

Cultural Policies Program
in the Arab Region

3rd periodic report
January 1st
June 30th, 2013



Current developments of cultural policies in the Arab Region

Summary Report

Current development of cultural policies

Algeria | Morocco | Tunisia | Mauritania

Yemen | Egypt

Palestine | Syria | Lebanon | Jordan

June 2013

The current periodic report monitors the developments occurred in ten Arab countries between January 1st and June 30th, 2013, and focuses upon two key aspects: monitoring key developments on the national level, and the development of work carried out by the National Groups in each of the countries covered.

The report includes East Arab countries (Palestine, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan), West Arab countries (Maghreb) excluding Libya (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Mauritania), in addition to Egypt and Yemen.

This report is the most comprehensive since the outset of the periodic reports of cultural policies in the Arab Region as it includes all the eight countries involved in the program since its launch in 2009, in addition to Mauritania and Yemen. The program aims at including Libya in the near future.

The report adopts a methodology of direct contact with different groups and activists located in all the countries included. Researchers at *Ettijahat* developed « worksheets » pertaining each of the countries to be closely examined and revised by the National Groups, and ultimately used to guide researchers regarding priorities as well as the most important and accidental changes that need to be focused on in the report.

On the other hand, researchers at *Ettijahat* depended heavily upon the Groups' annual plan, which have been developed on the basis of the Groups separate plans, and submitted subsequently to the Arab Group meeting held in Cairo in December 2012 (annual plan attached to the report)

Thanks to all members of National Groups who deposited the outcome of their knowledge, expertise and experiences in this report, and the Program in general, strongly believing in the necessity of improving the milieu of cultural performance in their countries.

Algeria:



Constantine has been appointed as the capital of Arab culture 2015 with a budget of 15 billion Dinars allocated to develop cultural facilities.

In addition to the recurrent governmental violations, the private cultural sector has been accused of absolute failure. Eventually, the National Group has expanded and exceeded the capital to reach out the city of Oran, where it has accomplished a proposal that aims at restructuring the cultural policies in Algeria.

No radical changes has been witnessed during the first half of 2013 regarding cultural legislations and policies in Algeria, with the exception of some statements made by Algerian minister of culture khalida Toumi in an attempt to support and lay the foundations of current cultural policies. The statements declared were obviously in response to the pressure exerted by cultural activists, "it is not possible to claim total lack of a specific cultural policy in Algeria. We may disagree about such policies or the objectives expected, but we cannot deny having a clear cultural policy", she commented. Minister Toumi explained in detail the rate of cultural growth within the current policies, accusing the private sector of failing to manage the cultural policy in the country, "Although legally authorized during the nineties, the private sector has not constructed any facility, cinema or theater hall across Algeria", she commented. The minister concluded that the total outcome of the efforts exerted by the private sector is absolutely "naught in all domains"

In this context, the cultural practice continued to follow the same previous approach as the Minister of Culture has forcibly closed the Higher Institute of Performing Arts & Auto Visual (ISMAS) due to the students` sit-in and hunger strike in campus, and eventually escalation of protests which led to discharging some of the students. The Ministry issued a decree to close the Institute under the pretext of saving the lives of faculty members as alleged by the senior inspector who described the incident as a conspiracy against the Institute. Later, the Minister annulled the decree and the Institute was re-opened with students fully committed to attendance. The Ministry also called for initiating a discussion with the students in order to find common solutions for the preceding demands.

Similarly, the Algerian National Union of Book Publishers issued an announcement covering several points that attribute the deterioration of book status in Algeria to different reasons, most importantly: depriving the Union from its legal right to be legitimately represented within the National Book Center, in addition to refusal and disregarding of reception\meetings requests formerly applied to the Ministry of Culture by the Union. The announcement stresses that the Ministry classified the Union under the title of "intense hostility", driven by prejudices and whims, making every effort possible to spread dissension and confusion among publishers.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Culture organized the International Cultural Festival of Arabic Calligraphy in the Algerian capital, aiming at identifying the different developmental

stages of Arabic calligraphy, as well as encouraging and promoting creativity within such artistic form.

The declaration of Constantine as capital of Arab culture 2015 will create a significant impact on enriching the Algerian cultural movement, and rehabilitation of cultural infrastructure as 15 billion Dinars have been allocated to develop cultural facilities. The proposed operations include: analyzing, completion & fully equipping 6 extensions of Cultural centers, rehabilitation and preparation of 7 movie theaters, and construction of grand gallery accommodating for 3000 seats as well as completion of the National Museum of Arts and History. It is worth mentioning here that cultural planning in Algeria is blamed for being event-based, exclusively activated during celebrations and festivals.

In an unprecedented remarkable step, the Algerian parliament has summoned the Minister of Culture on charges of insulting Islam due to her remarks concerning a different perspective of worship practices. The accused Minister had stated earlier that the huge amounts of money spent on the Holy Pilgrimage (Hajj) are a waste and better be invested on other areas. She also expressed that the Holy Quran contained no explicit indication or reference to the five daily prayers, and that the notion of slavery and prostration (kneeling with the forehead touching the ground) are both derived from the Bedouin and slave trade culture previously prevailed in the Arab Peninsula. Activists in the National Groups believed that no tangible impact of such a thing has ever affected the cultural policies in Algeria.

The National Group of cultural policies

The Group commenced its activities in 2013 by presenting a proposal of cultural policy to the public (developed in 2012) for participation and discussion. The (forth) meeting was held several months after consultations and exchange of views and opinions among 100 experts and specialists in the cultural and artistic affairs from various states of Algeria.

The proposal consists of 14 chapters and aims at restructuring cultural policies in Algeria. Each chapter dealt with a specific topic (audience, artist, support & funding, cultural tourism among many others)

The Group designed its own visual identity and launched a project-oriented website (in French): www.gtpca.org. The website is still under construction where it is possible to download the proposal of cultural policy in both Arabic and English.

World CP "International Federation of Arts Councils and culture agencies" has published the 2012 updated version of exploratory survey of the cultural policies in Algeria supported by "European Cultural Foundation"

The Group also published several articles and interviews about the workflow and cultural policies in Algeria including a study that focused on the number of NGOs in Algeria. The study concluded that the number of cultural and artistic organizations was 6074 in the period spreading between 2007 and 2009; such a number is the lowest in the Arab World with only 1 organization for every 6250 Algerians. The study also illustrated that such a small number of organizations is allocated only 0.23% of the total budget allotted for the cultural sector on an annual basis. According to the same study, the solution lies in facilitating the process of establishing new cultural organizations, and promoting its abilities through carrying out

workshops about financial management and planning, increasing the budget allocated to organizations up to one third of the total budget allocated to the cultural sector.

