



15 YEARS OF CHANGE: ASHOKA IN THE ARAB WORLD



ASHOKA



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ABOUT



15 YEARS OF CHANGE

Dear friends,

This year we acknowledge and celebrate a significant frontier in our work. The start of 2019 marks the official culmination of 15 years of Ashoka in the Arab World, 15 years since our founding and the election of our very first Ashoka Arab World Fellow. A decade and a half later, we are immensely proud to witness the rise and advancement of social entrepreneurship across the region, both within and outside of Ashoka's network.

At the time of our founding in 2003, social entrepreneurship was unknown in the region. The existing social entrepreneurs were swimming against a harsh tide: unnamed, unacknowledged, and unsupported. The social and business sectors operated in mutually distrustful silos, and social change models remained rooted in top-to-bottom donor-beneficiary relations.

Fast forward 15 years: the name, place, and power of social entrepreneurs in Arab society is now firmly established and ever-growing. Ashoka Arab World belongs to a new and robust social entrepreneurship ecosystem, with diverse models of change. Within our own network, a wealth of Ashoka Fellows span the Middle East and North Africa and are continuously connected to their more than 3,500 peers around the world. Ashoka is proud to lead strategic partnerships and a vibrant dialogue between the social and business sectors. And most importantly, the region has paid witness to the power of individuals with a new idea who take initiative to build the world they envision.

We know now with more conviction than ever that that our region and our world needs changemakers: in our schools, in our workplaces, and in our communities. It starts with young people, and so does Ashoka. Therefore we hope you will join us in trying to encourage our children and youth, the leaders of the future, to lead young and in giving them the skills and opportunities to be innovators and problemsolvers. This is how we build a world where solutions outpace social challenges: when solutions flow from everyone, and everyone is a changemaker.

On behalf of Ashoka Arab World, thank you to our Fellows, our partners, and our public and private champions who have uplifted Ashoka and social entrepreneurship to this point. We look forward to ushering in with you our next great era of change.

Iman Bibars, PhD.

Regional Director, Ashoka Arab World

Vice President, Ashoka: Innovators for the Public

About Ashoka

Thirty eight years ago, Ashoka pioneered the field of social entrepreneurship with the conviction that the most powerful force for change in the world is a new and innovative idea in the hands of the right person. Through building the world's largest platform of social entrepreneurs, Ashoka leads solutions to the world's most pressing social challenges, from employment and job creation, to gender equality and climate change.

At the core of our global work is finding and supporting the world's leading social entrepreneurs. Once invited into the Ashoka Fellowship, we provide them with a diverse package of financial and broader support, and a lifetime membership into an extensive network of peers and partners, empowering them to scale their impact for true systems change. At scale, Ashoka Fellows change laws and policies, disrupt market systems, redefine new fields, cross borders, and deeply shift patterns of behaviors and culture.

Not content to identify and empower a minority of revolutionary individuals, Ashoka envisions a world in which Everyone is a Changemaker: a world where all citizens

are powerful and contribute to change in positive ways. To this end, we partner with schools, universities, corporations, citizen sector organizations, and media to mobilize social innovation at all stages and in all fields.

Furthermore, Ashoka champions a new model to prepare future generations with the confidence and tools to navigate this rapidly-changing world, and to own their power to create a better world. We acknowledge Young Changemakers, much as we acknowledge Fellows, who are at work changing their communities and serve as powerful spokespeople to the world for the impact of young leaders. Through their stories and others, we inspire more young people to identify a problem, mobilize a team, and lead their own change. At the same time, we prepare parents to raise changemaking kids, and prepare education systems to provide changemaking opportunities by design. Our goal? To take the same vision, mindset, and skills that make our Fellows utterly exceptional, and make them the new status quo.



Founded **1981**

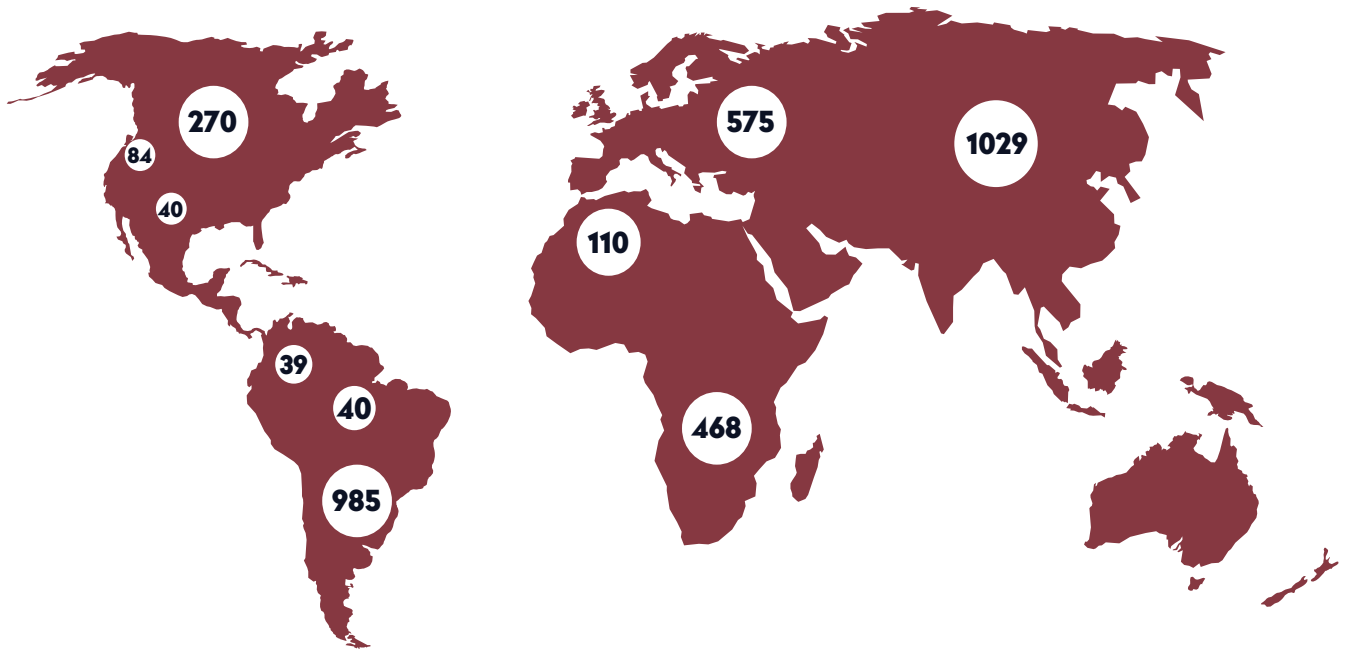


92+ Countries



3,500+ elected
Ashoka Fellows

Our Global Network



About Ashoka Arab World

Since its inception in 2003 and from its offices in Cairo, Ashoka Arab World has pioneered and been the platform for social entrepreneurship across the Arab region, identifying and electing more than 100 of the region's leading social entrepreneurs across 11 countries. From establishing the first terminology for social entrepreneurship in Arabic to hosting the first international summits on social entrepreneurship in the MENA region and serving on the boards of emerging local and regional organizations with social entrepreneurship-oriented programs, Ashoka Arab World has paved the way for a formal and flourishing social entrepreneurship sector in the region.

