



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Vision and Voice -
Rule of Law Leadership Network Conference
John Smith Trust/FCO

JOHN SMITH
TRUST

“What I see now is that people have started to believe that change can happen from the bottom to the top. That soft power, which is in their hands, can be more powerful than hard power. If that was really happening now then tomorrow will be just better.”

Mai Matar, Bahrain

“We are acting now -
we are not asking ‘Why?’
we know the answer ...
We understand that the future
of our region is in jeopardy.
We all feel it and know
we have to be part of the solution
by doing what we can do,
by contributing and not sit
on the side lines or simply talk
or complain.”

Lana Nimri, Jordan

Preface

Created in 1996 the John Smith Trust (JST) is a UK-based international not-for-profit organisation that seeks to promote good governance, social justice and the rule of law by nurturing a new generation of leaders who are committed to making a difference in their countries and societies. Through its Fellowship Programmes JST aims to build leadership capacity and a network of change agents to strengthen social and economic development and build more transparent and accountable governance structures in regions where it greatly matters.

The Trust believes that effective politics, leadership and governance are fundamental to development and progress. By investing in individuals and giving them the opportunity to share learning and debate in new contexts, they will be better equipped to use their abilities to bring about beneficial change within the governance of their own countries particularly through targeted Action Plans. The JST network acts as a self-sustaining platform of local expertise in which members support one another in a shared mission for development, peace and security within their societies and region.

“There is so much good that can be done if we seize the opportunities which a modern world makes available. There is so much we can do; there is so much we need to do.” The Rt Hon. John Smith QC MP

While the Fellowship involves a year-long engagement, at its heart is a three week UK-based programme which offers participants the chance to explore collectively and individually how politics, business, public administration and culture work (or fail) in another national environment. During the programme the Fellows value the challenge to their existing paradigms, finding out about each other’s systems and receive in-depth learning through workplace ‘attachments’ with relevant organisations and personal development meetings. The mutually-beneficial networking opportunities presented through these meetings and visits offer Fellows the chance to learn from well-established models and experiences that can assist them in delivering their Action Plans, whilst also giving hosts the opportunity to build relationships with the Fellows that might be of value in terms of their own work or policy goals. Since 2011 JST has placed Fellows from the former Soviet Union and the Middle East with over 400 organisations and institutions within the UK. While UK experience is a major focus of the programme many of the speakers (who represent all sectors of UK society) have international expertise which they draw upon when talking through different issues.

The aim of the John Smith Trust is to keep the memory of John Smith alive through work that reflects his values. Feedback from the Fellows shows a strong desire to reflect the ethos of John Smith, which at its heart includes instilling a belief in public service values. The best testimony comes from Dana Al Dairani, a 2014 Fellow, who recently wrote “I, of course, did not know John Smith but I have seen him in each of you and in each of these Fellows. I guess his vision and values are travelling through us now and I consider this a valuable responsibility. Beyond the name, I guess each one of us now has a John in her and in him - thank you for this.”

“I intend to work
for the rest of my life
to help make access to justice
in the Iraqi Kurdistan region
a reality for all
and to establish a genuine
Rule of Law for my country.”

Haval Raoof, Iraq

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“When I started the programme,
I didn’t know from which point
I had to start, which level:
religious or political.
They gave me the way to start.”

Isa Alarabi, Bahrain

Introduction

The FCO/John Smith Trust Rule of Law Fellowship was started in 2011 as part of the Arab Partnership Programme. The overall purpose of the initiative was to see the delivery of 120 individual Action Plans that support the Rule of Law, broadly defined, in the region and create a resilient peer-to-peer network of individual reformers who can extend best practice in the Rule of Law, improve the effectiveness and accountability of institutions and access to justice to see more and better individual projects delivered and regional projects initiated by harnessing UK expertise which has, in a number of cases, helped with implementation.

The Vision and Voice conference was a three-day summative conference marking the conclusion of the first five programmes in the John Smith Trust/FCO Rule of Law Fellowship where participants from the five Fellowship countries (Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Oman) gathered in London. The vibrancy and resilience of the connections made between the Fellows was clear from the phenomenal response to the conference. Over 100 Fellows indicated a desire to participate with ‘networking’ cited as one of the most important reasons to attend. The Proceedings of this event, as detailed in this report, outline the Fellows’ reflections on building the Rule of Law in the region, demonstrate the delivery of their individual Action Plans and show the seriousness of intent on behalf of the alumni to deepen, expand and develop the network on a number of different levels: across cohorts and across the region.

“The most important thing for me was the mixture of experiences and cultures in that room.”