The fifth meeting of the Group was held in June 29th at the city of Oran in order to eliminate centralism of the capital and shift to other states. The Group also updated the French version of cultural policies project, while the Arabic and English versions are now being upgraded.

The Group administration body has expanded to include a new member, as numerous artists, researchers and scholars have recently joined the Group

Morocco:

Morocco has ratified a convention on preserving and promoting cultural diversity. The House of Representatives is discussing the legal status of artists, and the Government Council has approved the Copyright act.

159 cultural organizations benefit from the 5.800.00 dirham government subsidy.

Cultural activists have been borne down heavily upon, while the House of Poetry declared 2014 the year of poetry.

By the mid of 2013, the cultural circles in Morocco are still awaiting the establishment of National Council for Languages & Culture stipulated in Article 5 of the 2011 constitution, to which the government was committed to by developing the Council's organizational law for the current year, and to be preceded by a comprehensive national dialogue involving all different national cultural circles.

Morocco has ratified a convention on preserving and promoting the cultural diversity approved by UNESCO. The convention recommends developing cultural policies as well as integrating culture within sustainable development policies and programs at all levels.

On the other hand, the Government Council approved a draft law regulating copyrights which aims at following legal requirements to control right of remuneration for the original version to ensure the promotion of innovation, encouraging talented gifts and preserving the interests of various stakeholders in the process of creativity, be it authors, composers, actors or producers. In response to the claims raised by some activists to amend the Artist Act issued in 2003, the legal status of Moroccan artists has been a subject of discussion under the roof of the House of Representatives.

The Moroccan cinematic manifestations benefiting from governmental subsidy have been identified in the first session of 2013. The subsidy includes 30 film festivals and cinematic manifestations, in addition to the whole three festivals previously subsidized which are as follows: the National Film Festival in Tangier, Agadir Festival for Cinema & Migration, and Festival Cinema Dakhla.

On its part, the Ministry of Culture proclaimed the list of artistic and cultural organizations benefiting from financial support offered in 2013, and thus revealing 159 organizations utilizing of 5.800.000 dirham in total. It should be noted that the minimum amount of subsidy has now been raised up to 25.000 Dirham, compared to 15.000 dirham in 2012.

Furthermore, the committee accountable for supporting the digitalization, modernization and establishment of movie theaters has announced its absolute support to digitalize 10 national movie theaters with a cost exceeding 6 million dirham in total, fairly distributed to several movie theaters located in Casablanca, Tetouan, Marrakesh, Meknas and Sala. It should be noted here that Morocco now comprises less than 40 movie theaters compared to 247 in

1985. Moreover, the number of visitors decreased from 45 million annually in 1980 to only 2 million in 2012.

Issuing a statement celebrating World Theater Day, the Moroccan Union for Theater Professionals called out to “revising the Artist Act as soon as possible in order to effectively assist in framing theater and performing arts in such a way that preserves the dignity of artists and provides professional rules in alignment with the privacy of their work, and protects their financial and moral rights”. The Union also appealed to “establishing a social care foundation for artists in order to guard their living standards and family affairs” to preserve the respect and high-esteem of the artists which would eventually contribute to grant them “a proper titular status”

With respect to freedom of opinion and expression, several violations have been spotted whereby artists were severely oppressed due to their attitudes and opinions. For example, Mr. Ahmed Asid, Moroccan scholar and poet, prominent activist in the Amazigh Movement, has been apostatized and instigated against in a way directly threatens his life after posing opinions questioning the introduction of religion within the curriculum delivered at schools. Similarly, Amazigh singer and member of the Moroccan parliament Fatima Tabaamrant walked out a session protesting on denying her the right to speak in Amazigh Language. This incident highlights the cultural rights of the Amazigh people in Morocco, since there are millions of non- Arabic speakers Amazigh. Police forces in the city of Rabat have arrested four members of “National Coordination for anti-Mawazine festival” organized annually by Morocco Culture Organization. Released the next day of their arrest, the internees were planning a protest on the eve of the 12th Mawazine Festival opening ceremony.

On the other hand, Safrou Cherry Festival (Fruit of Kings) was recognized as immaterial heritage of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The festival celebrated its 92nd anniversary last year which makes is the oldest in Morocco.

Harsh criticisms traditionally targeted Mawazine Festival have recently been mitigated. Such criticisms were usually aroused under the pretense of white-collar crime, as well as costumes worn by participant Western artists, widely considered inconsistent with the traditions of Moroccan society. Critics hold such accusations as justified by the Justice & Development Party taking over the power in Morocco (the Islamic political party now leading the coalition government) which was the first to express indignation and dissatisfaction with the Festival.

Concluding “House of the Poetry” conference held in Casablanca in March 24th, 2013, a substantial cultural project has been declared i.e. announcement of 2013 as “Year of Poetry”, whereby a series of national cultural and poetic event, both Arabic and International, is to be organized with the objective of renovating poetic topics and emphasizing the significance of poetry and its requirements, production and reception at schools, universities, mass media and daily life in general.

The National Group of cultural policies

The Moroccan Group has decided to incorporate a set of fundamental changes on its workflow starting September 2013, so much it became feasible to surmount the retardation characterized the group`s workflow in the final stage due to different circumstances specifically related to conditions prevailing in Morocco and the preoccupation of Group members.

Those members hold necessary to concentrate the works carried out in the coming period as the Group could not achieve the objectives developed in the first half of the year, and accordingly failed to convene a meeting with cultural circles as scheduled. However, it can be noted that the Arabic version of the Group`s interactive website has been 85% ready, while the French version is only 70%.

The monthly researches, on the other hand, are completely ready to be used. During the second half of the year, the Group is supposed to execute field researches discussing the following topics: cultural affair within parliamentary action, cultural affair in national parties` programs, and Ministries involving cultural issues.

Mauritania:

The instability and continuous change of Ministers of Culture in office prevents developing an enduring strategy

Culture issues are completely excluded from political discourse, while activists are developing a plan to promote the cultural policies in the country.