Across this trajectory, the engine of Ashoka's work in the Arab World has remained the selection and empowerment of the region's leading social entrepreneurs. Our Fellows are visionary and forceful changemakers with new, transformative ideas to address all areas of human need.

To enable them to create systemic change at the highest levels, we provide our Fellows with a variety of personal, strategic, and connective support. In addition, we work across fields with partners in the civic, business, and public sectors who share our belief that interconnected and escalating social challenges threaten us all, and demand collaborative, innovative action.

Moreover, Ashoka Arab World leads the charge to raise and educate new generations of changemakers among the region's children and youth. Through leveraging the innovations of our Fellows who co-lead this movement with us, we work with schools, teachers, parents, Boards of Education, government, and media to transform the way young people are prepared for a rapidly-evolving world. In 2019, our office is prepared to launch two new and pivotal programs to transform the stories and skills of growing up. Read more in our section on Education & Empathy (pg#38).



11 Countries



36 strategic partners



110 Fellows



3 Arab World Social Innovation Forums



More than **\$17** million in value created for our Fellows in support & services

Our Regional Network



MILESTONES

2003/4

The Ashoka Arab World Office was established and registered in Egypt.

AAW elects its first (7) Fellows from Egypt.

2007

First Ashoka Fellows in Morocco and Saudi Arabia.

AAW becomes first and only regional office to offer the Candidates' Retreat in preparation for the Fellow Selection Panel.

2009

First Fellows in Kuwait.

AAW held first Arab World Social Innovation Forum.

2010

AAW held its first selection panel outside of Egypt: the 14th annual Regional Selection Panel in Amman, Jordan.

AAW launched the Ashoka Innovation Network (AIN) in Cairo, Egypt: the first forum specifically for young professionals interested in social entrepreneurship to network, connect with innovative individuals from different sectors, and learn about the latest trends and initiatives.

2006

Ashoka Arab World elects its first Fellows from the Levant sub-region: Lebanon and Palestine.

The Nike Foundation and Ashoka Arab World established their partnership in order to promote sports as a tool for women's empowerment, supporting related initiatives within our Fellows' work.

2008

First Fellow from Jordan.

AAW held first ever Arab Fellows Retreat in Ain Sokhna, a 4-day event where 20 Fellows from around the Arab region gathered to exchange ideas and plan future collaborations.

2010

The second Arab World Social Innovation Forum (AWSIF) was held in Cairo, Egypt. The Forum hosted 250 delegates from 20 countries, and received a record number of 29 pledges of support for Ashoka Fellows and social entrepreneurship.

Through AAW's partnership with McKinsey Egypt, one-on-one consultancies were set up to offer business advice for six of our high-capacity Fellows on management and scaling up strategies.

2018

Ashoka Arab World convened 11 Fellows from the Arab World and Africa in a successful South-to-South partnership for a training on how to tell their stories of social change.

AAW launched the Young Changemakers Competition.

Ashoka brought together 19 women Ashoka Fellows from around the world to Rockefeller's Bellagio Center in Bellagio, Italy to explore the gendered experience and impact of women social entrepreneurs.

2014

First Fellows in Libya and Tunisia.

Ashoka Arab World, in partnership with the Ford Foundation, launched the Education Collaborative Platform project, gathering leading social innovators, experts, and organizations with the purpose of revolutionizing the entire education sector.

2016

AAW led a workshop in Casablanca, Morocco to define the gaps and challenges of the social entrepreneurship sector in the Maghreb and determine the leverage points for strengthening the ecosystem there.

2012

Ashoka-Synergos Series: 3 "Alliance for Social Entrepreneurship" Jams in 2012 to raise awareness about SE in Egypt and the need for a legal framework for social investment.

2011-2013

AAW convened Egypt Fellows gatherings dedicated to navigating the unpredictable legal/political/financial/security environment born out of the Arab Spring.

2011

Ashoka Arab World exceeds 50 Fellows elected.

The WISE Retreat brought together 10 Fellows from around the world in Ain Sokhna, Egypt and laid the seeds for the 2019 global program that seeks to empower women in social entrepreneurship.

2013

AAW hosts the Ashoka Levant Fellows Assembly. ALFA brought together Fellows from Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan to share best practices and on-the-ground experiences

2015

A three-day fundraising workshop, entitled "Finance your Impact," was conducted to provide Fellows and their staff members with the tools and networks needed to effectively raise funds for their initiatives. The workshop hosted representatives from traditional foundations, the private sector, NGOs, and alternative funding platforms.

2017

AAW reaches 100 Fellows.

AAW co-hosted with BuildPalestine the first ever social entrepreneurship event in Palestine featuring Fellow Fida Abu Turkey.

VENTURE & FELLOWSHIP

OUR VENTURE PROCESS

28
Regional Selection Panels

1,060
Nominators

4,000+
Applications Received

For over three decades, Ashoka has designed and implemented a rigorous and proven selection process to elect the world's leading social entrepreneurs. Ashoka's selection process is anchored by our five criteria, against which all Fellow candidates are evaluated in every step of the selection process:

1. A NEW IDEA



Does the candidate have a new solution or approach to a social problem that will change the pattern in the field? We evaluate the idea historically and against its contemporaries in the field, looking for innovation and change potential.

2. CREATIVITY



Successful social entrepreneurs approach opportunities and obstacles with creativity as visionaries and as problem solvers. They will often have a history of creating other new visions.

3. ENTREPRENEURIAL QUALITY



Is the candidate driven by the vision of solving the problem he or she is working on? Social entrepreneurs will not rest until their idea is the new pattern for society, and they persevere through challenges at all stages.

4. SOCIAL IMPACT



Does the candidate's new idea have the potential to truly alter the field and to trigger nationwide or international impact? The idea must be sufficiently new, compelling, effective, and replicable in order to become the new norm.

5. ETHICAL FIBER



Social entrepreneurs inspire radical change at a wide scale and across different stakeholder groups. If the entrepreneur is not trusted, the likelihood of success is low. Every participant in the selection process is assessed for ethical fiber.

Ashoka's Venture Process is a proven model not only in screening and selecting the world's top social entrepreneurs, but also in enabling social entrepreneurs themselves to refine their vision of change. Based on our 2019 regional impact study, 98% of AAW Fellows feel that the Ashoka Venture Process helped to strengthen and articulate their idea, surpassing even the global rate of 93%.

Throughout the five stages of our election process, we gather data and information about the Fellow through application forms, field visits, and semi-structured interviews. The average Fellow candidate will speak to eight people during their process of election and it takes six to nine months on average to be elected into the Fellowship. The process includes the following steps:

1

NOMINATION

Ashoka receives nominations from staff, volunteers, partners, Ashoka Fellows, and expert nominators based on the five criteria for Ashoka Fellowship.

2

FIRST OPINION

The local Ashoka Venture team reviews the nominations to identify a key social innovation. In order to ensure that the candidate is a good fit for the Ashoka criteria, they conduct site visits and meet with the candidate, and then review their work in-depth with other experts in the field.

