dynamics and its mode of operation.

The national coordinator in each country held meetings with the officials and members of the organizations at their offices. NCs visited the places where the CSOs work to meet with the field staff and officials as well as with the local communities. In addition, NCs conducted several consultation sessions with the CSOs funding agencies and field partners.

Field visits and CSOs assessments for Iraq were implemented by the regional coordinator due to difficulties in identifying the partner NGO and the national coordinator due to the political and conflicts in Kurdistan region, specifically between the central government and Kurdistan regional government.

#### **Final Selection**

All information was considered in the final selection of the CSOs. The selection team, under supervision of the national coordinator, reviewed all documentation and rated their observations based on the field visit and feedback from the community and other partners of the CSO. The CSOs were ranked and assigned a score. The following criteria were considered in the final selection decision:

- Review of the previous criteria
- Working experience
- Linkages and exposure
- Track record and organizational development status
- Geographical coverage and outreach
- Representation of communities
- Potential to work as implementation partner at identified communities.

### **Contractual arrangement**

The CSO must be willing, able and committed to enter into a contractual arrangement with the National Partner NGO to work together in implementing the planned activities of WPC program and serve their communities. For this purpose, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlines the mutual obligations of PNGO with the organization was developed by AID-MENA to unify the practices in all participating countries. After all local NGOs were selected, it was important to make sure that all agents operated with the same objectives and with the same level of understanding to achieve the goals of the HEYA program on both local and national levels.

During the three years of the program, some of the partner NGOs was dropped out due to some internal challenges, that can not make them able to complete the implementation of the program and those organizations were changed to another local partners that completed the implementation of the program activities. A major change acquired in the third year of the program by changing the Women Adult Youth (WAY) organization in Lebanon with another partner organization called The Lebanese women democratic gathering (RDFI). Yet, the RDFI was hosted the HEYA center for public policy during the third year of the program completing all of the remained activities of the program.

### **Result 3.2: Institutional assessment study, and capacity building plan for partner NGOs**

During the first year of the program, the NCs in cooperation with a national consultant from each country conducted an institutional assessment for the partner organizations in each country. The assessment tool used for the institutional assessment was based on an international methodology for institutional assessment used by many countries and international organizations. Where the assessment followed three stages, the first stage allows the CBOs to make their own rating, the second stage depend on the perception of the assessment expert through the individual discussions and secondary data available. The third stage represent the weighting average of self and the expert rating. Following the assessment process, an overall perception of the organizations capacity was reviewed with AID-MENA team before individual meeting with each CBO. This served two purposes: it provided a “snapshot” of the organizations capacity and facilitate the rating process.

Based on the institutional assessment result, each country with cooperation with the regional office developed a capacity building plan for the partner NGOs. Indeed, the development of the capacity building plan was in a participatory manner, where the NGOs were consulted for the proposed trainings according to their institutional assessment. Further, a mutual agreement between the main partner and the local NGOs was reached on the delivered capacity building activities

### **Result 3.3: Developed Arabic CSOs toolkit for “Monitoring Government Policies”**

According to several challenges that will be explained later in the challenges section. Unfortunately, the program did not achieve this result, where a major challenge faces the program management during the third year of the program the shortage of funding due to the exchange rates problem. ( a full explanation of the problem will be explained in the challenges section)

### **Result 3.4: Partner NGOs equipped with necessary tools, equipment, and knowledge to implement the planned project activities and sustain its impacts.**

Following the administrative and financial assessment held in all the 5 countries, the regional management in partnership with the local partners discussed the produced capacity building plans produced by each countries. Indeed, a specific intervention were required for all the partners in the five countries, where the regional management determined some gaps in the administrative and financial procedures, Human resources management, and Community behavior change. In total, the program conducted 18 workshop for the partner NGOs in the 5 countries with participation of almost 385 member of the partners NGOs.

A three days' workshop were organized in four countries (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia) on developing an internal financial and administrative manual. The training workshop emphasized on producing the financial and administrative manual in a participatory process with all the local partners in each of the four countries. In fact, the workshop was not implemented in Yemen due to the deterioration of the security situation at that time which lead to cancelation of the workshop. The main objectives of the workshop were to (I) Introduce the financial accounting and the role of financial management in the development programs, (II) study the financial systems and the financial documents cycle, and (III) introduce the types and stages of recording financial transactions on the financial accounts.

The second major workshop that have been delivered to all of the partner NGOs in the five countries was The Community Behavioral Change (CBC) workshops. The workshop was introduced to the capacity building package to strengthen the organizational capabilities of the PNGOs and convey the importance of integrating the Behavior Change (BC) approaches and strategies to the HEYA program. Three-day workshops were held in the five countries to introduce the concepts, strategies and approaches for behavior change as an integral element of the HEYA program (the workshops were designed and conducted by Dr. Soliman Farah, the WPC program BC Expert). The objectives of the workshop are (I) Discuss and highlight the importance of the Behavior Change to HEYA program, (II) Identify the components of the Behavior Change process and its success elements, and (III) Design Behavior Change interventions (activities) to be integrated in HEYA



*Figure 3: Partner NGOs members in Yemen during CBC workshop that took place in Sanaa*

operational plan. The training methodologies were designed to initiate and encourage participation from each participant in the workshop. All the training techniques used were engaging, participatory, learner-centered, and feedback focused. The participants were guided through a sequential, multi-stage process over the duration of the workshop to come-up with a mural which identifies and clarifies the key stages of developing a BC component within the WPC/HEYA program. The mural composition was initiated by identifying the key words included in HEYA program's goal, the main players of the program and its main audiences (beneficiaries and partners).

The mural identifies the main ingredients of successful BC interventions such as: audience segmentation, role of community and family setting the conducive social norm for the promoted behaviors, creating an enabling environment by 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 participants were actively involved in series of individual work, gallery presentations and brainstorming, case studies and buzz groups to come up with the various components of this mural. This interactive process was enriched by several presentations and discussions on the nature of behaviors, factors shaping behaviors, the stages of behavior change, main planning steps to design and implement BC activities and the role of HEYA program's partners in each stage of behavior change. Learner –Centered Mural Approach is one of the new training methodologies that was adopted and adapted by AID-MENA to serve HEYA program's BC goals and objectives.

Another major workshops conducted also the the partner NGOs, where in Tunisia workshops were conducted on strategic management and planning, proposal writing and human resources administration. In Jordan, another workshops conducted on training of trainers, strategic strategic management and planning and proposal writing. In Lebanon, workshops conducted on human resources administration and training of trainers. In Yemen, besides the CBC workshop, another workshops conducted in proposal writing and strategic planning.