المجموعة الوطنية للسياسات الثقافية - موريتانيا
Groupe des politiques culturelles nationales

في طور التأسيس
En cours de constitution

The idea of establishing National Group for the cultural policies in Mauritania has gained a notable interest since the recognition of Cultural Resource Foundation (*Almawred Althaqafy*) and gaining access to researches provided in the field of cultural policies. Thus, establishing such Group has become an ultimate goal for cultural actors in Mauritania; a concern that was vehemently supported following the recognition of Arterial Network.

In October 2011, Filmmakers House organized the first workshop on cultural policies under the supervision of Algerian researcher Ammar Kassab. The workshop was of utmost importance for drawing the attention of active cultural actors to the significance as well as necessity of developing a cultural policy in the country to escape the state of loss and organizational gap at the public sector level.

Throughout the last few decades, the concerned Ministry has undergone drastic changes – in terms of interest and trend – from culture and education to culture and media, Islamic guidance, communication with parliament, youth and sport. During this era, the Ministry also witnessed the succession of numerous ministers so frequently that no sooner the newly-appointed Minister began to develop a novel strategy for his sector than he is replaced, and the successor would begin all over again, and so forth until today.

In addition, the word “Culture” is hardly mentioned in the platforms and speech of politicians, both of ruling party or opposition. When included, “Culture” in most cases is modestly attached to one aspect only, often “Poetry”.

The initiative:

Filmmakers House took the initiative to reunite those willing to establish a national group for cultural policies, entreating assistance from Arab and African friends to make use of their experiences and support. Cultural Resource Foundation promptly and positively responded to the initiative, fully adopting the idea, supporting it financially and morally. On its part, Arterial Network took the responsibility of managing the initiative, as well as providing two components and two researchers.

Activists prioritized their objectives to include: reviewing documents and legislations regulating the cultural sector, examining all public sectors involved in cultural sector directly or indirectly, preparing and educating candidates for the upcoming elections about the significance of including ‘Culture’ within their visions and platforms and providing proper support, and finally creating the core National Group of cultural policies in Mauritania.

In order to achieve the aforementioned objectives, activists prepared a set of activities and mechanisms as follows:

- Employing two experts to make a preliminary review of active and suspended documents and legislations available. In this context, contracts have been concluded with Mr. Ahmed Maouloud Aidah and Mrs. Maymuna Bint Al-salik to undertake such task.
- Employing an expert to make a preliminary inventory for institutions and facilities involved in the cultural sector.
- Developing a summary report on the status quo of cultural policy in Mauritania (In Preparation)
- Organize meetings with different entities involved in public and independent sectors. In this regard, a meeting with Ministry of Culture was held to communicate the initiative, as well as with experts employed by the Ministry in order to develop a clear strategy for the cultural sector, discuss and prompt mutual cooperation, and share information. Correspondingly, a press conference was held at the premises of Urban Group to discuss the cultural policy project in Nouakchott.
- Prepare meetings with candidates for the upcoming elections to be held following the Holy Month of Ramadan (August).

Tasks were distributed as follows:

Filmmakers House: Assuming the first stage of administrative management and coordination, provide and translate all documents relating to Cultural Resource Foundation & National Committees, arrange seminars and meetings, preparation and distribution of brochures, organize candidates meetings, follow-up newspapers, TV channels and publications through its programs.

Experts: Collecting all culture-related administrative and legal documents directly from official resources namely: Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNESCO, Institution of Historical Cities, Chinguitt Award, and Ministry of the Interior, Parliament and the Senate, the National Archive.

In close collaboration between Filmmakers House and the experts, a preliminary list of the core National Group is being prepared, taking into consideration the cultural and linguistic diversity of its members, and utilizing from the experts employed by the Ministry of Culture in the different stages of developing cultural strategies.

By the end of 2013, the introductory meeting to establish the Mauritanian National Group of cultural policies will be officially held.

Tunisia:

Due to the difficulty and complexity of obtaining proper information in Tunisia, the report is currently limited to review the development of the program within the current situation. The Program and the stakeholders in Tunisia are discussing different mechanisms to establish a lobbying group supervising the cultural policies. According to the stakeholders, this Group is supposed to be followed by inclusive and transparent mechanisms from the very beginning, so that the firmly-established “divisions” among key actors in the cultural sector are surmounted and deeply involved in supporting a set of issues that aim at improving the milieu of cultural practices.

Simultaneously, the concept of cultural policies and awareness and achieving its objectives is now attracting different autonomous entities in Tunisia as well as supportive international parties. *Actif Association Culturelle Tunisienne pour l'Inserion* held a meeting on cultural policies under the title of FACT from 20th – 23rd of June. The meeting was attended by cultural actors and activists representing individuals and institutions where cultural policies in Tunisia had been under discussion.

Yemen:

Different sites are threatened with removal from World Heritage list, while al-Qaeda threats intimidate activists

Scholars and intellectuals play a key role in activating national dialogue sessions, and establishing the National Group of cultural policies

The cultural scene in Yemen has gone through a slow-paced development and a gradual recovery after the Yemeni Revolution in 2011 and political events that followed. Unfortunately, the political developments have not yet been reflected on the cultural scene. The government issued the latest Act regarding cultural affairs in 2012, (Act No. 15; protection of copyrights and neighboring rights) which includes workbooks, moral and intellectual rights and relevant financial issues, neighboring rights referring to performance artists, sound recording producers and broadcasting organizations. The Act was promulgated by President of the Republic of Yemen on July 22nd, 2012. It should be noted that cultural actors were not fully satisfied with the Act.

No developments have been detected in 2013 in terms of legislations and laws relating to cultural policies, with the exception of a conference held on May, 2013 by the Ministry of Culture titled “Policies & Cultural Development”. The conference hosted a wide range of



researchers who dealt with the following themes: Theme 1: (Cultural Policies & Development), Theme 2: (Intellectuals & Change), Theme 3: (Cultural Heritage, Archeology, manuscripts and Handicraft), Theme 4: (Books & Publishing).

Meanwhile, Yemen is currently hosting the national dialogue sessions which represent a distinctive shift in terms of achieving the vision and future of the country. Yemeni Intellectuals and artists should be allowed to take part in such sessions, which can be regarded as a tacit recognition of their roles in shaping the future of the country.

While "Taiz: Yemen` Cultural Capital" will be launched in 2013, UNESCO threatens to axe Old Sanaa from World Heritage Sites list, unless Yemeni authorities make every effort possible to prevent the impetuous and unruly removal of old buildings in favor of modern ones, as well as the use of cement in reconditioning the architectural sites located in the old city. This warning has been released after the deadline given to the historic town of Zabid which was eventually removed from the same list.