3

SECOND OPINION

A senior Ashoka representative with extensive experience in the field of social entrepreneurship reviews the work of the candidate with the local Venture team. The second opinion interviewer comes from a different continent than the candidate, bringing objectivity to the process and assessing the potential of the idea to be applied elsewhere.

4

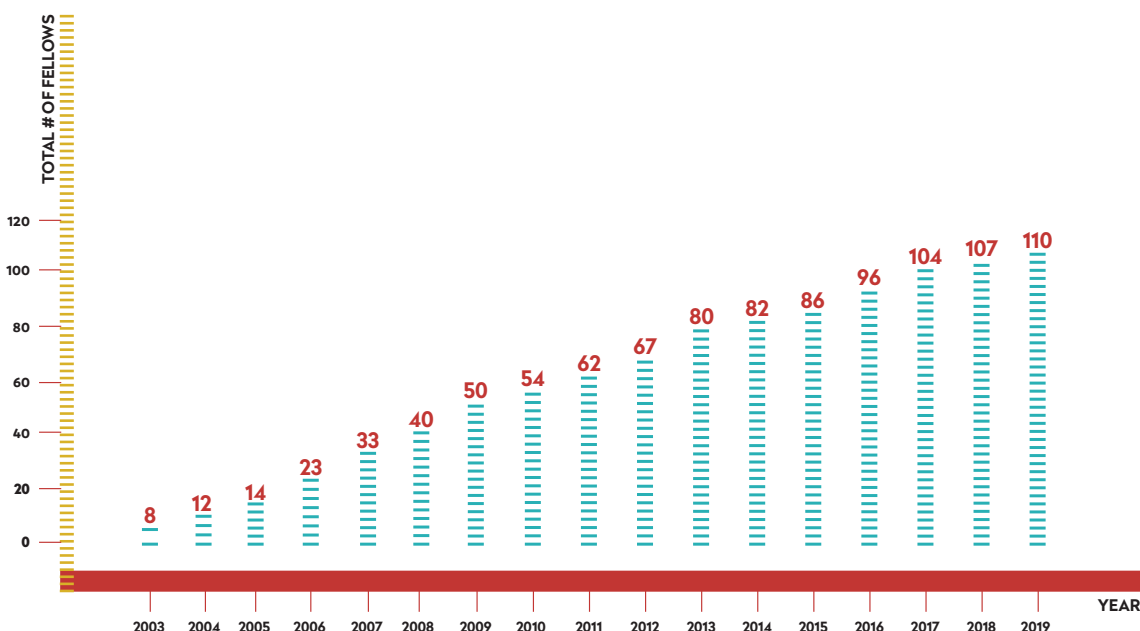
PANEL

Three to four leading social and business entrepreneurs from the same country/region interview the candidate to assess the innovation and its potential impact in the local context. The panel then convenes as a group and, facilitated by the second opinion interviewer, decides by consensus whether they recommend that the Ashoka board elects this candidate as an Ashoka Fellow.

5

BOARD REVIEW

Ashoka's Global Board of Directors reviews the candidate's case in light of the observations made by the local Venture team, second opinion interviewer, and panelists. After assessing the candidate's fit with the criteria and alignment with Ashoka's mission, they make a final decision about whether to select the candidate to be an Ashoka Fellow.



The Ashoka Fellowship

Social entrepreneurs require global connections and networks to create pressure for systemic change and to develop multi-stakeholder approaches to help scale their ideas at international and global levels. They need strategic support and visibility in order to shift the mindsets of the people they engage and to spread their idea. They need business and professional services to strengthen their operations and models for further growth. Finally, they need the space to focus full-time on their idea, and the funding to implement and grow it.



84%
of AAW Fellows expanded their teams since election, and 70% have expanded by 2x or more



88%
of AAW Fellows shared that the stipend helped them to focus on their idea



29%
have partnered directly with other Ashoka Fellows



#1
most important service from Ashoka according to AAW Fellows: Connections to the regional and global Fellowship community

SPOTLIGHTS ON ASHOKA'S IMPACT



REDA SHOUKRY

In 2010, Ashoka Arab World connected Egyptian Fellow Reda El Shoukry with a direct funding opportunity with our partner the Ursula Zindel-Hilti Foundation. The Foundation has been funding Reda's organization for more than eight years.



AHMAD EDILBI

Leveraging Ashoka's global network, Ashoka Arab World collaborated with Ashoka Canada and a local changemaker campus in 2016 to support our Syrian Fellow Edward "Ahmad" Edilbi to relocate, under pressure of security concerns, to Canada and continue his work building solidarity among Syrian refugees and diaspora.

Key Areas of Lifelong Support

ACCESS TO POWERFUL NETWORKS

- Connections to diverse partners and contacts: social sector organizations, corporations, philanthropists, policy leaders
- Dedicated networking events

VISIBILITY & MEDIA SUPPORT

- Connections to local and international media partners and journalists
- Features in Ashoka publications and platforms
- Speaking opportunities and nominations to international awards

TIME & FUNDING

- Financial stipend for up to three years to allow Fellows to focus full-time on their ideas
- Connections to funding partners and investors
- Skills building and support in proposal and grant writing and fundraising

A LOCAL & GLOBAL PEER COMMUNITY

- Connections to over 3,500 Fellows around the world for knowledge sharing and collaboration
- Regional and cross-regional workshops, retreats, and events

SKILLS BUILDING & PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

- Workshops and training sessions: from storytelling, to community mobilization and building hybrid finance models
- Accelerator programs
- Access to pro bono partners in law, business, tech, and other fields
- Personal support and coaching from Ashoka staff

KHALID AL KHUDAIR, MOHAMED ZAAZOU, KAMEL AL-ASMAR



In 2014, Ashoka Arab World convened three Fellows – Mohamed Zaazoue, Kamel al-Asmar, and Khalid Al Khudair – in Dubai and connected them in a series of meetings with the highest executives and business leaders in the Gulf.

SARAH TOUMI

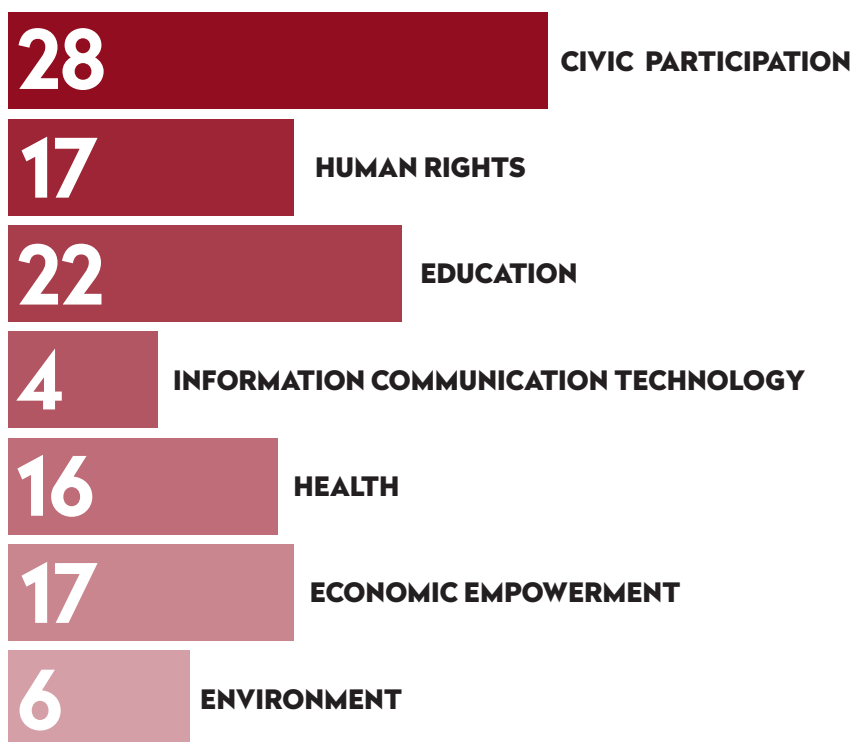
Ashoka Arab World nominated Tunisian Fellow Sarah Toumi for the Schwab Award for Social Entrepreneurship and the Echoing Green Fellowship. She ultimately received both accolades, and since then has been acknowledged by the Forbes 30 under 30 Europe List and the Rolex Awards for Enterprise.



