

Supporting Capacity Building in Libya



Programme supported by the European Union (through the Instrument for Stability)



Workshop on the priority leadership and development needs of the Libyan public service, October 2011

In July 2011, the EU put in place an initial programme of capacity building support for both civil society and new public service bodies in Libya. This programme, financed by the EU's Instrument for Stability, was set up to respond to early Libyan requests for support with training on leadership, organisational and other management skills. This EU programme is implemented by Common Purpose, a European NGO partner which is working closely with key actors in the emerging civil society and public service.

Programme activities aim to build up the leadership and other management capabilities of individual participants and groups coming from both emerging civil society and interim institutions. Activities include practicing approaches that encourage working across institutional and other divides, so that the target groups are better enabled to meet the challenges of a society in transition. Various experiential type courses have been organised to date with a diverse community of enthusiastic people coming from many areas of Libyan society: young leaders, typically 20-35 years (both men and women); NGO leaders and volunteers; leaders/officials in the Public Service, including newly emerging leaders; women's organisations; media groups; and other organisations and groups wanting to develop more specific technical and other skills.

The various courses and related workshops run over the first five months of this programme have involved 437 participants, each attending for on average of 1.72 days. This is a total of some 1,060 participant days. The gender split among participants to date has been 60% male: 40% female. Starting off with courses in Benghazi in July, activities were then extended to Derna and Tripoli (since November) and most recently to Al Bayda, with other locations to follow in early 2012. Participants on the Young Leaders' Courses have been demonstrating their sustained commitment to maintaining and increasing the momentum for change in the new Libya and learning to be effective leaders in this fresh environment. Various courses have been run in partnership with community organisations, such as Attawasul, and universities in Benghazi and Tripoli. A number of other workshops have been developed in partnership with the 'Capacity Building Office' of the National Transitional Council (NTC), with a focus on helping public servants to establish for themselves the leadership and development needs for the new public service.

Attawasul Media team workshop, August 2011



Young Leaders' Courses

Mostly these have been for people from 20 to 35 who wanted to attend because since 17 February 2011 they have been active in a variety of (mainly voluntary) areas and have seen that Civil Society actions are critical to bringing about change. The main ambition of participants is to learn how to become effective. To do this, they realise that their knowledge needs to be partnered with developing a true understanding of their own community, if they are to be able to translate their passion for change into effective action.

Approach: The courses have focused on learning how to dialogue and analyse issues in depth; to manage diverse opinions constructively; to deal with change in a positive way; to go out and talk/listen to 'the man (woman and child too!) in the street'; to go to organisations and companies in their cities and towns so as to meet leaders from a wide variety of sectors, both public and private, and see how these people are dealing with the transition to a sought after new era of transparency, openness and change; to see how the local and national context also relies on global awareness. As they do this, they examine and discuss leadership characteristics to see which are the most effective and in what circumstances and how they themselves need to take responsibility for contributing to change and developing their leadership qualities.

Among the priority topics brought up by the young people on courses in September were rubbish disposal / cleaning up the streets, and facing up to the dangers caused by 'celebratory fire' and the lack of regulation of weapons. By October, participants' priorities had moved on to also include the need for laws, security and democracy, and especially the need to engage the more 'hard to reach' individuals and communities so as to ensure the whole population is 'informed'. In addition to working on the challenges they had to tackle during the courses, many have been developing projects to help their communities.



Young Leaders Course, December 2011



Young Leaders Course, October 2011

The aim of the training activities is to help participants to really think through what they can do, and how. Some of the days are spent in classrooms and conference halls, but the most important part is taking them out into their own city to speak to senior leaders in different areas of life. This also helps to ensure the course discussions are grounded in the current realities of Libya. In Benghazi this included visiting the Bank of Commerce and Development, the Great Man Made River project, the Benghazi Medical Centre, the Libyan Businessmen's Association, the Red Crescent refugee camp and national media organisations. Supported by this capacity building, various participants have gone on to set up new initiatives to address local problems they care about and in particular to respond to environmental, health and security issues they have seen in their cities.



Attawasul Media Team volunteers, August 2011

Mr Jim Moran, EU Senior Co-ordinator at the new EU Delegation in Tripoli, spoke at the first Young Leaders' Course to be held in Tripoli. He spoke about the EU's activities in Libya and how the EU is there to help Libyans by responding to their priority needs. This presentation followed a course where the participants had worked on a challenge to improve 'Law, Order and Security in Tripoli', with the involvement of a number of 'expert witnesses' as contributors, including the Dean of The Faculty of Law, a Colonel in the security services and a Human Rights' activist. Working on such real challenges in this training environment empowers the participants to be better able to lead on such challenges in their respective roles in the 'real' world.



Young Leaders Course, September 2011

Leadership of NGOs

Some of the many NGOs that established themselves just after the revolution are now working to turn themselves into organisations that can operate effectively in the new Libya. To do this they realise they need to develop certain skills, including how to organise their own governance and financial management, how to fundraise and how to create a compelling vision. Following on from the facilitation over recent months of prioritisation workshops with the boards of NGOs and focus meetings with groups of NGO leaders, this EU supported programme envisages to run from early 2012 a series of specialist NGO Leaders' Courses to help equip the participants with the skills they have identified already as priorities and to support them in the process of developing effective organisations. These courses will draw on specialists from the EU for some workshops, so as to provide advice and support technical development in the identified areas of need.



Workshop on the needs of the Libyan public service, October 2011

Public Service Workshops

Public service participants have emphasised that they want to build a system focused on outputs, with high standards of transparency, good governance and ethics. They realise that this will not be easy and that they themselves will need to be creative if they are to deal with the unprecedented challenges facing the new country. So they have asked for help with prioritising skill needs and then developing these skills. The first workshop was held in Benghazi in October 2011 and brought together a range of leaders from the public service and various other sectors and backgrounds and challenged them to contribute to this process. Mr Jeremy Nagoda, the EU's representative in Benghazi, spoke at this course, drawing on his own experience as an EU public servant. The second such workshop was held in Tripoli in November 2011 and this time was confined to public servants alone so as to focus more on developing their own priorities.



Workshop on the needs of the Libyan public service, October 2011

The facilitation process for both workshops was one that encouraged the participants to interview stakeholders, to discuss the priorities as a group and then build a picture of the desired future for the new public service in Libya. They were then able to make their contributions to answering the question set by the NTC's Capacity Building Office, 'What are the priority leadership and development needs for the Libyan Public Service?' Further workshops in early 2012 will go on to tackle the priority needs that have been identified already.

Technical Advice

Advice on communications has been provided to the Great Man Made River Project (the only supplier of water in Libya) and to NGOs and young leaders with aspirations to enter the media. Financial management advice has been provided to one of the emerging NGOs. It is expected that the amount and range of technical advice provided under this EU programme will increase significantly in the first half of 2012 as the emerging institutions come to a clearer understand of what they need to do to become effective.

Quotes from some course participants:

"What happened in Libya after the 17 of February makes our experience enriching because as individuals we stood together against the tyrant and challenged him. In spite of our differences we managed to work together in a workshop like this and the most remarkable thing that happened is us meeting young people, men and women, with different opinions, but what unites us is our love for Libya and civil work."

Public Service Capacity Building Workshop in Benghazi.

"We gained the skill to hear one another and reach common ground and also have the patience to hear each other and that it is ok to have different ideas. I liked meeting new people and going to places you never thought you will go to and knowing that you are relied on to make a better future for our country"

Young Leaders course participant in Benghazi.

"I liked working on a real life challenge. The most useful thing about it was putting yourself out there - thinking out of the box and discovering ourselves."

Attawasul Media team workshop