A group of activists and filmmakers has urgently communicated with the Minister of Culture to stress the necessity of adopting proper and professional standards when assigning the chairman of the board of National Film Organization, warning against favoritism on subjective and factional basis as such practice would definitely destroy the cinematic movement and fail to release it from the current state of marginalization and recession.

Following the example of similar Academies in Egypt and other countries, the Yemeni Arabic-language Academy was established pursuant to a presidential decree

Correspondingly, the people of Socotra archipelago complained to the Minister of Culture to be treated culturally fairly through providing a cultural centre.

On another level, violations against the freedom of artistic and literary expression have increased significantly as some academic institutions surprisingly took part in committing and augmenting such violations. For example, Al-Baida Public University has oppressively discharged poet Ahmed Al-arami from faculty for having taught a novel called "*Hurma*" by Yemeni author Ali Al-maqri, under the pretense of containing licentious scenes. The University`s despotic actions have been accompanied by a decapitation threat by the district-active Al-Qaida.

The National Group of cultural policies

Founded on January, 2013, the National Group of cultural policies in Yemen have recently joined the cultural policies program in the Arab Region.

The Group identified its objectives for the first half of the current year by establishing the core group, convening monthly meetings, publishing press articles on cultural policies in Yemen, meeting with influential cultural officials, discussing legal consultations about cultural policies, hold introductory meetings on cultural policies in other governorates, in addition to designing a logo and administrative print.

Accordingly, the National Group held an introductory meeting with several Yemeni cultural and media institutions (Knowledge Forum, Cultural Media Center, Yemen Music House, anaween.net, Asharq Cultural Foundation). The meeting has resulted in establishing « The Non-governmental National Committee of Cultural Policies » which acts as a starting point for

upcoming actions. Membership of the Committee was available for all institutions involved in culture and art, as well as artists, authors, inventors and journalists. Participants agreed on inviting a representative of the public cultural sector together with chairman of the parliament's cultural committee.

By the end of June, 2013, the Group has held three other meetings at which the attendees of the last one approved on re-naming the Group into « Yemen Group for Cultural Policies » and choosing a new logo.

The Group was enriched by several new members, which increased the number up to 10 members (8 institutions & 2 cultural activists)

Formal communications were initiated to urge and motivate governmental entities through holding three meetings with Mr. Hicham Ali, undersecretary of Ministry of Culture.

The National Committee held two consecutive meetings with deputy Minister of Culture Mrs. Huda Ablan and discussed mutual cooperation between governmental and non-governmental institutions in order to develop a national cultural strategy under the new social contract prevailing in Yemen.

Articles and studies dealing with cultural policies as well as activities carried out by the Group have been assiduously published in newspapers.

Within the framework of National Dialogue Conference, the Group is currently in close coordination with the relevant cultural committee to ensure complete apprehension of outcomes resulting from Policies and Culture Development Conference within the new social contract. The Group also liaises with the French Embassy that supervises the drafting of new constitution for the Republic in order to share views about the relevant culture items included.

The Group recognized a direct impact of the actions previously taken through engagement with the Ministry of Culture to vitalize cultural policies. Such engagement has significantly assisted in driving the interest in this inactive and long-concealed domain. Accordingly, the Ministry has decided to launch Policies and Culture Development Conference which was suspended and deferred since 2009. Responding to the pressure exerted by the Group, the Ministry of Culture changed dogmatic mentality and discourse in dealing with the independent cultural sector through seeking the Group's assistance in updating the conference blueprint and adding supplementary sessions to keep pace with the democratic change in response to the Group's demands under the title of "intellectuals & Change". The Ministry has also invited all committee members to attend the conference. Two sessions were headed by the Group's coordinator who presented several proposals representing the Group's vision for the future of cultural policies. While a few members of the Group were involved in framing recommendations, the coordinator recited the closing statement and final recommendations of the first Yemeni conference tackling cultural policies.

A special committee has been mandated to redesign the conference outcomes. The committee equally consisted of undersecretary of Ministry and director general of manuscripts (representing public sector), and two members of the national Group (coordinator and another member). The Group succeeded in imposing crucial items within the recommendations and outcomes¹ of the conference, widely considered a preface and solid pillar to build upon a new national culture policy.

Egypt:

Ministry of Culture issuing « purging » decisions: dismissals and collective resignations accompanied the era of former president Mohammed Morsi

Initiating 2nd stage of « Cultural Policy for all Egyptians » campaign, conducting a questionnaire about cultural policies to collect as many opinions and visions of those involved as possible.



In May 2013, Egypt has witnessed a cabinet reshuffle including the Ministry of Culture where Prof. Alaa Abdul-Aziz was appointed to replace former minister Mohammed Sabir Arab, who frequently submitted and retracted his resignation. The last few months of Minister Arab's term of office have not brought forth any weighty changes or legislations that would have made a difference pertaining cultural policies in Egypt. Yet, the decisions taken were limited to aspects of activation, scholarships and an attempt to revive the cultural movement.

The Ministry then has provided opportunity to several young directors to present their unique experiments through « 100 Nights Theater » project held in Hanager Arts Center in support of theatrical talents. On the other hand, the Supreme Council of Culture has given permission to apply for full-time scholarships in arts, literature and social sciences during the fiscal year 2013 \ 2014, by subsidizing their creative works. By the end of the time dedicated for full-time scholarships, the Council also organized an exhibition comprising the creative works designed by recipients of scholarships. In a similar context, the Minister has stated that all theatrical performances will be available free of charge for the public throughout the National Theater Festival.

The cabinet reshuffle has brought forth a serious crisis between the Ministry and intellectuals through a set of decisions and statements made by the new Minister Alaa Abdulaziz, in which the decisions were closely connected to the legitimacy of Egyptian Revolution and the task of cleansing the Ministry.

The decisions issued by Prof. Abdul-Aziz included – but not restricted to – a set of termination of employment as follows: Prof. Ahmad Mujahid; head of Egyptian Book Authority, Prof. Abulnasser Hassan; head of Egyptian National Library & Archives, Prof. ENA Abdel Dayem; head of Cairo Opera House, Prof. Salah Al-miligi; head of Sector of Fine Arts. Termination of employment of four senior officials at the Egyptian National Library & Archives: Prof. Abdul Wahed Al-nabawi; head of the Authority and of Central Administration, Prof. Mohammed Sabri Al-dali; head Central Administration of Scientific Centers, Prof. Eman Izz Eddine ; director of Heritage Library, Prof. Nivine Mohammed Mahmoud ; supervisor of artworks quality.