Ashoka Arab World Fellows

Since the election of our first Arab World Fellows in 2003 to the addition of our newest Fellows in 2019, our Fellowship community has entered new countries, new fields, and new heights of impact. Ashoka Arab World Fellows have affected laws and policies, expanded into new geographies, created new fields of work, and sparked grassroots movements.

Breakdown by Thematic Field



OF FELLOWS

CROSS-CUTTING FIELDS



Across their primary thematic fields, **49%** of Fellows are working on income generation and job creation.

MORE THAN **3 MILLION** DIRECT BENEFICIARIES

78%

have had their ideas replicated by other groups or institutions

22%

have sparked replication and scaled out to other countries

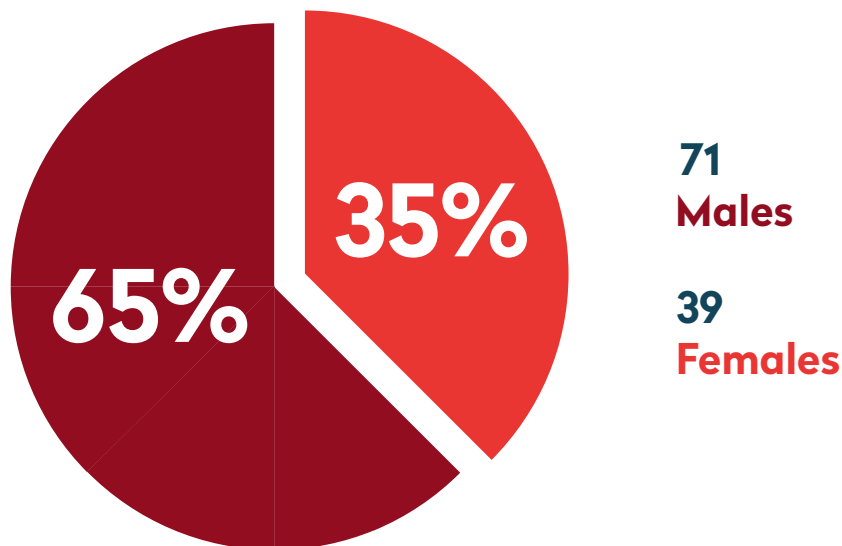
89%

have impacted public policy or government regulations - **20** national policies changed

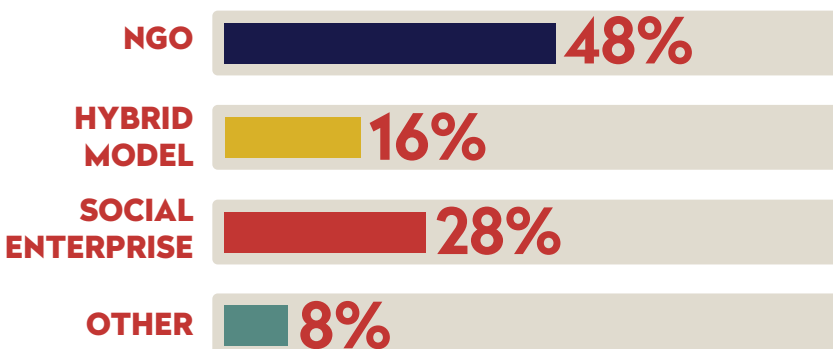
42%

scaled up to more than one country

Breakdown by Gender



Breakdown by Legal Framework





Fida Abu Turkey

Iradah, Palestinian Center for Communication & Development Strategies

Country: Palestine

Elected in 2011

Sector: Economic Empowerment

THE PROBLEM

The majority of women in the Levant face barriers – such as high pregnancy rates, gender gaps in literacy, less access to job opportunities, and limited political representation – that limit their entrance into the formal labor force.

SYSTEMS-CHANGING IDEA

In a region that more traditionally depends on charities and loans, Fida was the **first to adapt business incubation for the Levantine context** – boosting job creation, supporting more women entrepreneurs and diversifying local economies. Fida’s mission is to economically empower women in rural areas of the Levant through a grassroots venture capitalist approach.



Over **100%** increase in number of people directly employed by her organization



Expanded to **2** countries



Fida works with at least **500** women every year



Fida’s budget doubles every year

THE VISION

That the women targeted become visible members of society working to raise and improve the socioeconomic development of their country and that her venture capitalist model be replicated outside of the Levant, and across the region.

ASHOKA’S IMPACT

“Ashoka’s Fellowship has impacted me on both personal and professional levels. On the personal level, I have gained great skills due to the capacity buildings I had directly from Ashoka. It has greatly influenced and molded me to the person I am now. As for the professional level, I have gained some great knowledge and information from Ashoka’s events and Fellows, and have applied all the knowledge and skills that I have gained on the personal level. Ashoka’s Fellowship has impacted my personality and work in general, and it has had a great influence on my life in general.”

CHANGE IN POLICY:

Fida’s target group is now part of the Palestinian National Plan



Adnane Addioui

Tamkeen

Country: Morocco

Elected in 2017

Sector: Job Creation, Education

THE PROBLEM

The high number of unemployed youth in Morocco has caused instability at social, economic, and political levels. High school and university graduates are not being equipped with the problem-solving and analytical skills necessary to enter the job market and have a passive mindset that leads them to rely on the government to secure jobs for them.

IMPACT SNAPSHOT

Expanded to 5 countries

10% increase in annual budget

100% increase in number of employees since his election

Adnane reaches around 10,000 young people every year

THE VISION

To transform individual student mindsets as well as create a more creative and innovation-oriented education system.

SYSTEMS-CHANGING IDEA

Working directly with schools as well as individual students, Adnane drives a more innovative educational system and fosters changemaking mindsets in youth. He is encouraging a focus on creativity and student-led innovation in schools through a training program that explores community, business, and personal development and engages all school stakeholders to achieve lasting change.