Elias Diab, Lebanon

A John Smith Trust Fellow is a high-flying and influential leader with the potential to make a substantial impact on the future development of his or her country. The individual experience of many Fellows has been described as “life changing” and most report a profound shift in their perspectives as a result of participating in the Fellowship. Fellows have ranged from: politicians and civil servants to civil society leaders, journalists, entrepreneurs, and lawyers who, as a result of their Fellowship experience, have championed judicial reform; promoted economic diversity; pioneered women’s rights advocacy; improved accountability in public institutions; and promoted national reconciliation and dialogue. A full list of JST’s Middle Eastern Fellows and short profiles can be found in Annex 1 of this report.

The conference itself was a mix of Action Plan progress reports, panel discussions and networking activities. These were designed to reflect the building blocks of the Fellowship experience:

- **Individual Action Plans** - projects to be implemented that the Fellows develop during their time in the UK where they meet British experts who can help them achieve their objectives. During the conference Fellows from 2014 reported on progress of their project
- **Personal Development Plans** - one-to-one development meetings which sometimes focus on Fellows’ projects and other times on much broader issues and ambitions. Before the conference Fellows submitted their personal reflections on its themes which were reflected in the panel discussion with the guest speakers
- **Group workshop programmes** - major themes around the Rule of Law are discussed and debated during the UK residential programme with leading UK experts. The conference workshops were designed to reflect these group discussion sessions
- **Networking** - underpinning and running through each of these activities is the time and space for the Fellows get to know and value one another

These Proceedings have been collated to show how individuals can create change if they select workable strategies and are supported in implementing these strategies over an extended period of time through a network of their peers and individual mentoring.

The report is divided into two sections: Reflecting on the Rule of Law and Gender in the Middle East and, Actioning Change. Section one tracks the Fellows’ Vision and Voice discussions on how they can make change happen in the Middle East in relation to the Rule of Law and Gender both individually and collectively through the JST network. The second section shows the impact of JST Action Plans and contains Fellows’ progress reports on their individual project implementation to date and what they have achieved.



The Vision and Voice Conference

The John Smith Trust/FCO Fellowship was launched with a pilot in 2011. Since then there have been five programmes, with 120 Fellows and their projects, supported through a UK residential programme and a subsequent year-long engagement. The Vision and Voice conference was the summative event of this first set of programmes in the Middle East and the first time that representatives from all of the programmes have come together in one place. The three-day conference, which concluded on International Women's Day, was designed to allow the Fellows to reflect on two themes that have run through each programme – the Rule of Law and Gender – and provide a forum to stress that the Middle East is not just defined by its problems. Rather, that it is a young and creative region, with the Fellows demonstrating the difference a group of energetic and powerful individuals will make to their societies.

The conference enabled many Fellows from the different cohorts to meet and engage with each other whilst also allowing time for individual reflection. The outputs from these encounters are impossible to capture but there was much discussion of joint projects, sharing of ideas and exchanging of contacts. Over the weekend, Fellows worked in small breakout groups, larger breakout groups and had plenary discussions with guest speakers to address the questions at hand. In parallel, Fellows were also asked to reflect on and produce visual materials representing International Women's Day. Through these discussions JST also generated a debate around the future of the network and how the network might contribute to building a safe and sustainable future for the region as Fellows completed individual and collective bridging and bonding exercises administered by Extended Minds. During these more formal encounters JST took 'minutes' in order to capture the discussions that were being had. Fellows were also invited to submit abstracts and papers reflecting on the themes of the conference. A combination of these submissions and the 'minutes' taken are detailed in this section.

The Middle East today is very different to when the programme began in 2011, yet despite the changes in the region's situation there was a remarkable degree of parity between the discussions held during each of the workshop programmes since 2011 as well as during the final discussions over the Vision and Voice summative conference in March 2015, demonstrating that John Smith Trust Fellows generally share a focus on how they can make change happen in their region. The specific areas of change discussed during the Vision and Voice conference and key recommendations are summarised in the table on page 37 of this report.

It is important to state that the conclusions reached concern only the overarching themes that came through most strongly in the discussions and that specific considerations were embedded in a range of deeper discussions, differences of opinion and perspectives that permeated the debates. In part, these themes echo common issues that arise when the Rule of Law is debated in general terms and the emphasis on the issue of gender tended to, if anything, enhance the nature of these discussions but are often not reflected directly in the Action Plan reports and project proposals.

