

WAN-IFRA launches new programme for Middle East media development

PARIS, FRANCE, DARMSTADT, GERMANY: Newspaper executives from Libya and Egypt are participating in a new training programme from the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA): the Media Professionals Programme, an innovative initiative to equip media executives with the tools to advance their careers and contribute to the growth of strong local media enterprises.



The Middle East and North Africa programme, launched simultaneously with a similar programme in Southeast Asia, combines skills development with peer mentoring, networking, and career coaching to provide a multi-dimensional approach to capacity building.

In the Middle East programme, seven senior executives from print and online media outlets gathered in Cairo earlier this month to participate in business skills development and leadership workshops, peer mentoring sessions and one-on-one coaching.

"The Media Professionals Programme touches on all the aspects of a media business - the editorial side, leadership and management side, administrative side, and so on", said Rania Al Malky, managing editor of egyptmonocle.com, one of the participants.

"This is particularly relevant for me as my background is in journalism, but now that I'm starting my own initiative I have to become familiar with the various aspects of a media business," he said. "I don't think I would have come this far with any other programme."

Khalid Ateea, editor-in-chief of the *Roaya Newspaper* in Libya, said: "I've been to plenty of workshops before, both inside and outside Libya, but what distinguishes these events is the fact that I am with my peer group, which makes the debates and the sessions all the more interesting."

The goal of the project, funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), is to support the professional development of the new generation of media leaders that contribute to the evolution of strong, independent media in emerging and developing markets. The Middle East programme is running concurrently with a similar programme in Southeast Asia involving news media executives from Vietnam, Cambodia and Myanmar.

"This is an exciting time for WAN-IFRA, as we continue to pilot new approaches to media development and build on our current successes," said Larry Kilman, deputy CEO of WAN-IFRA. "While the Media Professionals Programme is unique to specific markets, we developed it by drawing on the best practices and lessons learned from ongoing projects elsewhere. We are developing and expanding strong models that have proven to deliver results."

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and WAN-IFRA conduct an ambitious strategic partnership to advance media development and press freedom worldwide. The partnership allows WAN-IFRA to broaden and develop its press freedom and media development activities to support free and financially sustainable media worldwide. More on these projects can be found at <http://www.wan-ifra.org/microsites/media-development>.

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