Putting Young People in Charge:

“One of our **youngest** volunteers – 17 years old – was in charge of recruiting the new **CEO** of the organization”



Zeinab ElMomany

Sakhras Women's Society Cooperative

Country: Jordan

Elected in 2009

Sector: Economic Empowerment

THE PROBLEM

In many Arab countries, women face obstacles to achieving economic independence, including traditional gender ideologies, reduced access to education, and a lack of support from existing institutional and legal frameworks. Even more prevalent conservative social norms in rural areas prevent women from working outside of the home or seeking opportunities for education.

ASHOKA'S IMPACT

"After being an Ashoka Fellow, I got many benefits, and many opportunities were opened to me. The stipend helped me a lot in developing my work. With this stipend, I was able to expand my work horizontally and vertically. I completed my master's study and improved my English, and developed my skills and capacity. Now, I am a trainer in business leadership and innovation."



Has increased number of cooperatives across Jordan from **7** to **22** cooperatives



Increased number of members of "Specific Union for Female Farmers" to **5,000** & established a **women farmers network** in 5 countries: **Jordan, Morocco, Egypt, Palestine, and Lebanon**

THE VISION

To replicate her model throughout the Arab region in order to increase women's access to economic and social opportunities and organize self-sustaining organizations that enable women to leverage their collective power.

SYSTEMS-CHANGING IDEA

Zeinab has organized the first agricultural union in the Arab region, creating a platform to amplify Jordanian women's voices and providing opportunities for them to start their own income-generating activities. Through this union and additional agricultural cooperatives, she has shifted the perception of women's roles in rural communities, empowered them to participate in decision-making processes, and provided training and marketing support.

Zeinab successfully advocated for the legal amendment that has made land rental an acceptable condition for individuals to join unions, breaking down the previous institutional barrier keeping women from participation in these unions.



Magda Iskander

Care with Love

Country: Egypt

Elected in 2003

Sector: Job Creation; Economic Empowerment; Health

THE PROBLEM

A large number of Egypt's population over the age of 60 requires assisted-living or home healthcare, but the country's healthcare system lacks quality services, and private care has become increasingly expensive. Most doctors and nurses are not reliable and do not understand the compassion needed to support this population.

IMPACT SNAPSHOT

Increase in number of people employed from 12 to 158

Magda has secured jobs for more than 2,000 since her election

More than 18,000 people were trained through Magda and organizations that have adopted her model

More than 10 organizations have adopted her model

Change in Law

Responsible for recognition of Home Health Care Provider as a profession by the Office of Labor

THE VISION

To transfer a mindset focused on compassion and effectively train a large network of home healthcare providers, widening opportunities for employment in Egypt and ensuring that the population in need of home healthcare receives quality attention and assistance

SYSTEMS-CHANGING IDEA

Magda has established an entirely new profession in Egypt - that of home healthcare providers who are providing high-quality care to the elderly and others who are homebound. Through a comprehensive curriculum, she is creating jobs and transforming the country's healthcare system by training providers to integrate care and compassion into their practice.

In the last year, Care with Love has provided 53,604 hours of home health care services and raised the awareness of 1,094 children and parents about health issues.

“Being chosen as an Ashoka Fellow was an affirmation for my initiative to introduce organised and accountable home health care services to the Egyptian Community through **Care with Love**. Ashoka made me known to the outside World. Since we started in **1997**, we have provided more than 10 million service hours.”



Sameh Seif Ghali

Together Association

Country: Egypt

Elected in 2006

Sector: Environment, Civic Participation

THE PROBLEM

The lack of sewage systems is one of the major causes of high levels of pollution in Egypt and has had negative consequences on rural communities. In many villages, sewage waste affects groundwater used for drinking and other agricultural needs. Poverty, low-quality education, and current government policies inhibit the application of technologies that could mitigate this environmental challenge and the attached health-related risks.

THE VISION

To cultivate a sense of ownership and pride among rural and village populations, engaging community members in decision-making processes to improve their local environment, public health, and quality of life.

SYSTEMS-CHANGING IDEA

Sameh has introduced new technologies into rural areas, building and maintaining low-cost sewage systems tailored to village contexts as well as inviting communities to participate directly in establishing a framework for sanitation.

| IMPACT SNAPSHOT |
|--|
| Since his election, he has increased the number of people employed directly by his organization from 3 to 28 |
| 80% increase in annual budget since his election as Ashoka Fellow |
| Sameh impacts the lives of around 7,000 people every year |
| He has expanded his model to Germany |
| Change in Policy: Sameh's model is now part of government projects in Egyptian villages |

Sameh has collaborated with the Government of Egypt in several villages to replace the traditional municipality-based management system (the norm) with Sameh's successful concept, transforming the status quo. Sameh is currently serving as an expert in community participation in World Bank projects with the Ministry of Housing for sewage projects.



Mostafa Farahat

Nafham

Country: Egypt

Elected in 2015

Sector: Education, ICT

THE PROBLEM

With around 19 million students and only 8% in private schools, Egypt's education system suffers from low-quality and rigid conventional teaching styles. Schools lack the technological resources to support teaching and meaningfully engage the growing number of students.

THE VISION

To democratize access to education in the Arab world and instill in teachers, parents, and students a responsibility for the development of innovative learning opportunities and value for education.

IMPACT SNAPSHOT

Increased number of employees by 200% since his election

Active in 5 countries

Annual budget increased by 17% since his election

Reached 1 million active users on Nafham

Nafham's online learning style for school is currently being adopted by many governments in the Arab region

SYSTEMS-CHANGING IDEA

The first to use the "crowd-teaching" model in Egypt, Mostafa encourages communities to take responsibility for their education. He has transformed access to Arabic content online and dramatically expanded technological resources for educators and students through his online platform.

In the last year, Nafham has directly reached

5,000,000 people.



Alwan wa Awtar: Shifting Community Mindsets

Ashoka Fellow Azza Kamel is bridging the social gap affecting children from underprivileged areas by equipping them with a set of vital abilities and skills through her community education center. The center employs experiential learning and non-formal education through a participatory and pedagogical framework to overcome the root causes that keep children from marginalized areas locked in poverty cycles.

When Azza Kamel's education center, Alwan wa Awtar, was suddenly forced to close its premises in 2014, she and her team were confronted with the challenge of starting from the beginning. In this period of reconstruction, however, Kamel observed an incredible shift in the community. Although she was faced with having to rebuild much of her work, reactions reflected a different community than the one she first opened her doors to in 2006.

"When it first happened, it was really shocking and very negative," says Kamel. "As time went by, we began to see the positivity of it. We saw the community stand up for us, going to the governor, going to the municipality, not just once or twice but really fighting for us. We really had a chance to see how the community mobilized itself and how they had managed to change, how they were organized in their thinking. This, for us, was really touching."

What struck Kamel were the ways in which the community vocalized its reaction to the shutdown and the language families used to describe Alwan wa Awtar's impact. "In the letter they wrote to the governor, they really understood what Alwan wa Awtar was all about, about the values we were embedding in the children and difference we were making in their future," reflected Kamel. "When we first started, we were perceived as an organization working with art, and art as a social taboo was not a priority. We saw that mindset shift in a matter of years."