As Wafa Nimri puts it:

"Tides of resistance are high, ideologies of extremism seem resolute and our human capital is ill managed. It appears as though everybody is playing to a different tune and dancing to a different drum. Except, many of us have challenged the status quo. By his/her own means and in their own way, each Fellow has created a tiny ripple of hope that is yet to form a powerful grid for sustainable development, peaceful co-existence and innovative learning."

These many ripples need to be understood in the context of the broader issues that arise in the debates between the Fellows themselves as well as between Fellows and the UK experts they engage with during the Fellowship. These broader issues can be summarised as a series of statements:

- The difference between the letter of the law and its operation holds back the region
- Economic opportunity is the key to the future of peace in the region
- Conflict, both intrastate and interstate, affects everything
- Change will only come over the long term
- Networks of change agents are central to long term transformation

The debate around the first of these statements runs through these discussions and was repeatedly evident during the Fellowship, especially in workshop sessions with Sir Jeffrey Jowell of the Bingham Centre and Professor John Gardner of Oxford University. The relationship between the letter of the law and the enactment of the law in practice and the knowledge of law amongst vulnerable groups adversely affects many across the region.

This was summed up perfectly by Zeina Chedid when presenting her Action Plan where she described 'sketches' of the lived experience of human rights in northern Lebanon:

"The first sketch would be a description of a domestic migrant worker's working day, with its tight schedule, the constraints and the difficulties the worker might meet during the working day. Her secret complains and requests. The deaf wall she faces, when it comes to try getting her basic human rights respected, in the place where she works: long working day, non-regulated working hours, no rest time per day, no day off per week, no respect of her private life, different kinds of abuses ... without any possibility for her to claim any of these elementary basic rights."

The same theme was picked up by Nada Dhaif. When Nada asked herself what she would present at the conference she acknowledged that she was in a highly privileged position compared to most women in the Gulf, but that:

"An illiterate woman in her late 40s, who looks 60, with five children and an unemployed husband, she supports a family of ten (including in-laws and her husband's other children). I asked about her opinion on the future of women, and her answer was not surprisingly "who cares", women are born and die slaves. "We are engaged in a non-stop cycle of service and labour until we die", she continues. When I asked her why, amazingly enough she was able to give me three very interesting pillars:

- The law is against us
- The government is against us
- Even the words of God and those who interpret it are against us."

The idea that the law might actually work against women in the region, as well as the law not being applied fairly or properly, has led to a number of different conclusions by the Fellows. For some, this touches on specific aspects of the law that need to change or be enforced such as laws on inheritance and property or laws on the proper registration of marriages. For others, this means that an audit must take place of the law in each country as to what aspects might discriminate directly against women. This came through in some of the breakout discussions where a number of groups suggested the idea of a baseline survey to identify laws that discriminate against women. For laws that already exist, Malak Al-Hasoun suggested that:

"[the] future will not be better unless laws and legislations rule and all the components of society should be informed and educated about it. My action plan aimed to enhance the Ministry of Justice's social responsibilities towards improving the legal culture by increasing the awareness of young people and women about the rule of law and the MoJ and courts' roles in delivering the rule of law through workshops and training sessions. I also plan to implement field visits to courts and justice palaces to see how these organisations support the Rule of Law in practice."

The quotation that Nada presented also links to a second significant theme, and one which was frequently referred to in Fellows' abstracts and discussions: economic opportunity. Thin definitions of the Rule of Law would not include an economic dimension. However, no discussion of gender would suggest that the second generational right of economic equality was not critical in the promotion and defence of gender equality. As Maysaa Al Tameemi puts it: "Empowering women specifically vulnerable ones (widows and divorced) economically is the key that opens the doors to raising the economy of the whole country. A wealth of opportunities can be found in vocational, craft careers and computer engineering. As such, work opportunities allow for career mobility, the possibility of working for private companies, and the chance to work from home. Therefore, supporting developing centres offering such vocational training and computer skills improvement, in addition to small grants projects, will help in creating work opportunities for women."

The economic debate led to some disagreements, reflected also in the political debates, about positive discrimination. The use of quotas for economic representation on boards was strongly supported by some Fellows. Reflecting on the nature of the challenge in this area, George Kara'a highlighted that:

"Women's leadership in all levels of public and private sector economic activity is "very humble" with no woman heading a labour union, trade association or business council."

Ahmed Husain also observed that:

"While touching on women's contribution percentages, which show that Bahrain has the highest share of entrepreneurship of most local economies in the Gulf. Having met with most of the businesswomen's unions proved to me that they were a very small number compared to the number of businessmen's associations. Looking deeper into the matter, I found that most businesses registered under women are a facade for a side-business run by a salaried employee, be it their husbands or brothers."

