The Arab World Regional Report

Executive Summary

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1.Subject Matter

This report provides an analysis of the potential of Creative Commons in the Arab World region and perceptions of the affiliates to fulfill this potential.

2.Methods of Analysis

This research makes use of a qualitative case study method. Methods of analysis include semi-structured interviews and participant observation with 4 affiliates in the region: Egypt, Lebanon, Qatar and Syria. A total of five representatives were selected as interviewees to reflect diversity in terms of geographic location, culture, ethnicity, languages spoken, field of expertise, gender, and team structure. Each interview was audiotaped and transcribed and is used in the report with the consent of the interviewees.

3.Limitations

Although minimized to the extent possible, there were some unavoidable limitations in this research.

First of all, due to time and financial constraints, most interviews were conducted online and sometimes the bad internet connection has affected the flow of conversation. It would have been better if face-to-face interviews could be conducted or better internet connection could be accessed.

Second, the language barrier might affect the interviewees' ability to deliver their thoughts effectively and also the interviewer's ability to conduct a more in-depth analysis of the questions. Despite the fact that all the interviews were conducted in English, some of the interviewees expressed themselves in their own language, which is Arabic, and these parts of the interviews were translated by the interviewer.

Lastly, the researcher thinks that Arab world cannot function fully without the inclusion of the all MENA countries into the regional projects specifically non-Arab ones: Turkey, Iran, and Israel. This limits the extent of the report in seeing the true potential of the region.

4. Results

CC affiliates in the Arab World region think that the fundamental thing that connects all of the affiliates and supporters of CC is the idea of giving and sharing as well as the belief in sharing knowledge and making it accessible to everyone with the purpose of common good. The affiliates share the view that the greatest accomplishment of CC is to change the patterns in sharing and to bring alternative ways of looking at sharing knowledge and ideas. They share the view that CC's key strength as a global movement comes from its people and the network itself.

However, they think that there is a huge regional potential, which has not been fully used due to the limited human and financial resources, as well as political conditions of the

region. Unstable political regimes, suppression of activism and control over foreign organizations limit the activities and functioning of the local teams.

Affiliates hope to ensure the sustainability of CC activities in the region and therefore underlined the importance of transferring the know-how and the knowledge to the new generations by sharing experiences with workshops, meetings, and trainings. They need financial and strategic support of HQ in achieving this. They also point out that the lack of dedicated volunteers is an obstacle in expanding the work of CC in the region.

Affiliates feel that they can work more efficient if they work together around certain areas of expertise and/or topics of interest such as open education, copyright reform, policy and advocacy, and creative projects etc. Affiliates agree on the need of localized promotion of Creative Commons as a global movement and marketing of CC in Arabic, designed specifically for the region.

5. Conclusions

The report finds that CC affiliates in the region believe in the mission of the network and highly value CC's achievements as a global movement. In such a collaborate atmosphere, they have a sense of belonging to a greater community. There is a strong commitment and willingness to contribute to CC's regional and global network and to the future of the movement. Even though CC has faced challenges in the region, it still has a huge potential as a global movement that can be fulfilled if improvements are made in some areas presented below in the recommendations.

6. Recommendations

- The local CC communities should expand their capacities by reaching more experts in their field of work and possible fields that could widen the scope of community outreach.
- There is a need for bringing the regional communities closer to each other to share their ideas and successes as examples to be implemented.
- Connecting the regional communities is a necessity also for the establishment of an organic network and common identity in the Arab region.
- The promotion at a high level is important because the state plays a determining role in every country of the region in the fields relevant to CC's goals.
- Local communities should focus on transferring the know-how and the knowledge to the new generations and new individuals by sharing experiences with workshops, face-to-face meetings with the authorities, and trainings.
- Local affiliates and HQ should work on customization of CC activities in the region. While local affiliates bring local knowledge on the table, HQ should localize communications and targeted messages, and promote local affiliates' work.