Actions taken by the Minister during his two-month term of office include – but not restricted to – the following:

- Re-naming « Family Library » project to become « The Revolution Library » without issuing executive decree.
- Calling off prizes awarded to creators under the pretext of invalid nominations and preventing white-collar crimes.
- Conducting a study identifying projects of translating Arab productions into other languages to be initiated on the African level.
- Establishing the Intellectual Union to identify cultural groups without restricting it to a particular one.
- Creating a committee of legal affairs, administrative & fiscal inspection to study complaints submitted by employers and promptly implementing provisions pronounced by Administrative Justice on behalf of employers throughout the successive eras which have intentionally disregarded such implementation.
- Documentation of January 25th Revolution through books and documentary films, a project exclusively discussed with representatives of Justice & Freedom Party

In response to such policies and actions, the Egyptian cultural circles are now witnessing several protests whereby a group of intellectuals and artists have resigned, while other musicians announced full suspension and began a sit-down strike at Cairo Opera House. Another sit-down strike has been simultaneously carried out inside the Minister's office.

The Attorney General has earlier received a notification by a pro-Minister official requesting the prosecution of 31 authors, intellectuals, artists and politicians on charges of disturbing public security and state actions through taking over the Minister's office.

In addition to arbitrary dismissals of employers listed above, Cairo Contemporary Dance Center was recently threatened of closure as a group of Muslim Brotherhood's officials heaped abuses against Ballet Dance. In protest of such an insult, Cairo Opera House Ballet Company performed Zorba down the street near the Minister's office. Furthermore, a group of artists, intellectuals and activists have signed a communique to save and support Cairo Contemporary Dance Center against such reckless and unjustified decision aiming at burying a fruitful cultural space and exclusion of more than 20 regular students.

On the other hand, the Minister of Culture issued several decisions supporting cultural and art exchange with countries all over the world. Two Units for development, planning and follow-up have been also introduced to leverage the support provided by Operational Unit for Development Assistant (OUDA) in order to implement technical and administrative development to all sectors within the Ministry of Culture. The Minister formerly confirmed the close cooperation between the two recently-founded units will result in establishing the national project for managing and securing documents of governmental institutions, as well as boosting the performance of Egyptian National Library & Archives, and delivering its responsibilities as a national archive of the state.

Prof. Alaa Abdul-Aziz submitted his resignation only 60 days after taking over the office in response the mass popular protests which eventually toppled President Mohammed Morsi from office on June 4th 2013.

Former Minister Mohammed Sabir Arab has been re-appointed within the provisional government. Protesters continued their sit-down strike, rejecting to recognize Prof. Arab and calling for electing a new Minister by intellectuals themselves.

The National Group of cultural policies

The year covered by the report has been described as a latent period regarding the performance of "Egyptian National Group of Cultural Policies" due to the full-time engagement of most members in the current turbulent events. Intellectuals continued their sit-in strike to protest the (former) Minister Alaa Abdul-Aziz.

Three meetings have been held by the National Group (from January to July) through which they attempted to develop and implement the 2013 plan that recommended the completion of chapters identifying cultural policies by next September & adopting new and more adequate structure and formulation for such chapters to be totally different from Arterial's. Moreover, no progress has been detected in terms of the intended-on website plan in order to promote the cultural policies and National Group.

The Group strives to combine new members while urging actual ones to attend meetings as some has been idle and absent. A meeting is supposed to be held every two months.

The Group is now developing a survey to gather information about creating the chapters of cultural policies. The survey questions the role played by Ministry of Culture as well as legislations related to culture and freedoms. The process is supposed to be concluded on August and widely distributed within the same month.

The National Group has launched the 2nd stage of « Cultural Policy for all Egyptians » campaign on May, which at first involved printing different publications (postcards, stickers, and posters) widely distributed in Cairo and other 13 governorates and cities. The publications included new designs and logos such as "*Culture lies in streets and alleys, not the Ministry*" among others. Logos followed "*I have the right to*" pattern like "*I have the right to act | listen to music*" etc. the campaign also involves posting advertisements down the streets and public transportations, producing a film analyzing cultural policies

Palestine:

Bethlehem has been recognized as world heritage, while subsidizing culture has been significantly decreased

Palestinian cultural vision for the next phase: authenticity & modernization, cultural resistance and saving the environment.

Establishment of national Group: (Institution of Cultural Policy)

On June 2013, a new government has been formed with Minister of Culture remained vacant. A series of acrid criticisms by the cultural milieu preceded the assignment of Prof. Anwar Abu Aisha as the new Minister of Culture.

Weeks prior to issuance of this report, the Palestinian Ministry of Culture held several meetings with advisory committees of governorates to develop the strategic plan of cultural sectors for 2014-2016. Recommendations proposed by the attendees included: create solid communications with cultural circles in 1948 Palestinian territories and overseas, promoting infrastructure (cultural centers, theaters ...) particularly in some governorates, consolidation of Women-gender dimension in developing policies and modifying plans, full-time mandate of

Municipalities` staff for cultural activities. In addition to identifying specific components to shape the Palestinian cultural vision in the next stage: inclusion of authenticity & modernization, cultural resistance and environmental issues, proposal to deny cultural normalization with the other side, paying special attention to people with disabilities in order to be incorporated within the executive plan of the Ministry.

Celebrating the National Day of Culture & Women`s Day, the Ministry of Culture held a ceremony honoring different cultural institutions led and run by women in the city of Ramallah. The Old Ramallah, as well as the Church of the Nativity and Pilgrimage Path have been recognized as world heritage by the United Nations educational, scientific and cultural organization (UNESCO) during the second half of 2012.

In terms of Palestinian Cooperation Institution, a draft strategy plan for the cultural sector has been developed (still officially unapproved) including the West bank, Gaza Strip, 1948 territories and Lebanon. The cultural work scope has been limited to three trajectories: preserving the Palestinian culture & identity, promoting Palestinian institutions, development of workforce through patronizing and improving cultural creativity.

The Institution laid the cornerstone of Palestinian Museum in Birzeit in April 11th. The project aims at creating an open dialogue among Palestinians at home and overseas. Special efforts will be directed at investigating and fully understanding the Palestinian history. The expected total cost of the project is \$1 million.