### **Result 3.5: NGOs trained on BRIDGE TtF (Train the Facilitators) and accredited to provide BRIDGE trainings and sustain it in their communities.**

The BRIDGE workshop of Train the Facilitators (TtF) represents the second milestone of the HEYA program to create a pool of qualified BRIDGE facilitators. BRIDGE utilized in order for the program to increase women participation on election not only as a voter and candidate but also as a policy maker, BRIDGE proofed to be the most effective means to do so.

HEYA Program implemented a ten-day BRIDGE train the facilitators workshop for group of women leaders and activists from WPC project partners from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia, and Yemen. The workshop took place in Amman, Jordan in July 2016. The objective of the workshop was to accredit a group of female BRIDGE facilitators from the region. This group of female facilitators is to contribute to achieve AID-MENA objective to reach out and build the capacity of several women leaders and activists on governance and election in order to play an active role in decision making to increase women political participation as part of the WPC program in the MENA region. Participants of this Train the Facilitators workshop selected from the previous BRIDGE workshops that took place over the last two years of the project. The selection process was based on a set of agreed criteria.



Figure 13: Ms. Benan Zien El Dien "Participant from Jordan" during delivering one of the TtF presentations

During the first three days of the course, in addition to introducing participants to the TtF, the training concentrated on BRIDGE content and methodology, TtF Learning Outcomes, and participants learned various facilitation skills that are key in any BRIDGE training. The training covered also adults learning principles and different teaching techniques used in BRIDGE methodology. Furthermore, constructive feedback and various course monitoring and evaluation techniques were covered. During day four and day five, first group of paired presentations was constituted and assignments were assigned to all sub groups. Participants worked in pairs of two to prepare and present to the whole group BRIDGE materials that were assigned to them by the facilitators. The group and the facilitators then evaluated the facilitation skills of the presenters and gave a positive feedback to help the presenters gain confidence and improve their facilitation skills. During day six, seven, and eight the second group of paired of presentation was formed. All participants worked again in new pairs of two and were assigned to develop and write BRIDGE training curriculum. Then paired teams were instructed to swap their work with another pair that will prepare a training session and present it to the whole group. The facilitators and the whole group evaluated the material that was written by the pair as well as gave positive feedback on their facilitation skills. During day nine and ten, participants were introduced to how to plan and organize the effective delivery of BRIDGE project. The following topics were covered:

- BRIDGE showcasing and building support to conduct BRIDGE course,
- Training needs assessment,
- Design course materials,
- Logistical and administrative arrangements of BRIDGE course,
- Deliver BRIDGE course, and
- Evaluate BRIDGE course.

18 persons invited to participate in the Train the Facilitators workshop in Amman, Jordan. Participants came from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia and Yemen to ensure equal geographic representation of the participated women leaders and activists. More than 94% of the total



participants were female and the rest were male participants mainly from NGOs officials who manage the project in Tunisia. All participants were involved in the WPC program. Through the daily and the final evaluation of the entire workshop, participants of the TtF in Amman were very satisfied by the workshop. Their evaluations reflected that. Most of them requested to participate in other workshops in different BRIDGE modules, Ms. *Somaia Ahmed Al-hosam a participant from Yemen said* “the workshop was based on Positive and interactive participation, the importance of working in a team, training and training means should be divers using different evaluation techniques, motivating the participants and the ability to prepare good materials for a BRIDGE workshop”.

**Objective Four: Women leaders and their allies have increased interaction dialogue, mutual support and joint advocacy on women’s public participation at the national and regional level.**

#### **Result 4.1: Women active and equal participation on policymaking advocated at national and regional levels**

In order to achieve this results, HEYA program and its partner organizations conducted several engagement activities between the women leaders and the decision makers and various governance institutions in both local and regional level. Where, a regional conference has organized during the first year of the program to advocate the role of the women in the sustainable development goals and their role in public affairs generally. And another local field visits have conducted to national human rights committees, member of parliaments, League of Arab States (LAS), various ministries offices. Will illustrate on some of this activities below in more details.

In Tunisia, two public discussions between decision makers and women leaders on women role in public affairs were conducted, the first in September and the second in October 2016, and both discussions event held at the HEYA Center head office in Tunis. Where a regional and national paper present and discussed on “supporting political participation of Tunisian women” and the “Representation of the Tunisian women in the elected bodies”

In Jordan, and during the celebration for International Women's day, WPC in partnership with JNCW and the United Nations for women, a public seminar on the implementation of the UN resolution's 1325 women's participation in international peace and security. The seminar took place in March 13, at Jerash Governorate (north of Jordan). During the seminar, a policy paper was presented by the women the role of women in combating hate speech. A full coverage was done in all media channels in Jordan. In addition, Jordan Television hosted one of the women who developed the policy paper and



Figure 4: HEYA program in Jordan discussing the UN resolution 1325 with the UN Women and JNCW

field coordinator. Another public seminar took place in Fuheis city near Amman on October 29, 2016 by Young Women's Christian Association – Fuheis. The seminar discussed the role of municipalities in Jordan. A policy paper was presented entitled “Changing Role of Municipalities from Services to Economic Development”. The seminar was under the patronage of Dr. Fawzi Toumeh a parliament member representing Balqa Governorate, and in the presence of the Head of Development Directorate in Balqa and women local leaders and media agencies.

On a regional level, AID-MENA in collaboration with the Arabic Union for Youth and Environment, Arab Federation for Environment Experts, the “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 opening of the conference was hosted by the Arab League on September 24th. The Conference was then hosted in Sharm El-Sheikh on 24-27 September.

The conference launched at the League of Arab State (LAS) under their sponsorship, the launching session, attended by 100 participants from the five countries; in addition, a pool of policy makers, former ministers, guest speakers, civil society organizations, community leaders, and media representatives attended the conference in order to highlight the role, activities and achievements of the HEYA program in their respective countries. According to the findings of the participatory action research, two environmental issues have been discussed during the conference. The issue of desertification was covered by the participants from Yemen and Jordan, and the issue of costal pollution was covered by the participants from Egypt, Tunisia and Lebanon.

### ***Conference Main Goals***

ucceed 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.

develop five local and country based public policy statements that address the most pressing environmental issues in their respective countries.

even trained women represented each of HEYA’s countries in the conference, where they worked collaboratively with technical assistance and guidance from the environmental experts of the Arabic Union of Youth and Environment and Arab Federation for Environment Experts and countries.

provide an opportunity and venue to develop partnerships and practices by “HEYA” program’s activities to serve our communities and countries.

### ***CONFERENCE GUIDING PRINCIPLES:***

- Think globally and implement locally.
- A forum to serve as a primary stage to prepare policy papers on environmental issues.
- Developing policy papers by the women participants with the assistance of the technical team to help them in producing the five policy papers.

