



## BAHRAIN – MEDIA, ACTIVISM & DEMOCRACY

**DATES:** Sunday, April 12th – Thursday, April 30th, 2009  
Final Screening - Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, (6 p.m. – 8 p.m.)

**LOCATION:** **Manama, Bahrain**

**VENUE:** TBD

**TIMES:** 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Sunday – Thursday)

**LANGUAGE:** English (with consecutive translation)

**COST:** Made possible by a grant from the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI). Closed to the public.

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**Population:** 718,306

**Capital:** Manama

**Chief Of State:** King HAMAD bin Isa al-Khalifa

**Languages:** Arabic, English, Farsi, Urdu

**Religions:** Muslim (Shia & Sunni) 81.2%, Christian 9%, other 9.8% (2001 census)

**Life expectancy:** Total population: 74.92 years  
Male: 72.41 years/ Female: 77.5 years (2008 est.)

**People:** Bahraini 62.4%, non-Bahraini 37.6% (2001 census)

**Communications:** Telephones - mobile cellular: 1.116 million (2007)  
1.5 mobile phones per person.

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

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### **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, social networking tools, and mobile phones.

### **SOLUTION:**

With support from The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), Barefoot Workshops will lead a three-week workshop to train fourteen leaders and activists from civil society groups (CSOs) in Bahrain, to produce a collection of Public Service Announcements (PSA's) on topics of public concern, such as civic participation, human rights, volunteerism, youth employment and education.

#### ***What is a Public Service Announcement (PSA)?***

*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 and their leadership, to affect public opinion and public policy through 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 one to two finished PSA videos, 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 in-house equipment packages (including computers and video cameras), hands-on training in media production and editing, and a short course manual that explains how to produce a Public Service Announcement (PSA) from start to finish. CSOs will be responsible for cost sharing enrollment of two members from their organizations in the workshop, through grants offered by the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI).

The workshop will culminate with a public screening and press conference. Media broadcasters will disseminate PSAs after the workshop is over through television networks. CSOs will post videos via the Internet using social networking tools, and at their web sites. Barefoot Workshops will network CSOs with local and regional partners to continue building their media capacity after the workshop is over.

#### ***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:**

Increasingly, media has the potential to positively impact diverse sectors of society, and to increase public debate in the areas of: business, economics, human rights, public policy, education and international development.

Barefoot Workshops is a New York-based organization that assists government, nonprofits and civil society organizations, among others, to tap the power of low-cost video technology to spread solutions and meet challenges within their communities.

Our model consistently demonstrates how “participatory media” – media written and produced by the people for their own communities- can be extremely effective in mobilizing the public, especially when coupled with web sites, collateral materials (flyers, hand-outs) and events. Increasingly video is the “new literacy”, enabling marginalized people and voices to be heard.

From November, 2007 - December, 2007, Barefoot conducted two media workshops, training fourteen CSOs in Kuwait and Jordan to produce twenty public service announcements. From October, 2009 – November 2008, Barefoot conducted another two media workshops, training fourteen additional CSOs in the West Bank and Israel to produce twenty-one public service announcements.

The resulting videos in all four workshops were aired on local networks, including NBC Arabia, and will be broadcast by JAVNA mobile media content providers to approximately 1 million people in the region in 2009.

### **Results can be viewed at these links:**

<http://www.barefootworkshops.org> (Alumnae Gallery)

<http://www.facebook.com/video/?oid=29968185520>

<http://www.youtube.com/mepiabudhabi>

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 leaders and activists, who work for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) 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, but who are motivated to use Public Service Announcements to promote the message of their organizations to the public.

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

- CSO participants should be fluent in English.
- CSO participants should be computer literate.
- CSO participants should have enthusiasm and be available to attend the workshop in full.

- CSO participants should enroll at least one key stakeholder who is familiar with their organization's communication strategies and overall goals, and another who has the time and technical capacity to teach and pass on the skills they learn to others.
- The organization should avoid sending only volunteers, interns, or those with high turnover rates to the workshop. CSOs should enroll staff members or volunteers who have a long-term commitment to their organization and who will retain the skills once trained.
- CSO participants are not required to have any training in media or digital technology prior to this workshop.

### **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.

The goal of Barefoot Workshops in partnership with MEPI and Business Care Consulting, 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.

### **ABOUT BAREFOOT WORKSHOPS:**

Barefoot Workshops is a New York City-based not-for-profit 501(c)3, founded 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.