A national study about cultural infrastructures recently introduced by the Palestinian Statistic Center has shown that Palestine included 14 active museums in 2012: of which 10 of them are located in the West Bank and 4 in Gaza Strip, whereas the active cultural centers counted 646, of which 577 in the West Bank and 69 in Gaza Strip. The Governorate of Nablus enjoyed the highest number of active centers (107 centers), followed by Al-khalil (86 centers). According to the study, cultural centers hosted 9.5 thousands activities in 2012 compared to 9 thousands in 2011, of which 10.3% are seminars, 8.1% lectures, 63.0% training courses, 16.1% art shows and 2.5% exhibitions. The total 10 active theaters (7 in West Bank and 3 in Gaza Strip) hosted 122 plays in 2012 of which 68 plays in West Bank and 54 in Gaza Strip. The study indicated that 50% of the performances played were dedicated for children compared to 26.2 for adult and 23.8 for both.

It should be noted here that key events held since the beginning of the year include: Theater of the Oppressed \ Ashtar Theater, the 7th Ramallah Contemporary Dance Festival, Palestine International Festival, Apricot Festival in the village of Jaffna, Rozana Heritage Festival in Birzeit, /si:n/ festival of video art and performance, Palestinian Circus School Festival and shows, April Child Festival, Visual Arts Exhibitions by the students of International Academy of Contemporary Arts in Palestine, the 6th Music Festival, in addition to dozens of art galleries such as Khalil Raad Photo Gallery, Colored Fish Exhibition and others.

The significant decrease in financing Palestinian cultural sector has been under scrutiny and detection as cultural institutions nowadays pay more attention to such point driven by the following reasons:

1. Declining of international supporting institution interest that have recently focused on Arab Spring countries
2. Economic deterioration in Palestine and re-arrangement of priorities at the official level, whereby Culture is rated at the lowest scale.
3. Decrease of money appropriated by Municipalities for cultural projects due to improper taxation as a result of economic deterioration.
4. Gradual decrease of funds provided by Ford Institution to subsidize cultural institutions
5. Decrease of allocated funds usually provided by public sector institutions
6. Limited financial support by Public Institution of Cultural Events (institutionally& individually).

The National Group of cultural policies

The Group was founded in Palestine under the designation “Institution of Cultural Policy” and set the following objectives:

- Motivate employers in different public and private sectors to stress the vital role of culture in society and its relation to human development
- Creating a cognitive foundation to promote cultural planning and investment among Palestinians inside Palestine.
- Develop legislative and administrative mechanisms to improve cultural activities
- Follow-up cultural practice parameters and progress made in terms of legislations and laws
- Defending the right of Palestinian culture to be adequately and fairly represented in public and private mass media
- Development of cultural management, cultural media, cultural manufacturing and cultural activation
- Protect cultural diversity and encouraging national dialogue

The Group is supposed to establish a constituent committee comprising of different culture and art sectors and representing Palestinians in Jerusalem, West Bank, Gaza Strip, Palestinian Territories 1948, and exile and overseas.

Founding members are: Asma Al-ghoul, Atef Abu Seif, Arij Hijazi, Fedaa Touma, Khalid Alyan, Rasha Huloieh, Antoin Shalhat, Ghassan Raktan, Khalid Horani, Vira Tamari, Alya Rayan. Amal Kaoush, Serin Halila, Rawan Sharaf, Alaa Khalili, Emile Ashrawi, Sali Abu Bakr and Fatin Farhat.

Since legal registration of the Institution in Palestinian Ministry of Interior takes longer time than expected due to complexities of legal procedures followed in Palestine (driven by existence of some non-Palestinian officials), the alternative option is working under the framework of legally registered and audited Institution. Accordingly, “Dalia Institution” is assumed to act as administrative and financial sponsor of the project. An application attached with detailed explanations was submitted to the Board of Directors for approval.

Legal registration in the Ministry of Interior entails identifying the location of Institution. Accordingly, an agreement was conducted with “Nawa Institution” to host the activities carried out by the Institution of Cultural Policy. Several meetings were held individually via Skype and the first founding members’ meeting was determined on August 5th, 2013.

Syria:

World heritage sites are extensively endangered

Violations against artists continues, while civil organizations are arduously developing abilities to substantially involve in cultural change

The first half of 2013 has not brought forth significant changes at the legislative or legal level. The Syrian government suspended the legislative “reform” initiated in 2012 and shifted its focus on constitutional amendments and other laws that have directly or indirectly influenced cultural activities.

After the eruption of uprisings in Syria and despite the absence of noticeable radical changes affecting the organizational structures as well as mechanisms of decision making at the governmental level, some newly-emerged political factors have fundamentally transformed the cultural scene, foreshadowing a long-term change at the level of cultural policies in Syria, irrespective of the upcoming political change. The most important of all is the emergence of dozens cultural civil institutions out of the traditionally-approved laws, legislations and unprecedented activities of civil communities.

Such a change might dwindle and become transient unless serious and prompt actions are taken to mobilize support and build alliances in order to develop the independent sector to exert pressure on political change mechanisms at the cultural level. Active cultural institutions and communities are conducting remarkable activities although no specific strategic plans are adopted yet; however they are all focusing on the following points:

1. Promoting civil values and the power of law
2. Peaceful change
3. Active contribution in building the civil Syrian society
4. Providing studies, field and academic researches required for cultural planning, conducting cultural and intellectual projects in alignment with the requirements of new society
5. Develop cultural policies and basic trends of culture and arts at the national level in order to incorporate the concept of culture within development.
6. Activating the independent art movement
7. Preserve freedom of media through adopting different work tools.

In a press release issued on Jun 20th 2013, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) stated that the inclusion of the six world heritage sites in Syria in now endangered. The release aimed at highlighting the peril threatening those sites due to the current situations. The intended sites are: the Old City of Aleppo, the Old City of Damascus, the Old City of Bosra, Saladin citadel, the historic city of Palmira and the Old Villages located North Syria.

The National Group of cultural policies

Due to the radical changes currently taking place in Syria, National Groups have been launched during the first half of 2013, within a totally different structure and mechanism normally applied in other countries.

As the project coordinator, (“Ettijahat...Independent Culture) developed the annual work plan comprising a series of activities to attain a comprise formula in terms of cultural change and the role of independent cultural sector in the current and futuristic phases alike.

In this context, a communicating base was established consisting of almost 50 people (currently) of cultural actors, well-informed about the developments made in order to provide advices and consultations.