- To maximize the benefits of the policy papers; participants must provide the information in a simple and clear method.
- Policy papers should include quantitative and qualitative information.
- Policy papers should include the responsible local and regional authorities, and the important laws regulating environmental problems locally and regionally.

#### ***CONFERENCE METHODOLOGY:***

- Participatory and interactive discussions and group work.
- Technical lectures specialized in defining environmental problems, their influences, and how to deal with them
- Identify guidelines and principles to inform the development process of the policy papers.
- Group exercise to develop the practical training through the development process of the policy papers by the participant women under the assistant of a group of experts and the group coordinators.

Most of the participants were very pleased with the opportunity of attending the conference and being part of it. Attendees were interested in the conference topics; particularly addressing the environmental problems and how these problems impact upon women. They expressed their pleasure being in a conference that supports women to apply their knowledge practically. Many attendees stated that the conference helped in promoting women engagement in political and social affairs as well as increasing their awareness of many political issues. The overall view on the conference was that it helped and maintained the collaboration between partner organizations and more importantly between women leaders and political figures in their countries. Being part of the conference, most of the attendees spoke positively of the conference and the benefits they gained.

Another regional activity conducted to strengthen the role of the HEYA women on the advocacy efforts in their countries and across the region. A The three-day advocacy and policy influencing training course was held in Jordan in April 2015. The training was provided by advocacy specialist Helen Collinson who is a UK-based consultant for the International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC [www.intrac.org](http://www.intrac.org)). INTRAC is a specialist research and capacity-building organization which seeks to strengthen civil society globally. 27 participants (22 women and 5 men) from the program countries took part in the course, including 5 staff members from AID-MENA. The participants were chosen from a much larger number of participants in the five implementation countries, each of which is establishing a Women's Policy Centre (WPC) as a focus for the HEYA programme's activities at a national level.

The participants were selected with reference to two main criteria: a) their ability to put their new skills and knowledge into practice in their home country; b) their strong knowledge of English (since the course was delivered in English with only minimal translation support). After the three-day course and following a 2-day training of trainers course to be delivered by AID-MENA, the participants cascade the training they have received on advocacy and policy influencing to a wider group of individuals in their own organizations and partner organizations in their respective countries.

### ***Aim and objectives of the 3-day advocacy and policy influencing course:***

Aim: Participants are more effective at influencing the policies, processes and actions that are critical to the progress and change you want to see.

Objectives: by the end of the course, participants will have:

- Learnt more about the basic skills for influencing policies: use of policy reports, lobbying, media, advocacy coalitions
- Practiced some of the steps in planning and monitoring an advocacy strategy
- Practiced tools for analysing the external context and the formal policy process
- Understood how to do research and write policy reports in order to influence policies
- Practiced drafting strategic policy recommendations

A key objective of the training course was to enable participants to learn from each other's experiences of doing advocacy in different MENA countries. As we progressed through the advocacy strategy development tools, participants proposed that we mix up the groups with 1-2 participants from another country in each group to encourage cross-fertilization of ideas and approaches. For the practical lobbying skills exercises, a conscious effort was made to ensure participants were in mixed country pairs or groups in order to promote to cross-country exchanges.

### **Result 4.2: 6 media and advocacy campaigns at regional and national level designed and conducted.**

The program succeeded to launch a five media and advocacy campaigns in the five countries of the program countries, besides a regional campaign launched by AID-MENA on the "Representation of women leaders in elected bodies".

In general, AID-MENA established the perpetration for this component through organizing a 3-day consultation meeting with 15 media representatives from the program's umbrella organizations in Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia and Yemen to design a regional communication strategy for HEYA program. AID-MENA identified the participants from each country based on selection criteria that has been developed in consultation with the umbrella NGO in each country to ensure maximum participation and contribution to the process.

The consultation meeting was conducted in Egypt on January 20-22, 2015 and facilitated by Dr. Soliman Farah, AID-MENA BCC Advisor, who developed this document based on the outcomes of this consultation meeting. The participants were knowledgeable in this field and their participation was rich and informative to the process. The facilitator guided the participants through a sequential, multi-stage process over the duration of the meeting to come-up with a mural which summarizes the main ingredients of successful BCC strategy, such as:

- Primary and secondary audiences,
- Roles of (i) community and family in setting the conducive social norm for the promoted behaviors, (ii) policy and decision makers in creating an enabling environment,
- The desired behavior/s for each program's audience within the HEYA program's vision and context,

- The proposed strategies and activities that can be designed and implemented within the program to promote and endorse the identified behaviors,
- The appropriate communication channel mix to convey the messages to each audience, and
- The appropriate process and impact indicators that can be used to assess the success of this strategy in achieving the program's goals and objectives.

By the end of the workshop, the communication strategy of the program and the center has been developed and shared with all the media teams in the five countries. The following overarching strategies will drive AID-MENA and its partners in implementing the different activities of HEYA program:

- Use participatory planning approach
- Bring together different program partners and players under a coordinating body
- Framing all program activities under a comprehensive, coordinated, big tent, "HEYA"
- Support and build on current national agendas and policies:
- Frame HEYA communication activities around different program's AUDIENCES:
- Coordinate across Sectors
- Go beyond building technical skills and individual capacity to developing systems for sustainability

***Based on these strategic approaches, the program is structured around the following four themes:***

- Strategic Coordination
- Behavior Change Communication:
- Advocacy / Supportive Environment
- Institutional Capacity Building

Continuing to the development of the communication strategy, the local partners in cooperation with the media consultant team organized and conducted a training workshop under the title of "Production of HEYA Media Action Plan". The 3-days gathering yielded its fruits by achieving its goal which is: production of a media action plan for HEYA program/Center. In this context, we shed light upon the most important issues that effectively and accurately covered as well as discussed through the 3-days meeting. The Methodology and process that followed during the workshop: using round tables to easily train the participants on the best way for managing group discussions, also, conducting brainstorming to discuss, inspect and explore the participant's new ideas, additionally, crafting the whole plan based on the input of participants and their points of view regarding means of promoting HEYA women and HEYA center for public policy. Further the development of the advocacy and media campaigns plan, each country established its campaign on one of the selected policy proposals during the development of the media action plan.

