

April / May 2017



Dear sirs and madams,

The Egyptian Center for Women's Rights would like to thank you for your interest in its efforts and achievements. In the newsletter of April/ May 2017, ECWR highlights the Women's Voices project that is primarily concerned with the women's political participation under the slogan #Participate_in_municipalities.

The upcoming local council elections are the most important in the history of the Egyptian municipalities, because the 2014 Constitution gave them powers to control the executive bodies as a key partner in the development process. Article 180 of the Constitution allocates a quota for women is a quarter of the seats, as well as a quota for young men and women, which is also a quarter of the seats.

This means that there are about 14,000 seats for women and young women who are wishing to run for local councils; this is unprecedented in the history of women's participation in municipalities. It is also a new beginning in the effective participation of women in political life. As in the last elections for the local councils in 2008, women represented about only 5% of the council, which is very small and does not fairly represent women or the extent of their participation in economic activities within the society.

Article 180 of the Constitution also added several supervisory tools that did not exist before, such as questioning, so that the members of the local council would have the right to question the governor. This may lead to the council issuing a vote of no confidence. Hence, the local councils will have a strong and effective role, not decorative presence, in fact a strong and influential one.

It is a great opportunity for women and young women to run in the upcoming local elections to take part, increase their influence and improve quality of services in their communities. This newsletter coincides with the launch of the first training workshop for the second phase of the "Women's Voices" project, which aims to qualify young leaders to run for the upcoming local council elections.

The Voices of Women project was launched by ECWR since April 2015 with the support of the Fund for Gender Equality- UN Women. Through project, ECWR has conducted training courses for more than 1000 young women leaders to run for the upcoming local elections in all of Egypt's governorates and created a network among young women to prepare a generation of young women leaders, and to raise awareness of the importance of candidate and elect women.

In its second phase, ECWR continues its mission through the capacity building of a new generation of young women leaders, reaching about 880 young leaders in 20 governorates. This issue covers the achievements of Women's Voices project in this second phase.

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Launching the Second Phase of Women's Voices

The second phase has been launched a new series of training targeting 4 young female leaders from 20 governorates: Alexandria, Qena, New Valley, Minya, Beni Suef, Sharqia, Ismailia, Assiut, Aswan, South Sinai, Red Sea, Fayoum, Gharbaya, Dakahlia, Sohag, Port Said, Matrouh, Suez, Luxor, Damietta, resulting in a total of 80 young leadership.

The participants were divided into three groups. Each group included diverse political and social affiliations, as those working in civil associations, members of political parties such as El-Wafd party, translated in English as the future of the Homeland, the Protectors of the Homeland and the Free Egyptians. Some participants are employees in others professions such as researchers, lawyers, journalists, engineers, or social workers.

The training tackled the following topics: history of local administration in Egypt, local administration in the Constitution of 2014, terms of reference and committees of local councils, good local governance tools and how to apply it. The trainings also focused on the role of local councils in confronting corruption, electoral campaigning and its stages of preparation, launching an electoral platform, human rights approach to development, and effective communication techniques and skills.

As soon as the trainings were finished, the participants carried out their practical training and shared what they have benefited in the abovementioned trainings to larger groups in their governorates. This phase of the Women's Voices project targets 800 young female leaders to run for local elections.

By the end of May, the coordinators held their own trainings in four governorates: Fayoum, Qena, Luxor, and Assiut"



Fayoum's training targeted 42 participants representing different party affiliations, including Homeland Future Party, Al Wafd, the Egyptian Democratic Social Party, Future Builders, and various development associations such as community development associations; Umm El Masrien Association, Dar El Hanan Association and the Egyptian Association for Development.

Qena's training targeted 49 participants affiliated with several civil associations, including association for community development; Ahli Baladi Association, Businessmen Club Association and Bedaya elKheir Association.

Luxor's training included 45 participants representing different parties; HomatWatan Party, Egyptian Democratic Social Party, and various civil associations, including the Egyptian Association, Media Association, Red Crescent Society, Resalaa Association, Family Development Association and Egyptian Development and Training Association.



Assiut's training targeted 43 young women representing various civil associations, including the Majd al-Islam Association for Orphan Care and Community Development, Atta'a Bela Hedod Association, Egyptian National Council for Human Rights and Development and Eshraquet Hayat Association.

The training tackled a number of different topics including but not limited to: definition of the local administration and its objectives, centralization and decentralization, the difference between local councils and executive councils, establishment of local councils at different levels, the committees of the local councils, the electoral campaigns, and how to launch an electoral platform.

2019 ... The Date of the Local Councils elections in Egypt



In a statement to a member of the local committee in the House of Representatives, MP Abdul Hamid Kamal said that the local councils elections will be postponed until 2019 due to the approaching the presidential election, which will begin to its preparations in January 2018.

