



Press Release

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Equitas launches a compendium of best practices in youth community involvement under EU programme for the Middle East and North Africa

Youth committed to improving their communities

Tunis, April 14, 2016 - Today, Equitas and its regional partners presented the results of the [EU-funded regional project *Mosharka*](#) and launched a new tool to support the implementation of youth projects aimed at promoting human rights in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

The publication, [Youth Participating in Community Life – Implementing Human Rights Projects in the Middle East and North Africa](#), shows the lessons learned and good practices of the *Mosharka* project, an innovative programme working to equip young people to participate more effectively in civic life and to develop sustainable youth networks in the MENA region.

*"Our experience in the region showed that there was a lack of user-friendly tools to help young people, decision-makers and civil society representatives work together to implement youth civic actions. Based on the promising outcomes of the *Mosharka* youth initiatives, this publication demonstrates that youth in the MENA region have the capacity and the desire to contribute to the development of their communities", says **Ian Hamilton**, Executive Director of Equitas.*

More than 170 youth have come together in five countries to implement 20 community projects. Through these projects, the youth have openly discussed issues such as the exclusion of vulnerable groups from social and economic life, early marriage, inter-tribal conflict and sexual

harassment. Through a series of related activities including workshops, conferences and artistic activities, over 16,000 people have been reached since 2012.

Highlights – Best practices of the *Mosharka* project

- The development of a strong and sustainable sense of belonging to their communities keeps young people away from radicalization factors.
- Creating safe spaces for exchange encourages the participation of young women in human rights projects in communities where it is not common for young women and young men to participate together in the same activity.
- Using a participatory approach based on human rights is the best approach with marginalized youth, whose rights are often violated.
- Local and national decision-makers must be involved in the youth rights projects, right from the beginning, in order to enhance dialogue and ensure achievement of the desired results. *Youth Participating in Community Life – Implementing Human Rights Projects in the Middle East and North Africa* thus suggests new avenues of action to pursue the engagement of youth in the region, establish mechanisms for dialogue with decision-makers as well as ensure real opportunities for change for youth and other vulnerable groups. The launch of the publication took place April 14th at the Canadian Embassy in Tunis, Tunisia.

This tool is available free online in English, French and Arabic on our website [here](#).

- **Ends** -

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Related Links Publication *Youth Participating in Community Life – Implementing Human Rights Projects in the Middle East and North Africa* : <https://equitas.org/news/latest-news/lessons-learned-good-practices-implementing-human-rights-projects-middle-east-north-africa/>More information on the impact of the Mosharka project can be found here: bit.ly/1SCQ3VU

About Equitas - Founded in 1967, Equitas is a non-profit organization committed to advancing equality, social justice and respect for human dignity through human rights education programs in Canada and around the world.

The *Mosharka* project is made possible through the support of the European Union, the *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF) and the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) in Jordan. The project was implemented in partnership with the following organizations: l'Association des femmes tunisiennes pour la recherche et le développement, AFTURD (Tunisia), the Arab Network for Civic Education – ANHRE (Jordan), l'Association marocaine pour l'éducation de la jeunesse (AMJED – Section Fès (Morocco), and the Youth Leadership Development Foundation (Yemen).



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