




KUWAIT – MEDIA, ACTIVISM & DEMOCRACY

DATES:	December 2 nd – December 15 th , 2007
LOCATION:	Kuwait (state capital), Kuwait
ROOM & BOARD:	N/A
TRAVEL:	N/A
TUITION/DEPOSIT:	N/A
INSTRUCTOR(S):	Chandler Griffin Alison Fast
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Population:	2,505,559 Note: includes 1,291,354 non-nationals (July 2007, estimate by CIA World Factbook)	
Capital:	Kuwait	
Area:	527,970 sq km (203,850 sq. miles)	
Languages:	Arabic (official), English widely spoken	
Religions:	Muslim 85% (Sunni 70%, Shi'a 30%), other (includes Christian, Hindu, Parsi) 15%	
Life expectancy:	76 Male / 79 Female	
Chief of state:	Amir SABAH al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah	
People:	Kuwaiti 45%, other Arab 35%, South Asian 9%, Iranian 4%, other 7%	
Main exports:	Oil and refined products, fertilizers	

USING MEDIA TO ENGAGE THE PUBLIC: A WORKSHOP WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS THE MIDDLE EAST

PROBLEM:

The nascent civil society of the Gulf region has little experience mounting public awareness and opinion campaigns. Most civil society groups lack communication tools and training to broadly impact the general public's opinions and actions. Efforts to impact a wider audience typically result in minimal press coverage or publishing of booklets or brochures. This workshop aims to give participant groups the capacity to convey messages through quality "public service announcements" (PSAs), which will be disseminated through television, the Internet, and personal electronic devices.

SOLUTION:

With support from The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), Barefoot Workshops will lead a two-week workshop to train sixteen young leaders and activists from eight civil society groups (CSOs) in Kuwait to produce a collection of Public Service Announcements (PSA's) on topics such as voter registration, human rights, volunteerism, and education.

*As defined by Barefoot Workshops, a **Public Service Announcement (PSA)** is a noncommercial message, ten seconds to one minute in length, designed to support public awareness campaigns in the form of television and radio broadcasts.*

The goal of the program is to empower local CSOs (Civil Society Organizations) and their leadership, to affect public opinion and public policy with targeted messages that improve their societies from within.

The workshop will also allow participants to put forth alternative viewpoints from the Middle East, via broadcast television and the Internet, adding to the plurality of voices and opinions heard internationally.

Each participant, in the course of producing an actual, finished PSA video, will be exposed to advanced communication strategies, social networking tools and distribution devices such as podcasts, video blogs, and mobile devices, to access a broader audience.

Barefoot Workshops will furnish CSOs with equipment packages, training in media production and a course manual in Arabic that explains how to produce a Public Service Announcement (PSA). CSOs will be responsible for cost-sharing enrollment in the workshop, through grants made possible by The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI).

The workshop will culminate with a screening to government, nongovernmental, media and business sectors. Barefoot Workshops will invite noted scholars, fellows, public figures and media outlets to write articles and reviews for publications with prominent distribution. CSOs in partnership with Barefoot Workshops will also encourage national and international universities to incorporate blogs and vlogs into their curriculum, clubs and student activities.

What is a Civil Society Organization (CSO)?

A Civil Society Organization (CSO) is a voluntary institution, such as non-governmental organization (NGOs), registered charity, faith-based organization, community group, women's organization, trade union, foundation, coalition, or advocacy group, that underpins civil society, as opposed to a state and commercially backed institution.

HISTORY:

Media has broad applications in the world today, but is most commonly cited as a source of entertainment. Yet increasingly, media has the potential to impact sectors as diverse as politics, education, business and international development.

Since 2006, Barefoot Workshops has assisted governments, nonprofit and community based organizations, and medical institutions, among others, to tap the power of low-cost video technology to spread solutions and meet challenges on the ground.

We have worked with partners as diverse as UNESCO, The Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation and US State Department to impact areas such as: HIV/AIDS, Land Conflict, Disaster Relief, and Refugee/Displacement issues.

Our model consistently demonstrates how "participatory media" – media written and produced by the people for their own communities- can be more effective in mobilizing a public response than generalized news or entertainment.

*A **"media template"** is a media format that is short, targeted and designed to meet the needs of a specific audience.*

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In September 2007, Barefoot Workshops was awarded a grant from The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), to strengthen the role of a free and independent media in the region of The Middle East, and to put a special focus on training women and youth.

Specifically, the grant supports the following objectives under the political pillar of MEPI's programs:

- Supporting local civil society.
- Encouraging programs for youth.
- Fostering networks.
- Encouraging women's participation in public life.
- Promoting the rule of law and legal reforms including legal rights education and professional legal education.
- Promoting public awareness and involvement in current political issues, including voter education, and building advocacy skills among individuals and groups.