In the political sphere, there was disagreement amongst the Fellows about the use of quotas for representation in Parliament and a questioning of the underlying premise of framing the debate in this way. As Melkar el Khoury puts it:

"The first matter that needs to be addressed is philosophical i.e. the foundation of rights. Women should not be described as "recipient of rights" e.g. we should give women their rights. Rights are inalienable and inherent in every single human being according to the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Thus, rights are not given – so they are at risk of being suspended, restricted or even "taken back" - rights are recognised".

The mood in which these debates have taken place has gradually and, almost inevitably, darkened since the programme began in 2011. The optimism of the early discussions in 2011-12, tempered even then by the realism of this group of practitioners, has been replaced by an over-riding concern regarding the regional impact of the Iraq and Syrian conflicts, and the obstacle to any real progress on gender or any other issue that this represents.

Given the nature of these challenges the obvious question arises: can intervention make a difference? With regards the refugee crisis that has engulfed the Levant, many Fellows held the position that a situation report should be conducted to generate ideas that would have an immediate impact on the ground. While a minority of Fellows, mainly from Iraq, were sceptical of immediate impacts - except perhaps in terms of humanitarian efforts and basic mitigation of the worst effects of conflict. As such, some of the breakout group discussions stalled early on with regards the Terms of Reference of the exercise because they did not accept the viability of immediate actions being anything other than remedial. As a group, the Fellows have a refreshing sense of their own agency. Therefore, this was not fatalism. It was realism.

The overall conclusion of the debates was that short-term interventions could make a difference to the position of women in the region but that long-term change can only be achieved by embracing culture and education, reforming relevant laws and through the proper implementation of existing laws. Still, when discussing the conflicts in the region and reflecting on the impacts of their own Action Plans, the Fellows frequently expressed the need for immediate changes. This serves to underline the reality that the most immediate threat to the security and position of women in the region comes from conflict but that, above and beyond an end to conflict, a deeper change is required.

There were a number of imaginative proposals for developing, on a network basis, some of the more long-term interventions. There was a general agreement that the kinds of network created through the JST Fellowship are critical for the future of the region. Given the theme of the conference, there was naturally a particular emphasis on the power of networks of more engaged women. As Alia Gharaibeh suggested:

"The case for women as drivers of innovation in the Arab World proves to be twice-fold; not only will more women behind programing consoles, design tables, and in boardrooms in the Arab World bring about more innovation, but it will also have a multiplier effect which facilitates the integration of other women into the workforce. The reason being that, innovation has the utility to surpass cultural and social barriers through creating flexible and adaptable solutions. We see applications of that daily. For example, through communications technology, which has empowered both youth and women by giving them access to markets."

There was also a more general argument, which aligns with the JST Theory of Change, in that connecting all agents of change is what can make a difference. For Nart Dohjoka, connecting people who could innovate in areas such as Science Diplomacy is key:

"The future of the Middle East relies upon the continuity of an open and inspired dialogue between the nations within the region to address common and existential challenges. These challenges are not ideological and they need collaborative solutions. They are global issues with particular characteristics in the Middle East that require local responses, and above all, regional coordination to attain circumstantial resolutions. These issues include: water scarcity, poverty, energy and food security, and climate change."

The final theme that has run through all Fellowship discussions since 2011 is the role of conflict in the region. There are two key ways in which the Fellows have addressed these conflicts. Raed Al Madanat sums it up thus: "...the war for a better life, the war for food, for jobs, for democracy. This is mainly between the people and the current governments and regimes. And the nature of the young Arab communities (35% less than 15 years old) will increase the severity of this conflict in the coming years. The second war is the war for GOD, which is represented by ISIS and the war against ISIS."

There have also been clear examples as to how economic issues connect directly with internal discontents and, in turn, feed conflict. As Vida Hamd puts it:

"Violent conflict and counter terrorism approaches left us with various human rights violations, such as arbitrary arrest, summary executions, intimidation of political opponents, etc. In order to transition towards the rule of law in the Middle East, we should ensure that our action plans deal with these violations as symptoms of conflict, and tackle the root causes that threaten the rule of law in the Middle East. These root causes include non-participation in public affairs, uneven access to resources, exclusion of minorities, discrimination in job opportunities, etc. Along with conflict and its ramifications came youth unemployment, water shortages, ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) control over oil wells, etc. Future stability and democratization warrants a reflection on how JSFP action plans impact the political economy of the Middle East."