Simultaneously, a comparative research is being conducted investigating the different usages of art and culture in making peace \ consolidating national peace and settlement of disputes in countries that have undergone similar conditions. The research aims at:

- Develop proactive visions to mitigate the painful and agonizing impacts of Syrian struggle at the level of social fabric
- Suggesting typical cultural programs and constructive approaches to avoid social clash and cementing social solidarity.
- Circulate international experiences and practices which adopted cultural interventions to promote national peace.
- Engagement of best practices proposed by international organizations to be exploited by cultural actors and policy makers in Syria.

The first workshop is also being prepared containing 30 participants to be held next September in Beirut. Topics covered include:

- Agree key concepts associated with a specific work.
- Consensus on a unified concept of culture to be adopted by participants
- Identifying the current culture actors at the national level
- Depicting the status quo of cultural policy in Syria
- Visualizing the nature of future cultural change
- Setting the objectives of the proposed cultural policy to be approved in the future
- Identifying the most important roles played by the independent cultural sector; at present and future

A questionnaire about change & cultural policies in Syria is currently being developed with the objective to get access to 300 Syrian artists and cultural actors living inside and outside Syria. Parts of the results concluded will be used during the workshop. In summary, the questionnaire represents a starting point to obtain the sought-after compromise formula within one year.

Lebanon:

Establishing the Unified Mutual Fund for Lebanese artists, closure of several cultural centers on political grounds

Active efforts to boost “Assembly for Preserving Heritage”, “Reclaim the Theater for Beirut” movement, and “The Lebanese Observatory for Supervisory Practices”

Events occurred during the first half of 2013 have closely correlated with cultural movement and legislations in Lebanon; most importantly, the decree issued by Minister Gabi lion on founding the Unified Mutual Fund for Lebanese artists that aims at protecting Lebanese artists and ensuring a dignified life healthily and socially through providing hospitalization, medical treatment, proper compensation and other related services. The Fund included 8 associations: Association of Theater, Cinema, Radio & TV Actors, Professional Musicians Association, Association of Zajal Poets, Fine Artists Association, Association of Graphic

Artists & Expressionist Painting, Association of Professional Artists and Association of Theater, Cinema and TV Actors in North Lebanon,

Mutual Fund Authority – comprising one representative for each Union – has recently notified the associations listed above that by the end of July, hospitalization cards will be delivered to members who meet the stipulated requirements. The activation of Mutual Fund has resulted in raising 300 million Lebanese Liras totally collected from taxes and donations (of which 100 million donated from the Ministry of Culture to be included annually within the budget). The new taxes prescribed on behalf of the Fund for local and foreign artworks (in addition to 10% tax collected by Ministry of Finance) are still controversial among unions, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Tourism, relevant art and cultural institutions.

The interrelation between culture and policy in Lebanon is crystal clear with vehement trend of anti-cultural normalization with Israel. In this regard, director Ziad Dwairi's film "The Strike" was banned in Lebanon by the ministry of Interior, as some shots were filmed in Israel and casted by Israeli actors. Accordingly, the Ministry of Culture has excluded the film from representing Lebanon in Oscar nominations. The governmental actions were severely denounced by several Lebanese institutions. "Media against Violence" issued a statement describing the decision as "impregnable obstacle and fundamental hindrance facing the excellence of Lebanese creators, and a disappointment for artists that would discourage them from returning home". On the other hand, plenty of entities advocated the Government's attitude, condemning the filming in Israel; "Campaign to Boycott Supporters of Israel in Lebanon" for example.

Early in 2013, hundreds of activists of "*George Ibrahim Abdullah*" campaign have shut down French cultural centers across Lebanon and carried out sit-downs where they distributed bulletins and photos of George inside and outside the centers. Protestors also published a unified communiqué in which they coupled the re-opening of French cultural centers with the release of George Abdullah.

The last year witnessed plenty of civic and cultural movements condemning the Ministry's decrees and demanding for new amendments. "Assembly for Preserving Heritage" organized a sit-in strike in protest to destroying the Phoenician archeological site in Al-husn Port which was excluded from the general inventory by the Ministry of Culture. Launched in 2011 in protest of closing Beirut Theater, "Reclaim the Theater for Beirut" continued its efforts and called for establishing a special group to preserve cultural facilities in Lebanon. The Group met with the official committee responsible for pursuing and studying the case and agreed on mutual recommendations recently forwarded to the Minister of Culture. The recommendations proposed a temporal seizure on part of property No. 243 at Ain Al-mraiseh district where Beirut Theater was built.

In a similar development, "The Lebanese Observatory for Supervisory Practices" continued the strife to modify the law of censorship applied on films after presenting a draft law last year as an introduction to conduct a thorough review of laws comprising all creative practices. In close collaboration with "*Maharat Institution*" the Observatory is developing integrated campaign to stress the importance of reviewing – for academic circles – relevant censorship practices as well as the new project, in addition to establishing lobbies within civil communities and inside the Parliament since censorship in Lebanon continues to oppress creative artists.

Promoting cultural partnership between the two countries, the Iraqi cultural center has been inaugurated in Beirut months after the opening of Turkish cultural center “Yusuf Emri” in 2012. Later in 2012, the Romanian chairmanship of the European Cultural Centers Network in Lebanon which usually executes its works and planning on a mutual basis has concluded. The Network will be chaired by Goethe Institute for two consecutive years 2013 – 2014.

The National Group of cultural policies

The core panel for the National Groups in Lebanon was founded in 2012 and consisted of a juristic expert, cultural expert and a coordinator: who assume the networking along with a wide range of cultural activists and actors and civil society institutions. The Group aims at pursuing urgent cultural issues; most importantly: censorship and the preservation and activation of endangered cultural facilities.

In pursuing of the abovementioned objectives, the Group deemed necessary to conduct a comprehensive legal study investigating several topics and problematic issues regarding cultural affairs and posing for discussion with active cultural groups and activists in order to develop defined cultural policies that would promote cultural sector in Lebanon. A preliminary survey of relevant laws and legislations has been carried out; a draft application has been produced to monitor the prioritization of topics and phases to develop a cultural policy in Lebanon provided that it must be distributed among representative samples from both public and independent sectors. In another context, the Young Policy Document in Lebanon was developed by Youth Forum. The document contains several recommendations according to different sectors including Education and Culture.