In Tunisia, the scope of the campaign and the main speakers were identified for the media campaign and they choose the "Education sector" and especially the violence in schools and the infrastructure of the schools. For that, under the supervision of YWB Association, HEYA Center for Public Policy

produced a short documentary film entitled *“Our children are our responsibility”* was produced. The documentary addressed the problem of the infrastructure of educational institutions and school violence in Tunisia. The film was produced in the context of the focus of the Center on educational issues in the studies conducted to analyze public policy. Following the drafting of 36 policy proposal papers in various areas, including 6 papers on education, dealing with issues such as early school dropout, school violence, infrastructure, the reform of the educational system, the Center agreed with its partners to make education a major national issue. Several regular meetings were held to discuss the content of the documentary, in addition to technical meetings until the final version was agreed upon. The film was the product of the great efforts of HEYA Center – Tunisia – leaders and came as part of the HEYA program to support women leaders. The program is implemented under the supervision of YWB.

In Egypt, as for the national campaign, HEYA program announces an open competition for film producers to submit their proposal for producing a short film highlight the main outline of the campaign, with a great focus on policy papers drafted by HEYA women. More than 20 proposals submitted, and reviewed by the competition committee. By the end of the review, the committee selected a proposal submitted by Mr. Mohamad Diab. Moreover, two participants from HEYA program from Qena governorate, express their interest to take part in the competition. The NDF and its partner organizations focus on the Health sector, they established the campaign entitled *“Our heath...Our Right”*. The campaign shields the light on the health rights in the new Egyptian constitution. The media campaign was designed based on the policy proposal developed by HEYA women leaders in their policy papers recommendations. The documentary videos presented the root-cause of the government failure in the health sector in Egypt, additionally, it highlighted the policy recommendations developed by the women in five policy papers deal with the health sector in Egypt.

In Lebanon, RDFL worked on designing and conducting a national media and advocacy campaign aiming to spread awareness about the selected policy proposal and the national issue selected “Early Marriage”. RDFL contacted two video production professionals, Nour Wahid and Adeeb Farhat, who worked on producing 8 videos: An introductory video about the project’s activities documenting targeted women opinions about the benefit they gained through taking part in HEYA activities, 6 videos covering the round table discussions of the main policy papers selected, and a short TV spot aiming to raise awareness about the national topic “Early Marriage”. Those videos were shared online, through RDFL and HEYA social media platforms, and screened in 6 public events. Accordingly, they reached more than 4000 people based on the number of YouTube views,



Figure 5: Snapshot from HEYA and RDFL Facebook during the Early Marriage campaign



Facebook views, shares and positive comments, and number of people who attended the public events. Also, RDFL worked on ensuring wide media coverage for all the public events organized within the project, and conducting media interviews aiming to raise awareness about “Early Marriage” on different TV and radio stations including Mariam TV, Tele Liban, Jaras scope radio, Future TV, Radio Liban. In addition, and within the media campaign, RDFL produced a 112 pages’ booklet including information about the project and its activities and the main policy papers selected. This booklet was shared online on RDFL’s website and distributed for more than 250 people in 7 public events.

In fact, the current circumstances of insecurity and the sharp political polarization created many difficulties and obstacles to women leaders to form a front of advocacy and establish lobbying groups in Yemen due to the fragile situation of the country. Despite, there is a huge difficulty to reach to information and attract dominating parties to hear women's voices. Nevertheless, the program is supporting initiatives of women leaders to express their opinions and enhance the required civil participation in public affairs. The program created a media campaign through holding a national round table discussion on the “Unemployment Threats in Yemen”. Followed the national roundtable discussion, the program team produced a documentary film on the issue highlighting the role of HEYA women policy proposals to diminish the problem during the current circumstances.

#### **Result 4.3: 18,000 women and men outreached in national media and advocacy campaigns on women rights.**

The program finds difficulties for measuring the success of this result, indeed, the program utilized various promotional and advertisement tools to promote the advocacy and media campaigns. The program succeeded in conducting 90 local seminars in the five countries (20 seminars in Egypt, 20 seminars in Jordan, 20 seminars in Yemen and 10 Seminars in Lebanon). The seminars have attended by almost 2,830 attendees in physical events conducted by the local NGOs. In addition, the main partner NGOs conducted two media forums and seminars. Additionally, the program focused on social media campaigns and podcasting the documentary movies via various online platforms (Facebook, YouTube and twitter)



*Figure 16: Picture from the local event held in Bekaa, Al Faour for preview the early marriage documentary in Lebanon*

The campaigns held in Lebanon, were heavily online focused on (on YouTube and Facebook basically), the campaigns reached more than 4000 men and women, without forgetting also the big number of audience (unmeasurable) we were able to reach through the media coverages and interviews in different newspapers, websites, TV and radio stations.

For instance; During the second year of the program, HEYA program in Egypt launched the first media forum titled **“HEYA...Between Empowerment and Undermining”** on February 17th, 2015 in Cairo. In attendance of around 50 representatives from different cultural, religious leaders, governmental officials, media representatives, civic and women organizations in Egypt, the National Development Foundation (NDF), along with HEYA partner organizations from Cairo, Alexandria, Behara and Qena Governorates, organized this forum to highlight and discuss different opportunities and challenges that are shaping Egyptian women’s active participation in public policy formulation and monitoring.



Figure 6 : Discussions from the media seminar  
“HEYA...Between Empowerment and Undermining”

In her introductory opening speech, H.E. Ambassador Mona Omar emphasized strengthening women’s roles and capabilities in policy and decision making processes as inevitable mandates to actively participate in governance and public policy systems in their communities. In addition, she gave an overview on the status of women in Egypt and its relation to HEYA program. On the other hand, Ms Manal Samra, program director in Egypt, went on to explain how “Comprehensive approaches, knowledge transfers and exposure to best practices are foundational steps for NGOs to initiate and sustain the empowerment process among women”. She added that HEYA is the proper gate now to accumulate this knowledge and positively mobilize the energy of women leaders affiliated to HEYA to induce policy changes.

The forum then gave the opportunity for the guests to interact via questions and comments with speakers. Most of the comments and questions focused on the importance of having complementary roles among different organizations and entities, such as the government, media, religious leaders and the political influence that would enable all parties to act effectively within a well-structured organizational framework.

In Jordan, the “Empowerment of Women and Development Challenges” seminar summarized the need to empower young entrepreneur women in all Jordanian Governorates and involvement of women in facing public challenges and formulating future directions. The seminar was organized by **“AlRai” center for studies** in collaboration with the Empowerment of Women Section, at the All Jordan Youth Commission (AYJC) which is the youth arm, of the King Abdullah II Fund for Development. The main recommendation by the seminar is to launch a coalition under the name «Jordanians Women to Enable the Economy». The participants were representing economic and academic experts concerning women’s issues. They emphasize that the Jordanian economy development does not take place without development of human resources and especially women, calling to address the decline in the proportion of women's participation in the Jordanian economy.