Kamel launched Alwan wa Awtar in 2006, after volunteering with a local NGO working with female heads of household and realizing that to truly have an impact on poverty cycles, it would be necessary to start with children while they were young. In her work with the NGO, she encountered the work of French volunteers who facilitated a summer program for the children of

the beneficiaries and observed that the children were very much engaged by the art activities introduced into the workshops.

After exploring what had attracted the children through focus groups, Kamel noted that this community had no access to any form of visual or performing arts in their homes and schools. Captivated by the potential of using art as a tool for social development, she decided to open her own center for children in the community of Moqattam in Cairo, Egypt.

"We opened our doors and the children just walked in," said Kamel. "Word of mouth is really amazing in Egypt. People just spread the word and more people keep on coming in." Between 2006 and 2014, Alwan wa Awatar grew from a single flat

of around 68m² reaching a handful of children, to 10 flats of the same size reaching approximately 6,000 children. The center also expanded its programming beyond a focus on the arts, providing educational services, offering a community library and even building a Montessori program.

As Alwan wa Awatar grew, Kamel and her team began to more concretely identify their theory of change. "We could actually see the impact and sense it," said Kamel, describing Alwan wa Awatar in its formative stages. "You could see it when you talked to the children. They became more confident, they managed to communicate, express themselves and speak their minds, have hopes and think about the future. Obviously, the impact you don't see until after a couple of years, the change in their mindsets and character building. It's not something that happens over night, and not even in a year or two. That's why continuity is important."

In the last year alone, Alwan wa Awatar has reached **2,000** young people.



It's this trajectory of change that Kamel traced in a young boy who visited the American University in Cairo (AUC) with Alwan wa Awtar to observe the Model Arab League. Just two years after being asked to join the Model Arab League himself and compete with the official team, he took the initiative to launch a league at Alwan wa Awtar. Kamel remembers being struck by the young boy's expressed appreciation for learning in his opening speech

at the launch event. This marked a defining moment for Alwan wa Awtar – a reflection of the significant mindset shift spurred in a community that had not previously seen education as a priority. Only a few years after Alwan wa Awtar's establishment, Kamel observed a deep curiosity and a drive to create and encourage others to join in a journey of learning.

Since Kamel's election, the number of individuals employed by Alwan wa Awtar has increased from **12** to **65**.





Even after restarting on a smaller scale after 2014, Kamel has no shortage of anecdotes to underline Alwan wa Awtar’s impact. One unexpected outcome of her work has been its significant impact on girls and young women. Seeing the immense value of the programs and services, parents have exhibited a unique trust in Kamel and her team, shifting to feeling more comfortable with girls and boys participating in programs together.

Alwan wa Awtar is now active on four premises in Egypt and has plans to explore continued growth to meet increasing demands and interest from children in these communities. Beyond her own premises, Kamel has also seen her model informally replicated by other entities across the country, which are constantly seeking Alwan wa Awtar’s consultation in creatively and effectively working with children in educational environments.





At the height of the Syrian War in 2013 and in the midst of increasing numbers of refugees, Ashoka Fellow Edward (Ahmad) Edilbi launched Dubarah – a network that connects Syrian refugees around the world with opportunities for employment, support with resettlement, accommodation, and other useful resources and information. Introduced initially as a simple web platform for job opportunities, Dubarah received 3,000 hits during its first hour without any paid advertisements. Leveraging the power of social capital, Edilbi has both directly and indirectly economically empowered over 3,700,000 individuals across 15 countries.

For Ashoka Fellow Ahmad Edilbi, all that individuals need to create positive change and serve their communities is the right tool. “All people are good – even bad people. They just haven’t had the chance to help other people,” says Edilbi. “I have millions of stories of Syrians. When they were offered a chance to help people, they were ready. People want to help, but when you offer to solve a problem you have to offer a proper tool.” Edilbi’s tool for achieving impact was the digital network Dubarah.

Dubarah operates around a “pay-it-forward” model. If you help one person, that individual is bound to “pay it forward” by helping another person, igniting a chain of positive action. A Syrian refugee himself who was forced to leave his home country for Dubai in 2013, Edilbi received support securing a job and becoming familiar with the city thanks to a chance encounter with a fellow Syrian who had already settled in Dubai.



He went on to “pay it forward” himself, offering support to a new refugee family in his neighborhood – and the chain continued.

This experience sparked a visionary thought in Edilbi, who realized that a simple digital platform and model could serve millions of refugees facing urgent situations around the world. Having observed the divisive, but enormous impact of social media during the Syrian Civil War, Edilbi thought to instead leverage the power of digital media to bring together the Syrian diaspora community with the millions of refugees migrating to new countries around the world.



Dubarah started out as a portal primarily for employment opportunities, inviting diaspora-led firms to post vacancies online and calling on Syrian diaspora businessmen, entrepreneurs, and investors to employ newcomers in their neighborhood or invest in Syrian refugee start-ups.

With marketing and branding expertise built from his experience as a creative editor in the corporate sector, Edilbi had a strong grasp of how to brand and launch his new tool. He branded the platform Dubarah – reviving an Arabic word meaning “the perfect solution.” To trigger interest, he promoted his brand with Dubarji, an animated character that uses comical messages and references to Syrian television drama.

Although Edilbi’s launch of the network was immediately successful – reaching 3,000 people in just a week – he observed that many Syrians were still rejecting the idea of supporting others based on their opinions on the war. Tapping into his marketing experience, he used targeted techniques to appeal to diverse beliefs, “selling” his philosophy through individual calls to action and spurring empathy in the diaspora community.

As Edilbi predicted, all that was needed was a proper tool. All an individual had to do was help one newcomer to sustain the “pay-it-forward” chain of action. In just eight months, Edilbi gathered a community of 1,800 Syrian diaspora volunteers, who were helping to provide accommodation,

“People want to help, but when you offer to solve a problem you have to offer a proper tool.”

connect newcomers to job openings, and even create “Foreigner Guidebooks” to ease the process of settlement in new cities. Since its launch, Dubarah has connected Syrians to approximately 600,000 jobs; 6,000 investment opportunities; 6,500 free accommodations; and more than 4,000 business consultations; and has answered over 300,000 questions. In weaving together this network, Edilbi has introduced a new way to economically empower and integrate scattered, immigrant populations that have been affected by a political crisis or natural disaster.

In total, Edilbi and his team of volunteers have supported over 3,700,000 Syrian refugees with the help of over 180,000 individuals who enlisted as volunteers, but what is unique to Dubarah is the strength of the network. Team leaders posted across 15 countries are able to directly contact members of the Dubarah digital community. “When I say we help millions of refugees, I mean we know their names,” said Edilbi. “I can see people who are moving from here to there; I see tangible benefits. Yesterday, one of the girls that we helped in London – we helped her to get a scholarship to study in the UK – she wrote to us saying, ‘Dubarah changed my life.’”



Seeing such significant impact and major mindset shifts within the community after Dubarah’s launch, Edilbi has expanded his network to include an investment portal for Syrian refugees and diaspora members with capital to invest as well as a portal for knowledge exchange and an online space to highlight achievements across Dubarah’s global community. Now, Edilbi is looking to continue evolving the platform, preparing to launch Dubarah Business for Syrian diaspora and refugee entrepreneurs to showcase their businesses and access more resources.