Prior to the actual establishment of the National Group, the activities exercised by activists have just come to an impasse without being practically executed due to disparities of vision and mechanisms between the Regional Program of Cultural Policies on one side, and members of the National Group on the other. The former acts as a regional patron, supporter and financier of National Groups, and eventually presupposes that members of these Groups are culture-fervent actors deeply involved in cultural issues and centers being the main cause they are obsessed with and strive for, and not a monotonous job within specific time and salary. Henceforth, the Program limited its support to promote the Group`s activities. On the other side, the Group believes that having faith in developing cultural policies as the “main cause” of independent sector is not to be contradicted with the need to (partial) full-time dedication in order to accomplish actual improvements since such kinds or work entail full-time dedication, accumulation and commitment, and can never be properly achieved as marginal or secondary activity in leisure time.

Both sides strive to reach an agreement to officially establish the National Group and launch its activities.

Jordan:

Continue to hold festivals while censorship is tightening its grip on cultural life.

EUNIC convenes four meetings to discuss the challenges faced by different creative sectors; preparatory meetings to establish the National Group are in progress.

The Jordanian culture scene in 2013 has been in accordance with the cultural customary mode without unexpected changes, while the mentality of festivals and celebrations sweepingly prevailed through holding festivities like Aqaba Cultural Festival, Reading for All and the 28th Jerash Festival. In a similar development, the culturally - activated city of Ajloun has been appointed Jordan Capital of Culture 2013 succeeding Ma`an.

In terms of cultural policies and legislations, the relevant authorities has issued a decree by which News Websites are required to register for press & Publishing Authority and obtain a license following the steps of published newspapers and press. Such action is totally unconventional in e-press. The decree stipulates that each news website must be headed by a Journalist Union member. Owners of websites had to comply within the 90 days time limit before extending the period until June 2nd, 2013. Consequently, more than 250 news websites have been blocked which aroused controversy within press and juristic circles.

With the increasing role of censorship, Al-Hussein Cultural Center deleted several scenes from the Swedish film (Hamilton: In the Interest of the Nation) under the pretense of 'paying respect to Jordanian culture'. While some held the decision as purely personal by the Center's director, others observed a new approach of censorship by relevant authorities after being slightly lenient at earlier times.

In another context, applications for governmental funding of organizations during 2013 have been submitted to Organization fund to encourage partnership with voluntary sector under social, cultural, health, environmental and touristic development schemes, and eventually fostering civic and popular engagement as well as promoting organizations in taking decisions as a key multi-supported topic. Automation of organizations' officially-listed categories and date has been suggested in order to identify national priorities, developmental initiatives and available networking opportunities in a way that serves sustainability of different sectors in pursuance of the best international practices of this field.

Jordan Artists Union has signed two agreements of mutual cooperation with Arab Artists Union and Egyptian Filmmakers Union to activate art activities between the two countries and exchange experiences particularly in terms of youth initiatives and promote committees in order to preserve artists and other items required to activate art and cinematic activities at the level of Arab World.

The Jordanian Association for Cinematic Culture has been publicly introduced with the following objectives: establishment an annual festival for Arab and international films, training and qualifying a new generation of cinema, providing opportunities for young creators who are unable to financially implement their views and ideas, holding periodic festivity for all types of Jordanian films, inviting local, Arab and international filmmakers to discuss their artworks, creating job opportunities for Jordanian directors and actors, promoting fruitful local environment for filming local and international films.

Four meetings have been held between EUNIC (a subsidiary of the European Union), British Council, Cervantes Institute, French Center, Goethe Institute and Italian Institute on one side, with four groups: Audiovisual (films, games, animation, post-production services), Creative Services (design, advertisements, media & digital communications), Performing Arts (theater, dance, music, festivals) and Visual Arts (sculpture, painting, photography, galleries, museums, etc...). A group of personalities representing public, private and educational sectors have been invited to the meetings where they discussed and analytically diagnosed difficulties and challenges facing each sector and opportunities available for production. On its

part, EUNIC proposed launching on-line guidebook where employers within the abovementioned four sectors can provide personal information and projects data.

National Group of cultural policies

The National Group in Jordan is still being established as cultural activists are striving to initiate the Group and communicating with cultural actors, activists and intellectuals to create the core group.

The establishment phase is challenged by absence of employers' full-time dedication as well as inadequate response by cultural circles.

A preliminary plan has been developed and an extended meeting has been held with wide range of cultural actors to join efforts on establishing the Group.

Activists applied for the Group website in World Press as being a blog, and included all studies, reports, summaries and meetings' outcomes. Such materials will be available to Visitors of the website to interact with.

General remarks about the work of National Groups

- Under-establishment Groups are challenged by the necessity for employers to be full-time dedicated; otherwise, the Group's productivity and pillars will be negatively affected
- Plans developed by the Group in order to achieve its objectives are not consistently applied, and the terms are often altered to align with current conditions of the country, directly reflecting the members' flexibility and interaction with current and emerging political and social situations in their countries.
- Despite the accumulation created by some National Groups, the lack of networking and proper utilization of other experiments are still a key feature of its works, particularly for newly-established Groups with the exception of Algerian Group that attempted at communicating its experience to Mauritania and Tunisia.
- It should be noted here that National Groups in Lebanon, Egypt and Syria are developing a questionnaire to monitor attitudes and opinions adopted by cultural actors in order to be deeply involved as many as possible in shaping the future scenarios for development of cultural policies. In this regard, mutual benefit and cooperation among the three countries emerge as extremely crucial.
- Strategies as well as tools of influence approved by the Groups varied considerably; providing drafts for public opinion, mobilizing views to gains support independently from the government, organizing sit-down strikes and protests against the government represented by Minister of Culture, or collaborating with some officials inside the government to influence its policies and decisions. The variance of such methods can be attributed to the composition of governments and communities in which they operate. It would be useful to study the evolution of the aforementioned strategies and methods at later time in order to identify the most adventurous and effective ones.
- A noticeable disparity in the internal structure and framework of each Group can also be detected. Some Groups have been established collectively to attract as many activists and actors as possible, taking into consideration the issue of diversity. Other Groups are head-centered. The extent to which Groups genuinely represent the intellectuals and cultural circles in the concerned country is controversial issue that needs to be closely scrutinized and analyzed. Correspondingly, preserving the most flexible and simplified mechanisms is extremely important in order to develop the works carried out.

- The inclination toward authorization of institutions (organizations) in Morocco and Palestine is clearly evident, whereas other countries keep on developing cultural policies outside the institutional framework. Countries like Algeria is seeking to maintain institutional structures and mechanisms without authorization since applicable laws prevent such practice within civil institutions.

This topic is raised within the context of questioning the sustainability of National Groups and its ability to independently work and influence the *Cultural Resource*-led cultural policies programs in the Arab Region