## Best Practices and Success Stories

*The following are examples of the best practices and success stories reflected the program progress during the past three years.*

### ***Success story of Dhekra Hidri – Agricultural Engineer – YWB Association/Tunisia***

*(The case was written by the words of Ms. Dhekra)*

“I believe that development and communities progress that countries are seeking for cannot be acquired from customs, traditions, or by random approach. The progress which is desired by communities especially states can be achieved through public policies as the most useful approach in order to achieve the desired progress and to reach reform in the community.

For these reasons, I am a part of the Women Policy Center (WPC) program or as known by “HEYA PROGRAM”. Heya program impressed me with its different activities starting by the introduction to public policies to the training in Jordan about advocacy and policy influencing with INTRAC and how it was very transparent and with integrity during the process of choice of participant in this training. Actually, this interesting and important program which helped me to understand many issues with new perspective and new vision helped me in addressing and tackling the empowerment of rural women as a focal problem which has been leading to rising levels of women disempowerment and a lack of participation in social, economic and political areas.



Figure 7: Ms. Dhekra during her participation on the Regional workshop on Advocacy and Policy Influence in Jordan with HEYA Program

When I applied to the Professional Fellows Program (PFP), funded by the US Department of State Office for Citizen, I was very proud talking about Heya Program. This fellowship aims to strengthen the leadership capacity and professional skills of mid-level professionals from Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco engaged with non-governmental organizations who work to improve the status of women. I travelled to Seattle from 12 October to 8 November in coordination with the World Affairs Council to work with the Grameen Foundation there, and as second step to Washington, DC from 8 to 13 November, 2015. In the framework of this program I am asked to develop an individual project idea/plan, to implement in my country upon returning from U.S. based fellowship. This is a mandatory part of the program, as I am part of “Heya program” I choose to work on a policy paper about the coverage of social security improvement of rural women in Tunisia’. Heya program was a good opportunity to strengthen my leadership capacity as well as increasing the interaction between women leaders and healthier mutual support through the more substantial interactions between women leaders from Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Yemen even Tunisia. By sharing different experiences, we would be able to highlight the problems that hinder our ability to participate more effectively and playing more active roles, whereby, as a result, raising policy papers to improve our communities”.

### ***Success Story of Ms. Bouthaina Ben Yaghlene, HEYA Women leader at the Tunisian Parliament***

The election of a women leader from HEYA program “Ms. Bouthaina BEN YAGHLENE” who participated in the BRIDGE training, as a Member of the new Parliament of Tunisia “Assembly of People Representatives” on 26 October 2014. In Second time, she was nominated as State Secretary charged of Finance on February 2015. Ms. Bouthaina was involved in the program despite her duties and engagement in the government and she participated with us in the second BRIDGE training and become as semi-accredited facilitator. It’s considered as a resounding success for the entire working group of the program in Tunisia and for the all HEYA program.

### ***Success Story of Ms. Sahar Sedky: Member in the 2015 Egyptian Parliament***

Another woman affiliated to HEYA program, won the parliamentary election 2015 on Fe-Hob Masr electoral list. She has been coached - through HEYA program – on analyzing and drawing the public policies. She was one of the most prominent participants of training workshops conducted by HEYA in Qena. Sahar has prepared and submitted in cooperation with a number of other women a public policy paper on women political empowerment.

Ms. Sahar has been engaged in the public and political life in Egypt several years ago through her role as Women Representative (Ameenat Al-Maraa) in Mostaqbal Watan political party in Qena governorate. Moreover, she is a board member of Horus Association for Youth and Development, one of the PNGOs at HEYA program. She has a long history in public affairs starting with her work as a trainer for preparing female cadres that executed by National Women Council in different developmental programs.



Figure 19: Ms. Sahar during her participation in BRIDGE workshop that took place in Cairo, May 2016

Ms. Sahar contributed in the social work through her participation in illiteracy and adult education committees at Abu Tesht location-Qena Governorate; as well as her involvement in the awareness campaigns on different issues such as female circumcision, Measles and Swine flu. Sahar Sedky set dropout , women breadwinners and family law on the top priorities of her electoral program, furthermore, she paid more attention on promoting investments in Qena by achieving the best use of resources and increasing the number of producing families. Furthermore, she is passionate about developing the agricultural field by using the modern techniques in agriculture and irrigation according to her new vision.

### ***Success Story of Dr. Kholoud Sayed Ahmed: A passion on the future of Agricultural Investment in Egypt***

From the very beginning, HEYA team realized Kholoud's role and active involvement in the public and political sphere in Egypt. Women's participation in political decision making process was on her top priorities through extending women with the significant information on political process



and increasing their involvement in the public field. HEYA program persistently decided to continue its full support to women by organizing direct meetings with decision makers, as well as executing media interviews for discussing, publishing public policy papers and preparing advocacy campaigns through electronic media such as: web sites and social media. Thus, HEYA program teamwork successfully organized in cooperation with Horus Association for Youth and Development an official meeting with Qena Governor, Major General Abd El-Hamed El-Haggan, in presence of a number of women who have been coached on writing, formulating and analyzing public policy papers by the training workshops conducted within the activities that implemented by HEYA program team. One of the most prominent women who met Qena governor was Dr. Kholoud sayed Ahmed.

Dr. Kholoud knew about HEYA program through Horus association, her first training workshop has been performed in April 2014 on analyzing public policy papers. The long experience and high qualifications paved the road to Dr. Kholoud to professionally formulate a public policy on ***the Effect of Reducing the Agriculture Investments on Egypt's Development***. She presented various alternative solutions that may contribute in creating other ways to support investment processes in Egypt such as, maximizing funding, providing local loans, performing coherent regulation for agricultural investments and supporting foreign investment inside Qena. For that reasons Dr. Kholoud was nominated to be on the top of the women delegation in the official meeting with Qena Governor held on 7<sup>th</sup> September and October 2015. She displayed to his Excellency her suggestions and views on agriculture development process in Qena particularly and in Egypt generally. From his side, Major General Abd El-Hamed ElHaggan expressed his ultimate eagerness toward HEYA program and its objectives as well as its full support to her good examples like Dr. Kholoud by organizing official meetings with decision makers and provides her with any support the government could provide.

***A best practice for strategic partnership in Jordan: Her Majesty, Queen Rania of Jordan, visited the Chechen Charitable Society for Women and introduced to the HEYA Program and attended part of a program workshop in Amman.***

Her Majesty, Queen Rania of Jordan, visited the Chechen Charitable Society for Women to show support for their work in the field of women empowerment. The Chechen Charitable Society has been actively involved in community development since its establishment in 1981 and gone on to work to support children and people with disabilities as well as give lectures, workshops and vocational training to empower women. The event was, in part, to celebrate the joint initiative, HEYA.