This evolution speaks to the extensive reach Dubarah has achieved with the use of digital media. Edilbi’s “pay-it-forward” thinking has embedded itself in the global diaspora and refugee Syrian community and multiplied itself through a number of platforms. Interested in the intersection of digital media and social work, Edilbi takes advantage of all forms of social media – reaching out to the community through a Dubarah mobile application, WhatsApp, Slack, and Facebook in addition to his initial web platform.

“When I say we help millions of refugees, I mean we know their names.”

Beyond his own work to expand services, Edilbi has observed his model being replicated by refugee and diaspora communities around the world through various digital spaces – all identifying with the Dubarah brand. “Dubarah is a philosophy – it’s all about how to help each other,” says Edilbi. “Go on Facebook, and look up Dubarah, and you’ll find hundreds of names of groups of Syrian people using my name to represent themselves. Dubarah means empathy, pay it forward, you are honest, you are reliable.”

Dubarah has now positioned itself as a leading hub for knowledge on the Syrian refugee networks and diaspora community. Entities



interested in designing services or supporting refugees frequently lean on Dubarah for insights into the community’s needs, support promoting opportunities and advice on designing resources. “Now we are moving from an urgent situation, to a situation where we are thriving,” says Edilbi. “Dubarah started because of urgency. People were forced to leave Syria. They needed jobs, information, accommodation. Now, they want to thrive and upgrade, change policies, change how they work.”

With the launch of Dubarah in 2013, Edilbi sparked an endless ripple of “pay-it-forward” actions, redefining the Syrian diaspora and refugee community’s identity and forging a powerful model for self-empowerment through digital media. “I believe in ideas that help millions of people, not hundreds, not thousands. Yes, my idea targets Syrian refugees now. But later on, we’ll target refugees worldwide.”

PAY IT FORWARD.

EDUCATION & EMPATHY

EDUCATION & EMPATHY

In a new era of accelerating change, Ashoka believes that we need to equip and empower every young person with the skills and confidence to be changemakers in their families and communities, and across the world. Ashoka therefore seeks to transform the way we raise and educate young people, creating new generations that self-identify as changemakers and enter the world ready to change it.

At Ashoka Arab World, we have worked with PTAs, teachers unions, and national education schools who independently adopt and therefore sustain our mission to put changemaking skills like empathy, teamwork, and problem solving at the core of learning and growing up. Now, as we prepare to launch our new program to source powerful young ambassadors who are leading change in their communities (Young Changemakers), it is many of the first students we worked with years ago who have emerged with innovative social initiatives. They prove that a new literacy can create a new generation of empowered problem solvers. It is their stories, and the stories of mature social and business entrepreneurs who led initiatives at a young age, that can inspire more and more young people to join the changemaker movement.



500 Students



2,250 Children



60 Student-led
Community Initiatives



23 Public Schools

Education

Ashoka Arab World & the Ford Foundation

In January 2014, Ashoka Arab World, with the support of the Ford Foundation, initiated the implementation of the Education Collaborative Platform initiative, popularly known as Khaleek Makano. The initiative aimed at equipping students with essential innovation skills, the ability to work in teams, and values of empathy. In collaboration with a number of AAW Fellows and their NGOs, the Ministry of Youth, the Ministry of Education, and the Sahel Educational Directorate, the initiative equipped more than 500 students in 23 public schools with leadership skills and empathy values and concepts, and supported them in designing, leading, and implementing a total of 60 community initiatives. At the same time, the initiative partnered with more than 110 teachers, school administrators, and supervisors and introduced them, through workshops and seminars, to active learning methodologies, effective facilitation, and child-centered learning.



**FORD
FOUNDATION**

Ashoka Arab World's Approach: Collaborative Platforms

Collaborative Platforms were created in Egypt and founded on the idea that the only thing more powerful than a social entrepreneur is the collaboration between social entrepreneurs dedicated to a common cause. Collaborative Platforms bring together Ashoka Fellows and partners working in the same field to leverage the collective impact of their work and create lasting change.



Empathy **Ashoka Arab World & The Ursula Zindel-Hilti Foundation**

Bringing empathy and innovation into the classroom will never reach many of Egypt's children, nearly 1 million of whom live on the streets and receive education services, among other interventions, from various social organizations. In 2014, Ashoka Arab World partnered with the Ursula Zindel-Hilti Foundation to transform the curricula and methodologies of such organizations to empower Egyptian children to change their own lives and communities. To do so, Ashoka Arab World established a network of more than 21 citizen sector organizations and care institutions (both governmental and non-governmental) who touch the lives of Egypt's children in three governorates (Cairo, Giza, and Alexandria). AAW equipped more than 300 social workers and educators from these institutions with new tools and approaches to expose children to experiential and innovative learning outside of classroom walls, including using art as a tool for self-expression, vocational training through self-confidence and changemaking, and the health education curriculum designed by Ashoka Fellow Dr. Sany Youssef. From 2014–2017, our partner citizen sector organizations reached a targeted 2,250 children.

In the project's 2019 phase, under the title Helmik Beidik (Your Dream is in Your Hand), Ashoka Arab World has partnered with Fellow Reda Shoukry and her organization based in Egypt, Al Shehab Institution for Comprehensive Development, to empower young women through entrepreneurship-centered education, civic engagement training, and mentorship.



Ursula Zindel-Hilti
Foundation

Young Changemakers

Storytelling Competition

With high unemployment rates still pervasive across the Arab World, Ashoka is working to shift young women and men away from the practice of rote memorization and repetitive actions, instead driving individuals to pose questions and explore innovation. Ashoka Arab World is committed to identifying young innovators with the potential to grow into Fellows themselves and elevate them as models of changemaking and champions of Ashoka's Everyone a Changemaker movement.

A vital characteristic for a social entrepreneur is the ability to tell one's story of impact with clarity and fervour, and to communicate the thread that ties one's passion and work together. In 2018, Ashoka Arab World launched a Young Changemakers storytelling competition, inviting youth between the ages of 12 and 21 to submit essays discussing a project they led to tackle a challenge in their community. From over 65 applications, Ashoka Arab World selected 25 candidates to participate in a number of trainings on storytelling and entrepreneurship, and to engage with our network of Ashoka Fellows across the region.



Transformative Training and Competition

In 2019-2020, Ashoka Arab World is launching a Young Changemakers competition in collaboration with Red Ochre UK and with the support of the British Council's Developing Inclusive and Creative Economies (DICE) Program. Through a year-long transformative experience and competition, Ashoka Arab World and Red Ochre will target a group of young women between the ages of 14 and 18 who have initiated creative community projects or demonstrated leadership skills in order to enhance their understanding of social entrepreneurship, refine their skills, and elect a select number as Ashoka Young Changemakers. Ashoka Young Changemakers will be given the chance to engage with Ashoka Fellows, be highlighted in the media, and receive targeted support to grow their community initiatives and build a team of changemakers around them.

LeadYoung

LeadYoung is a global storytelling initiative that inspires and helps young people acquire the skills and confidence to know they are changemakers, and helps adults support young changemaking. It features stories of great business and social entrepreneurs today who started leading at a young age, and stories of teens today who are excelling in changemaking.