"It is difficult for the government to hold local councils elections in the same year, given the burden and financial costs will be borne by the state. Despite finishing drafting the law for

the local councils' elections, and the need for elected local councils given the clear corruption negligence," MP Kamal said in press statements to Al-Ahram state-owned newspaper.

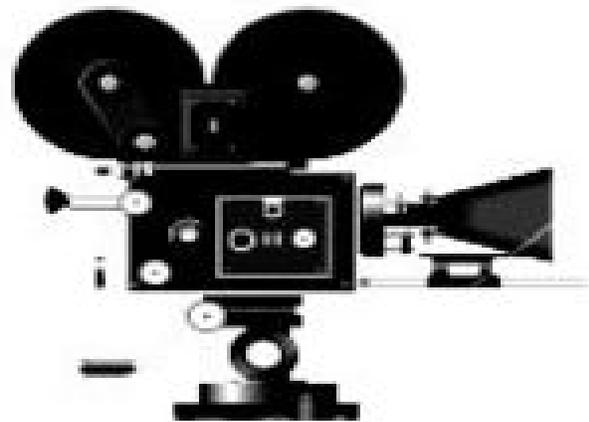
He added that the second disaster is the collapsing of buildings due to corruption, which causes disasters for citizens, as well as the deteriorating environmental conditions such as garbage in all governorates.

[The full article in Arabic](#)

A Documentary Film on "Women's Voices" Project

Facts on Local Councils

- * April 16th, 2008 is the date of the last local councils' election in Egypt
- * In the 2008 local councils' elections, 53,010 seats were the total of the seats for the local administration
- * 2495 seats were allocated to women out of 6,000 female candidates at all levels, with a percentage of 4.7%
- * The 2014 Constitution –in Article (180) - allocates a quarter of seats for young people under the age 35 and a quarter of seats for women.



The Women's Voices project has culminated its accomplishments during the last three years with filming a documentary about the project, its idea and purpose to be used as a blueprint for anyone.

With the conclusion of the stages of the "Women's Voices" Project, the actual filming has been started with our female leaders, who are also the project coordinators, in their governorates. The filming has been completed in the three governorates of Sharqia, Sohag and Ismailia.

Continued ... A Documentary Film on "Women's Voices" Project

The Upcoming Activities



Women's Voices project continues in June and July through the following activities:

- On the topic of political participation and electoral campaign, the project coordinators of phase one and two will hold awareness raising events within their governorates.
- The trainings of the second phase will be continued in 8 governorates: Port Said, Aswan, Minya, Sharqya, Gharbaya, Alexandria, Sohag, and Ismailiya
- Documentary film will be filming in Alexandria
- Training Manual will be published on enhancing women's participation as a member in the local councils



In **Sharqia Governorate**, Women's Voices coordinator collaborates with a team of volunteers to organize activities and events under title #Sharqia_initiative_without_C_virus. This campaign includes activities such as weekly medical convoys in the villages of Sharqia to conduct diagnostic tests for hepatitis C virus for free as well as raise awareness of people on hepatitis C virus and how to deal with. Each event concludes with answering the questions and queries of the audience.



raising the awareness of mothers of the local councils elections and the importance of their participating on it in order to improve the services they receive. The seminar was very effective as it appeared from their interaction with the coordinators and their questions.

In **Sohag**, Women's Voices coordinators participated in an exhibition titled "Ahlan Ramadan" at the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan, where handmade products were sold at suitable prices to relieve the economic burden on the citizens. The filming was also conducted in the "Community Development Association in NajaYaqoub, Saklatah," an association is directed by one of the project coordinators in the village of Saklatah, Naja 'Yaqoub. In this context, there were workshops for teaching sewing and tailoring for women. During which, there was a class which receives children from the kindergarten to the fifth-grade primary. Additionally, The Academy of Sciences for Training and Consultancy, which has been established by one of the project's coordinators, was also included in the documentary. By the end of the day, filming was concluded in the village of Akhmeem that is famous for making silk and textile industry.



Women's Voices coordinators are young and active women leaders within their governorates, one of the selection criteria for joiningsuch a project. They organize many activities and events to serve their communities. Therefore, we have highlighted their work for them to be a role model. These activities varied between awareness, politics, charity and economic empowerment; however, support and women empowerment is still the common element among all these activities.

Ismailia, which is one of the coastal cities of the Suez Canal, despite the difficulty of photography for security reasons, we filmed one of the most distinguished events organized by the project coordinator in her governorate. An entertainment day for raising awareness was organized within the Comprehensive Rehabilitation Center for Disabled. The event concluded with a seminar aimed at