Upon her arrival, Queen Rania stated that “through simple initiatives and collective action, progress can be achieved while simultaneously



Figure 8: Her Majesty, Queen Rania with HEYA team in Jordan and the program participants.

promoting national pride.” Her Majesty met with the participants and discussed the goals of the project, which aim to increase women’s participation in public policy making. Participants of the HEYA program also told Her Majesty of the community’s needs and how the HEYA program helped enable women to address these needs and become leaders within the community. Queen Rania has been a committed advocate for development in areas of education, health and youth and community empowerment for a number of years and was full of praise for the Sweileh based organization for their commitment to their field.

### ***Successful Collaborative efforts between HEYA and Jordanian National Committee for Women***

In joint collaborative efforts between the HEYA program in Jordan and the Jordanian National Committee for Women – The national women buddy in Jordan- The last training, August 28-30, 2015 on “Policy Analysis” and “Policy Monitoring” was conducted. The training was held at JNCW premises and invited leader women of their own members. The graduation took a place under the General Secretary of the JNCW Dr. Salma Al Nemis.

Dr. Nemis discussed the objectives of the training, issues concerning Jordanians to be included in policy papers. During the last day of the training, the women leaders discussed their draft policy papers with Dr. Nemis to include her feedback later. It is worth mentioning that the JNCW are appointed by the Prime Minister to be responsible on all laws and policies relating to women in Jordan. Moreover, the JNCW is responsible to publish the Jordanian strategic plan towards women in Jordan entitled women 2030.

It’s worth mentioning that the partnership established with the JNCW is a strategic partnership in order to open platforms between HEYA women and the national bodies to discuss and present their concerned issues regarding women status in Jordan.

### ***Documentation of Best Practices from HEYA Women Leaders in Lebanese Universities***

Lebanese law provides for a mandatory formation of committees of students in universities and public and private institutions of Lebanon, and that is meant for the Lebanese young women to express their opinion and participate in decision-making. Where the law set a number of powers to the elected committees and the participation in the development of public budgets for academic and educational institutions, these committees also enjoy representational role at the national level and play a big role in the light of the national youth policy which is approved by the Lebanese system. The success achieved with the implementation of the HEYA program, a group of women leaders participating in the program in the campaign for the referred elections in the academic year 2014 - 2015 and this with an important indicator of the general level which is increasing female candidate’s ratio at all levels, including nearly 45 %, and the percentage of women's participation program 73% at the general level of the Lebanese University, and in private institutions it reached 36%.

According to the implementation of the Lebanese law, and union movements and demands during the last two years in Lebanon, and that is named as, the trade union coordinating body movements, and after the weakness of the body to reach their goals and improve living conditions for employees and the wage of earners in Lebanon, it was decided to solve this problem and work to elect a new body within the first month of the year 2015.



Accordingly, a new achievement through our program appears and is applying for candidacy to the new coordinating body by the program participants. Prof. Amal Rhkida, is an active participant and has a high win ratios, and has consult her colleagues in the program with several paragraphs of its logistical posts that she was nominated based on it, and we can say they got the supportive posts in the program "Heya" and who are workers and employees which have the right to participate in the election, and thus able to obtain a working group that helped her to develop a strategy and contribute to the campaign, all this in the face of many of the challenges and regulations that govern the Lebanese society with its negative and positive side.

## Lessons Learned

- Dealing with women groups with different levels of familiarity with the public policies subject urged the program management and implementation team to adopt a systematic approach when presenting the WPC rationale and goals in groups, like in orientation meetings and in trainings. Systemizing the process ensured in some way that the message delivered to different groups is more or less the same so recipients would receive unified messages not confusing ones.
- Several NGOs, women groups, women who approach us through the social media and in the orientation meetings had high enthusiasm for the WPC program. This enthusiasm and high interest in the program came to be a natural motivator to the program implementation team; and also put a serious responsibility on how to keep the different stakeholders engaged all through the different stages of the program.
- Building the capacity of local partner NGOs is not only through direct trainings that will be organized for their staff throughout the duration of the program; but also through gaining their interest and ownership to cooperate and learn from what we all do as a team. This usually has a twofold effect: first, it greatly impacts the progress and the quality of achievements of the program at the end because all parties assume ownership; second, the partners involved learn how to deal with technical, organizational and financial challenges so we build up a strong team for future cooperation.
- In the communication with NGOs, target groups of women and all other stakeholders it proved that talking about the goals of the program and how to achieve these goals is not important as directly telling and engaging them in answering the question “what will we see after the end of the program”.
- In the trainings, gatherings and seminars it is recommended to invite higher number of attendees than the exact number you aim for to avoid the trap of having so many dropouts; which is always reflected in the additional costs on the budget line allocated for such training/event/seminar.
- Close coordination with the partner NGOs to form homogenous groups of women is a must; otherwise disagreements and general state of discomfort in the gatherings, especially trainings may arise which will impact its quality in a way or another. This does not mean that we only put people who are alike with each other; on the contrary diversity is so important but within a safe limit that does not undermine achieving the goals of any upcoming gathering. For example, having two extreme age groups in one patch of trainees is not useful in the public policy training currently implemented within the program.
- The field coordinators understanding and ability to present the WPC program has been improving by time. The more they interact with different women groups, the more they learn to tailor their messages and change their communication strategies.
- Working with different women from diverse geographical locations enriched the program; and maximized the learning of the implementation team and trainers. To back the argument, we seized the opportunity to work with women from Upper Egypt through (Horas NGO), one of the genuine NGOs with strong history in the area of women and youth empowerment, in Qena Governorate who approached HEYA management and showed real interest in the cooperation.

- With more communication and relations with the decision makers and natural leaders in each of the program Governorates, we shall be able to induce more positive impact and reach out to diverse groups of women in the near future.
- With ore communication with political parties and other relevant organizations, such as the Regional Union for NGOs in Cairo and the National Women Council, HEYA program would be able to achieve more concrete results on ground.
- The reality of implementation with NGOs and the target group impose an important lesson which is: plan B is so important to deal with unexpected situations and surprises.
- Constructive feedback from PNGOs, the implementation team, the regional team and from women is crucial for the success of the program; and should be taken into consideration.
- Motivating PNGOs comes through different ways, one of them is conducting regular meetings with the chairman and directors to ensure their clear understanding to all developments occurred within HEYA program. Communication with PNGOs should not be associated only with the need to plan for or implement an activity but it should be done even if no clear cause is behind it.
- The process of drafting policy papers with women went through various success and no success steps as explained earlier in this report. The main lessons to be highlighted are: seeking the support of an expert who knows about the topic of the policy paper is highly recommended to increase the efficiency of women in producing the paper. Second, regular coaching is important to ensure the quality of the policy paper produced by women.
- Development of public policies turned to be a very useful experience not only for women affiliated to HEYA program but also to HEYA team who got fully engaged with women in the issues that decided to address in public policies.
- Attending some of the events organized by PNGOs that are not related to HEYA assisted in creating mutual bonds; and thus increased the area of trust and cooperation.
- Enhancing the relationship between the program and the Media: - Recruiting media consultants with various specialization such e.g. journalism, TV/podcasting ensure a high quality of media coverage for the program activities.
- All the implemented activities been thoroughly covered by the media (radio, TV talk show, press news and electronic press), which attracted a tremendous attention among women and other stakeholder from different governorate.
- Updating the facebook page with the ongoing activities facilitate and nourish the relationship between the (HEYA Graduate) and the program on one hand, and established dialogue with new candidate on the other hand.
- The relationship between the program central organizations and the partner NGO:- Although that the program team assure that the NGO partner been update and informed with each planed activities, Yet , it realized that they are reluctant to initiate the implementation date , and wait for Cairo office to take the action. To deal with this situation, a list with require actives and implementation deadline been pass it to the NGOs, followed by monitoring process to assure the implementation and its outcome.