As we enter another decade of impact, Ashoka Arab World is set to bring youth further into the fold of our changemaking work. In order to amplify our message of Everyone a Changemaker, it is critical that we broadcast stories of Young Changemakers to youth and their support systems (parents, teachers) across the Arab region, showcasing the ways in which successful entrepreneurs began with leading young. Ashoka Arab World has laid the foundations to launch a regional LeadYoung media campaign in 2019.



PARTNERSHIPS

At Ashoka we know that as social challenges cross sectors and stakeholder groups, so too must effective solutions. That is why we partner with diverse organizations and connect them with our Fellows and broader network of innovators to co-create a better world. From Ashoka Arab World's regional office in Cairo, we launch and implement local and regional partnerships, and also activate global partnerships at the local level.

Over the last 15 years, our partners have joined us in several key areas:

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT:



From its headquarters in Liechtenstein, the Hilti Foundation has championed Ashoka's changemaking vision in the Arab region since our establishment in 2003. From the election of our first group of Fellows through recent initiatives to bolster and scale Fellows' impact, the Hilti Foundation has stood as one of our central partners, witnessing with us the evolution of our work and growth of a powerful ecosystem of systems-changing individuals. With their partnership, Ashoka has been able to change the lives of millions of individuals through our Fellows and spark immense economic growth across the Arab region.

ESTABLISHING POWERFUL MODELS FOR COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE CITIZEN & BUSINESS SECTORS



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: NIKE 2006-2010

Through the Ashoka-Nike partnership, Ashoka Arab World Fellows implemented innovative athletics projects to promote sports as a tool for social change and gender empowerment. Eight AAW Fellows added or enlarged a sports component within their original idea for social change, implementing projects in Morocco, Egypt, and Palestine to improve the physical and mental well-being of girls and women. Through this partnership, AAW Fellows increased their impact and Nike sourced new innovative models for reaching and engaging target audiences in the region.

PROVIDING PRO BONO SUPPORT AND CAPACITY BUILDING SERVICES TO ASHOKA ARAB WORLD FELLOWS



Ashoka Arab World has been proud to work with more than 50 partners to offer professional and business, legal, media, wellbeing, and strategic support to our Fellows. From empowering Fellows to tell their stories of social change, to offering critical legal consultation and services and facilitating IT trainings, our partners have directly supported Fellows to refine their business models and growth strategies, to raise awareness and engagement around their work, and to invest in their own growth as leaders.

EMPOWERING REGIONAL INNOVATION HUBS TO CREATE AN ECOSYSTEM MORE CONDUCTIVE TO SCALING SOCIAL IMPACT

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: DELOITTE MIDDLE EAST

Deloitte.

In 2018, Ashoka Arab World partnered with Deloitte Middle East to support their pilot Deloitte Accelerator for Social Innovation (DASI): a regional competition across 14 countries in the Middle East to identify two winning innovative social enterprises to receive customized Deloitte support packs of advisory services, mentorship backed by Ashoka Fellows and expertise, networking opportunities within and outside of Ashoka, and skills-development valued at over US\$ 100,000.

CONNECTING ASHOKA FELLOWS WITH THEIR PEERS IN THE REGION AND AROUND THE WORLD FOR KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND COLLABORATION



In 2014, three international Fellows – Mariana Banos from Mexico, Hasina Kharbhah from India, and Ann Njogu from Kenya, joined AAW Fellows in Egypt for a week of networking and collaboration. In 2013, the Ashoka Levante Fellows Assembly brought together Fellows from Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan to share best practices and on-the-ground experiences and to connect with prominent representatives of the business sector. In 2011, The AAW office hosted Global Fellow Karen Tse, who is working on building international coalitions to support public defenders in emerging democracies to test the possibility of replicating her innovative idea in Egypt. These are just some of the ways in which innovative global alliances have begun through the support of many partners.

Ashoka Women's Initiative for Social Entrepreneurship

THE CONTEXT

Women are uniquely capable of transforming the lives of families, communities, and societies. Yet, women innovators systematically face a lack of access to the social and capital resources that would allow them to grow entrepreneurial initiatives, build networks, and scale their impact. Furthermore, the mainstream definition of success in social impact often remains limited to geographical expansion and number of beneficiaries reached, neglecting the distinct ways in which women social entrepreneurs scale to change the power structures and patterns of the world.

ASHOKA VISION

Led by Ashoka Arab World's Regional Director and Vice President of Ashoka Global, Iman Bibars, the Women's Initiative for Social Entrepreneurship (WISE) was born out of an international gathering of 10 Fellows in Egypt in 2011, where participants had the opportunity to connect around their work with women and identify potential avenues for collaboration. Now in its new phase, WISE aims to build a comprehensive and sustainable movement to acknowledge women's unique impact, redefine success from a gendered perspective, and elevate the number, knowledge, and power of women social entrepreneurs.

In October 2018, Ashoka Arab World played a key role in organizing the soft launch of WISE in San Francisco, convening three Fellows from the United States and international partners for a dialogue on the challenges women innovators face and how they act to overcome these obstacles. Following the release of Ashoka's recent global report *Celebrating ChangemakHERS: How Women SEs Lead and Innovate*, which highlights trends and unique qualities among women social entrepreneurs, Ashoka Arab World is entering 2019 with a vision of forging new partnerships in support of WISE and its multi-layered objectives.



WISE OBJECTIVES

- 1. Comprehensive Research & Mapping:** To understand the gender-specific challenges and successes of women social entrepreneurs
- 2. Targeted Election of Women Social Entrepreneurs:** To increase the number of Ashoka women Fellows to at least 50% of the Fellowship community
- 3. Online & Offline Gatherings:** To establish a dynamic Collaborative Platform of women Fellows dedicated to peer-to-peer learning and exchange, support and mentoring, and collaborative action toward the cause of women in social entrepreneurship
- 4. Gender-Specific Globalizers:** To provide tailored and effective systems leadership and acceleration support to enable selected women Fellows to access valuable networks and scale their impact
- 5. Programming for Youth:** To include girls and young women changemakers in the movement to advance the presence and power of women in social entrepreneurship
- 6. Media Partnerships:** To share the stories of women Fellows who are transforming leadership and the world



THE TEAM

Dr. Iman Bibars, Regional Director, Ashoka Arab World & Vice President,
Ashoka: Innovators for the Public

Aya Sabry, Fellowship Officer

Ahmed Abdelgalil, Fellowship Assistant

Mariam Tag, Venture Assistant

Yara El Braidy, External Relations Officer

Kara Fitzgerald, Communication & Partnership Officer

Ioanna Moriatis, Development Assistant

Salma Elnagar, Research & Fundraising Assistant

Noha Negm, Junior Venture Research Assistant

Tarek Badr, Project Consultant - Education

Abeer Dergham, Helmik Beidik Consultant

Hanaa Nagy, Personal Assistant to the Regional Director

Mohamed Allam, Chief Financial Officer

Mohamed Rabea, Accountant

Mary Bishara, HR & Operations Manager

Mohamed Salem, IT Officer

Enas Ezzat, Operations Officer

Sara Esmail, Receptionist

OUR PARTNERS





ASHOKA