(source: www.mepi.state.gov)

MEPI has chosen Barefoot Workshops as a partner because we promote strong, citizen-led, community-owned solutions.

We also make programs self-sustaining by providing equipment, training, and facilitating "hubs" of learning, whereby individuals and organizations can continue to produce and exchange media after we leave.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND:

This class is structured for young activists and leaders, particularly women and youth, who are enrolled in Civil Society Organizations in Kuwait, to receive training in how to direct, produce and edit, broadcast-quality Public Service Announcements (PSAs) that stimulate dialogue and civic engagement from the grassroots up.

The workshop is designed for beginning to advanced students, who have varying degrees of experience in media, and who are optimistic about the role that media can play in promoting the messages of their organization to the public.

CSOs should keep in mind the following criteria when electing individuals to participate in the workshop:

- Half of the participants enrolled in the workshops should be women and youth.
- Participant should have enthusiasm and a commitment to complete a rigorous course schedule. Be prepared to arrive on time and push your normal capacity.
- CSOs will enroll students in pairs to learn complimentary production skills; At least one participant from each CSO should have solid communication skills (public relations skills, writing, copyediting, etc.) as well as creative competence, and the desire to learn how to operate a video camera. The other CSO participant should have computer literacy and the desire to learn video editing.
- Understanding of the English language is helpful but not required. Translators will be provided.

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- NGOs and their staff members should express a long-term commitment to producing and distributing media, even after the workshop ends.
- CSOs should enroll staff members who have a long-term commitment to their organization to retain skills once trained.

WORKSHOP STRUCTURE:

CSO participants will be enrolled in pairs, totaling sixteen individuals from eight organizations. Half of the participants will be women and youth. CSO participants will divide into two groups to learn complimentary skills during the first week. One member will be responsible for writing, producing, and operating a camera in the field; the other member will be responsible for post-production, including editing and distribution of videos. Depending on how quickly the group moves, we will produce one to two rounds of Public Service Announcements resulting in eight to sixteen videos. The final day will provide an opportunity for CSOs to invite their colleagues to a final screening. This screening will offer networking opportunities, as well as possible media coverage, to raise the visibility of their work in the press.

The workshop is intended to give all students a unique and intensive experience in the use of video to affect social and political change.

In addition, it offers a hands-on opportunity to foster local networks of support within Kuwait for a free and independent media.

Week 1 –

- Review the still image.
- Determine target issue & audience for each CSO and how media can be used.
- Group exercise: Scripting the Public Service Announcement (PSA).
- Divide into two groups - Shooting & Editing Practicum

Week 2 –

- Shoot & Edit PSA (round 1)
- Shoot & Edit PSA (round 2?)
- Upload and distribute videos.
- Presentation to the public.

OUTCOMES:

The workshop will: (i) strengthen the role of a free and independent media in the region (ii) bolster participation in political processes and (iii) lend a plurality of voices to public debate.

CSOs participants will permanently improve their capacity to affect public opinion and actions, by integrating PSAs into their current and future public awareness campaigns.

CSOs will have expanded power and influence with which to positively affect governmental policies and legislation.

CSO participants will reach and impact a much wider audience in their home countries and abroad through Internet distribution.

CSOs will have an expanded network of training and support to couple resources, influence and knowledge to better reach their goals in the region.

CSOs will have the opportunity to build a hub of media-interested groups and organizations locally, reinforcing knowledge and continued learning after the workshop ends.

Through public screenings, CSOs will encourage government and business leaders, educational institutions and broadcast media corporations, to become aware of their work and invite

ongoing forms of support such as: distribution of media, mentorship & continued training, sponsorship/funding, donation of in-kind services, support for future networking sessions, etc.

Barefoot's goal is to create responsible filmmakers who care about the world around them and who make it a point to give back to the people they work with. We empower communities at a grassroots level, through learning and exchange.

Barefoot encourages students internationally, to find their voices as filmmakers, while improving conditions locally by passing on their knowledge and skills others.

ABOUT BAREFOOT WORKSHOPS:

Barefoot Workshops is a New York City-based not-for-profit 501(c)(3), founded by Chandler Griffin in 2004, that offers short, intensive workshops around the world in narrative and documentary filmmaking. We assist organizations and individuals to use media, music and the arts, to accelerate progress and program goals in areas such as health, conflict resolution, resettlement, civil rights, and democracy building. We have worked with partners as diverse as UNESCO, Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation, The U.S. State Department and The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), to pioneer new formats and "**media templates**" that reinforce citizen-led, community-owned solutions.

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