- Providing more motivations and encouragements to the local NGOs during the coming period with the aim to enhance the partnership and ensure the sustainability of the consortium formed in each country through the following: -
- ✓ Change the approach in partnership and roles with the local NGOs, where they are handled as if they were key partners in the program planning, implementation and monitoring and not only as organizers of a number of training workshops attracting the women leaders beneficiaries and providing the logistic services for the training workshops. This could be achieved through holding a number of planning workshops for all the partners in the future, increasing the space of communication with those organizations and their participation in selecting the women leader's beneficiaries for advanced training according to the set criteria.
- ✓ Participation of the board members and the executive team of the local NGOs in the training workshops that will be held in the future as part of the program.
- ✓ Participation of the members of the local NGOs in the regional meetings and activities.
- ✓ Increasing the level of the communication of the program regional management with the local NGOs in all countries.
- Unifying and mainstreaming the correct concepts for all the partners at the regional, local NGOs, the consultants and the program beneficiaries about the goals, the method and the stages of writing and formulating the public policies papers. The program beneficiaries should be directed to be innovative in putting up solutions for the issues tackled in the public policies papers since the basic idea of formulating such public policy papers through this program is the development of innovative and unconventional ideas and solutions that can solve the public social problems and issues and fill the gaps in the legislations and laws. Thus the purpose is not limited to propose ideas, solutions and public policies necessary for the handling of those public issues and problems within the framework of the available laws and legislations. The proposed public policy may include ideas that are in contradiction to the current laws. It's highly recommended to acquire a professional support from an expert in the field/ topic of the policy paper to enhance and increase the efficiency of women in producing the paper, followed by a regular coaching as it is crucial to ensure the quality of the paper outcome.
- Institutional communication, coordination and partnership with the institutions concerned with public policy and women's participation in public affairs such as the National Council for Women in Egypt, the Women National Organization in Jordan, the relevant universities and research centers specialized in the areas of program works, political parties and other relevant civil society organizations will have a positive impact on the efficiency of the performance and effectiveness of the achieved results. It is also considered as one of the basic pillars of the continuity of the program
- It is important to increase and intensify the partnership and networking with governmental organizations concerned with the program and consortium issues, along with commencement of building a partnership with private sector organizations in order to put the principles of social responsibility of the private sector into action so that there will be a partnership among the three sectors. The current consortium became capable of forming and managing these partnerships among the three sectors. This partnership is one of the basic pillars of the continuity of the existing

consortium. Ensure the presence and involvement of the media in disseminating the message and goals of the program through inviting them to attend the activities implemented by the program.

- As the program deals with a large number of beneficiaries with diverse cultures and in different age groups representing different educational, social and ideological levels due to the large geographical scope and area of implementation, the interventions should be performed with the women leader's beneficiaries in each country through a mechanism, an approach and a content that suit and observe this diversity and difference in their circumstances and cultural backgrounds.
- At the beginning of the program, some of the local NGOs did not select the target group in accordance with the set criteria, especially the criterion, which stipulates that the women leader's participants should have the skills or experience in leadership. However, after the monitoring and guidance by regional NGOs throughout the life of the program and the continued emphasis on the importance of applying these criteria in the selection of the target groups, as well as explaining the positive impact on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the program, some of these organizations began to comply to some extent with the application of these criteria upon selecting women leader's beneficiaries for later courses.
- Building and development of the local NGOs' institutional capacity should be based on the institutional needs within the framework of the areas and strategies of the program work. They should not be limited to the implementation of standardized training programs to be conducted for all PNGOs without taking into account the differences in the relevant needs, experiences and institutional capacity. Capacity building activities should not only be restricted to implementation of training programs, but it must provide technical support activities throughout the life of the program and in accordance with the constantly emerging needs, because this will have a positive impact on the quantitative and qualitative development in the performance of these organizations, the matter that will increase their abilities and their contributions in achieving positive program results and increase their ability to deal with external and internal technical or financial challenges facing the program. This will also be positively reflected in the interest of PNGOs and their sense of ownership of the program, as well as in supporting the continuity of the consortium among these organizations in the future

## Challenges and Sollutions

The program has faced a number of challenges during the the three years. Such challenges had a negative impact on the decline of performance rates and achievement of the activities and results of the planned program, the matter that led to delays in the implementation of some activities of the action plan for the second year of the program which was developed in the second regional meeting. These challenges also had negative impacts on the excellence of the implementation of some of the program interventions. Some of these challenges are associated with external factors and circumstances and some other internal challenges are related to the program. The following is a presentation and analysis of these challenges.

### **Here are some of the challenged and the action taken for figuring out these challenges;**

- Developing and executing a partnership winning strategy with the PNGOs has been challenging at the beginning of HEYA program. Identifying qualified NGOs that meet HEYA program criteria; reaching out to them and creating solid foundation for collaboration was a quite challenging task. Continuous dialogue based on trust and being equal opponents helped in managing this challenge at the beginning of the program. Efforts were directed to maintain the relationship and open new horizon for expanding the cooperation with local PNGOs.
- The difficulty of some of the legal and administrative procedures regarding the registration and publicity of Women Policy Centers in some countries due to some restrictions imposed on the registration of civil society organizations, the matter that resulted in delaying the registration of centers in Jordan and Tunisia, and forcing the National Development Foundation in Egypt to add the center's activities as a field of work and activity within the fields and activities of the institution rather than registering the center as an independent entity. Delays in the registration of these centers also resulted in delaying the implementation of activities of these centers.
- Delay in launching the program in Jordan, compared to the rest of other countries, where the implementation in Jordan started after six months of the life of the program and where Motivators Foundation did not participate in the first regional meeting in February 2014 for discussing and developing the program management mechanisms and action plan for the first year. This caused the regional organization and local NGOs in Jordan to work under constant pressure in order to accomplish the planned activities and achieve the target number of the training program "Introduction to Public Policy Analysis and Formulation".
- Local NGOs expressed their dissatisfaction from excluding them in planning the program activities; and sometimes from even knowing the activities enough time before implementation. This sense of dissatisfaction impacted the feeling of ownership towards HEYA program. No doubt that the local NGOs are the main vehicle that long of exclusion is true in some cases and this is mainly due to the original design of the program that did not give much attention to the role of the local partners. We overcame this challenge through continuous dialogue, reminding our partners with their role Vs. the role of the umbrella NGOs and clarifying that the planning for year 2 and 3 of the program will be done differently where they were included in some parts of the planning.



