

## **ICTDAR launches in Egypt a regional initiative focused on citizenship: Resp-Act (Responsible Arab Citizen)**

### **Holds week-long training for Master Trainers from across the Arab Region**

The United Nations Development Program's Information and Communication Technology for Development in the Arab Region (**ICTDAR**), has launched the Resp-Act initiative, which addresses Arab youth as its primary target group, and aims primarily to educate them on concepts of active citizenship, both in terms of rights and responsibilities.

Resp-Act provides Arab youth with training, but also with tools and collaborative projects that they can engage in as a follow up and as means of exercising their citizenship responsibly. These tools are both online and offline, with the main online tool being a dedicated collaboration and social networking portal that is custom-built. The collaborative projects are conceived to address concerns of youth from across the Arab Region, so that teams of youth can work on them using the work spaces in the portal as one of the main means of collaboration. The scope of topics for these collaborative projects is wide and affords space for a lot of variety and flexibility.

However, the main underlying concern remains always to help youth understand their rights but also encourage them to exercise their duties responsibly as citizens of their community, city, country and the world.

“The launch of Resp-Act in Egypt is an important milestone for this much needed initiative, which aims at using innovative content, training methodologies, and technologies, to provide youth with training to build their capacities and raise their awareness of their role as citizens in their communities and countries,” said Ziad Haddara, Regional Manager of **ICTDAR**.

“It also aims to provide youth with a platform for self-expression, networking, discussion, and collaboration on issues and projects of concern to them and within the scope of Resp-Act, to develop project documents and ideas for youth to work on using the Resp-Act portal as a prime means of collaboration, and empower youth to develop their own ideas and plans for developing their communities,” Haddara added.

The three main components of Resp-Act are the content, the training packages, and the portal. The content that has already been developed for Resp-Act is divided into three main categories of inter-related topics: International Law; Citizenship, and Rights and Responsibilities. The content is innovative in its simplified language and formats that make the topics accessible to youth. It includes hundreds of FAQ as well as summary tables for the rights and responsibilities associated with each sub-topic.

Two training packages have been developed. The first is a training of trainers that consists of five-day training. The second package targets youth directly and is meant to be used by the trainers. It is a four-day training that is much more dependent on discussion, games, and hands-on activities. Both packages include detailed agendas, time allocations, tips, presentations, and support material. They are innovative in their use of interactive discussions, working groups, in-class games, and technology.

The portal ([www.resp-act.net](http://www.resp-act.net)) consists of two main components: the content viewing component (based on a content management system) and the social networking component. The portal will play a key role not only in making the content widely available, but also in providing the platform for Arab youth leaders to connect and collaborate on projects that Resp-Act will help identify and support.

Implementation of Resp-Act is done through partnerships across the Arab Region, rolling - out the Resp-Act training packages, developing and implementing collaborative projects involving youth from across the Arab Region and using the Portal to strengthen collaboration and networking among youth leaders.

In conjunction with the launch of Resp-Act in Egypt, ICTDAR also held from March 2-8 a 7-day Master Training on the Resp-Act training packages for 18 Master Trainers from ten Arab countries. These Master Trainers were selected based on their experience and involvement in various areas of “Citizenship” as well as their previous experience in training. Over 60 individuals had applied to become Resp-Act Master trainers, and extensive discussions over multiple rounds were held in order to select the final list of 18 who attended the training.

Once trained, the Master Trainers have multiple responsibilities: their primary responsibility will be to conduct Train-the Trainer sessions in various Arab countries as needed, in order to prepare local trainers to deliver the Resp-Act training to youth. The Master Trainers will also be responsible for updating various sections of the Resp-Act portal, holding discussions forums, managing working groups, and generally act as “ambassadors” of Resp-Act.

**For more information please contact:**

**Media Waves**

**Aya Essam**

**Tel. & Fax: (+202) 2405 5111 – (+202) 24055199**

**Mobile: (+20) 12 2185 452**