- In general, the coordination procedure with the PNGOs that entails a lot of communication and negotiations is an ongoing challenge in all social and developmental work. For instance, some of the orientation meetings occurred through the PNGOs were in remote areas because the NGO would not do the effort to convince women to meet at its premises or in a middle area. The solution was always that we offer good transportation for the FC to reach the places, which put an additional cost on the program.
- Difficulty in reaching the target group of the program in some remote and rural areas, especially in Egypt and Yemen, due to the difficulty of covering all geographic areas in the targeted countries. This is due to the limited time and limited financial and human resources of the program, however, due to the persistence of some women leaders' beneficiaries, the PNGOs paid the travel costs for some beneficiaries in return for their participation in the training program or implementing some training workshops in their own governorates.
- The three trainers in Tunisia, who have been hired, were not hired on a full-time basis and they were unable to cover all training workshops of the regional organization's "Introduction to Public Policy Analysis and Formulation" training program in accordance with the plan because they faced professional changes at the end of the first year, which affected their availability for the program. This has resulted in the postponement and delay of some training workshops. Therefore, the Youth without Borders NGO (YWB) has contracted another full-time trainer to complete the training workshops.
- The political instability in the Middle East and North Africa region and the blurred vision regarding the political climate and the mechanisms and powers of legislation in some countries targeted by the program. For example, there is no Legislative Authority in Egypt due to the absence of a parliament for legislation since July 2013 until the end of November 2015, no legislative and executive authority in Yemen. There is also the continuing political and sectarian conflict and the absence of a president in Lebanon, the matter that created a kind of frustration among many concerned institutions and many women about the importance of woman's participation in public affairs, especially her participation in the processes and venues of decision-making and policy formulation in these countries. It also led to a lack of clarity about the most important public issues and policies that the women leaders' participants can produce relevant policy papers.
- The poor security conditions in Yemen and the increasing disputes and conflicts over power, which resulted in Houthis taking over of the political decision-making and power in September 21, 2014, followed by the military operation "The Determination Storm" against the Houthis as of March 2015. This prompted the regional management of the program in Yemen to take a decision in agreement with the regional organization to low profile all the activities of the program as of the beginning of March 2015. At the present time, all the program partners have no clear vision of the possibility of having any kind of security and political stability in the short or long term. Therefore, there are some difficulties in implementing the program activities, as well as, communicating with decision makers or governance institutions.

- The small number of members of the working teams in the program, both in the regional management of the program or in the regional NGOs, which is not suitable to the quality and quantity of tasks and activities implemented in the program, as well as the lack of staff in the local partner NGOs and relying on part-time volunteers for the implementation of activities. This has resulted in delaying the implementation of some of the program's activities and the non-achievement of targets in accordance with the operational plan of the program.
- Withdrawal of a number of local NGOs from the program during different times and stages of the program life, especially in the early phases, due to lack of access to sub-grants or part of the program budget in order to carry out activities similar to those implemented by the regional organization, despite the fact that some of them signed protocols of cooperation and that some of them started organizing a number of training workshops for the "Introduction to Public Policy Analysis and Formulation" training program. For example, My Vision Foundation in January 2015 in Yemen. Yet, the regional NGOs had to provide other alternatives including enrollment and admission of new local NGOs in the program as a replacement of the withdrawing organizations, or distributing targeted women among some of the other local capable organizations involved in the program, or the implementation of training workshops by the regional organization itself instead of the withdrawing organizations. This has resulted in a delay in the implementation of some of the program's activities and a delay in achieving the targets in accordance with the program's operational plan.
- HEYA program teamwork faced obstacles and exaggerated problems in meeting many of decision makers in Egypt at different governmental levels such as: getting too much hardships in communicating with the Local Development Minister, Women National Council Leaders and South Valley University President. This situation has been attributed to changes in the Egyptian Government, accordingly ministries change, political insatiability that affected the ability of various Governmental and Semi-Governmental institutions to work freely and subtly take decisions.
- There are challenges related to the formulation of the public policy, including the challenge related to the uniformity and clarity of an accurate understanding among all the partners to the program and the women leaders' beneficiaries on the objectives, the method and the stages of the formulation of public policy papers.
- There is another challenge related to the skills of drafting policy papers, as the drafting skills are not available in a number of women leaders' beneficiaries of the "Introduction to Public Policy Analysis and Formulation" training program. This has resulted in disputes between the PNGOs in each country on the right time for the formulation and production of policy papers, and disputes on the mechanism of selection of cases which the policy papers deal with, as well as the clear discrepancy in the number of policy papers that have been produced by the countries until the time of the interim evaluation.
- Difficulty in reaching the target group of the program in some remote and rural areas, especially in Egypt and Yemen, due to the difficulty of covering all geographic areas in the targeted countries. This is due to the limited time and limited financial and human resources of the program, however, due to the persistence of some women leaders' beneficiaries, the PNGOs paid

the travel costs for some beneficiaries in return for their participation in the training program or implementing some training workshops in their own governorates.

- The limited and low financial allocations for certain activities, including the costs of training workshops of the "Introduction to Public Policy Analysis and Formulation" training program, the budget for the lease of the Women Policy Center and also the remunerations of the consultants.
- Low Euro exchange rate, which had a negative impact over the implementation of program activities since October 2014. This issue has been resolved through the financial consolidation from other items of the budget in coordination with AID-MENA. However, AID-MENA face a problem during the expenditures of the third year of the program; there is a gap between the total amount of the required budget in Euro and the original amount of the received transfers from SIDA. The Total requested amount in Euro is 2,565,248.40, but, the total amount of the received money in Euro is 2,414,989.57. The total deficit amount in Euro is 150,288.83. AID-MENA along with its partners will work hard to filling the gap of the deficit amount; otherwise, this might affect the implementation of some activities of the program.