The Future of Women in the Middle East

The overarching theme, 'The Future of Women in the Middle East', was thus designed as a means for the Fellows to consider the immediate situation and challenges faced in the region and the long-term challenges that will need addressing over the generation of which they will be leading figures in their communities and region. The Fellows were asked to reflect on these ideas through four broad areas:

- The Rule of Law, Women and Conflict Transformation
- Gender, Equality and Freedom of Expression
- Women, Politics, Choice and Voice - Shaping the Future of the Middle East
- Empowerment - Wealth, Distribution, Technology and Employment in the Future Middle East

Prior to the conference Fellows were also invited to submit abstracts relating to these areas. The following chapter details the discussions had by each breakout group, and includes excerpts from Fellows' abstracts around these themes and how the JST network might work to address some the issues raised.

Group One

Ali Alsabbagh (Bahrain), Anwar Al Battashi (Oman), Dadyar Sulaiman (Iraq), Khalil Al Marzooq (Bahrain), Maryam Al Nasser (Oman), Nada Dhaif (Bahrain), Nazeeha Saeed (Bahrain), Nour Al Rasheed (Jordan), Rami Salah (Jordan), Tala Abu Taha (Jordan) and Zeina Chedid (Lebanon).

What can we do **now that could have an immediate impact** in the region in terms of the Rule of Law, Women and Conflict/Equality and Freedom of Expression/Women Politics, Choice and Voice/ Empowerment - Wealth, Distribution, Technology and Employment in the Future Middle East?

What must we do **for long-term sustainable improvements** in the region in terms of the Rule of Law, Women and Conflict/Equality and Freedom of Expression/Women Politics, Choice and Voice/ Empowerment - Wealth, Distribution, Technology and Employment in the Future Middle East?

General observations about the question

- Fellows highlighted that it is hard to segregate issues into separate categories, e.g. the rule of law, women, conflict, etc. as all these are linked to one another.
- The group felt that the format of dividing between 'immediate' and 'long-term' change is also problematic as 'immediate' change often affects 'long term' change
- Fellows discussed the benefits of an assets-based approach to change such as projects and casework. They agreed that, in general, there should be greater focus on this type of approach and less discussion perhaps around broader systemic/policy changes.

Observations and Recommendations

1: Human Rights and Legal Frameworks

- i Fellows felt that there is a need to implement existing but inactive women-related laws and international treaties such as CEDAW through the development of stronger mechanisms. These mechanisms should work in cooperation with legislators, government and NGOs.
- ii Civic rights must be made applicable to the dependents of a woman who is married to a man of different nationality. This cannot be subject to Royal decree and must be regulated.
- iii There needs to be a revision and development of current women-related laws, such as the Labour Law in Private Sector in Bahrain and Nationality Law in Jordan.
- iv Watchdog organisations to identify gaps in women-related regulations and monitor the implementation of the current ones need to be established.
- v A provision for quotas should be put in place at all levels of society, especially for legislators.

Rabih Dandachli, Lebanon



"Moving from the Arab Spring into the Arab Autumn, as some like to name it, we have to consider the conflict area escalations especially in Syria, Palestine, and North Africa - being aware that all efforts can't have an immediate impact in this catastrophic destruction ... Where the materialistic impact of this destruction could be recovered in couple of years, the effects on a socio-economic level will take generations. This calls for international involvement on another level. Issues like poverty, human rights, social justice, education, and terrorism shall remain an issue in a place where freedom doesn't seem to flourish..."

"A containment policy should be launched and adopted in addition to several other measures that include the end of investment in dictatorships... a good example of such a policy is the process of denazification that was implemented in Germany by end of WW2."

"Though when the winds of change started to blow throughout the Middle East, Arab women were on the front lines organising, volunteering and even leading the protests, they participated and felt the time for change had come. Yet, like freedom, democracy, human rights and other dreams, their dream didn't come true... Women in the Middle East are increasingly aware of the obstacles in their way and are more determined than ever to overcome these hardships and realize their long-awaited aspirations of equal citizenship, parity and equal opportunity."

2 : Raising Awareness

- i There was a belief amongst the group that social media is the key to raising awareness, and that there may be no need for a structured approach in which formal agencies are involved.
- ii A bottom-up approach was viewed as essential. This could take the form of a grassroots movement created by John Smith Trust Fellows, who feel that they have a duty to educate and raise awareness on a daily basis, at work, through professional employment, etc. It was hoped that the UK FCO might support initiatives delivered through the JST network because they have the contacts in the region.
- iii In Oman, raising awareness through grassroots organisations about current women-related laws, such as family law, is needed.
- iv Capitalising on the power of the media, e.g. one idea included raising awareness through comedy (e.g. Laughing Out ISIS)
- v Empowering women to take active roles in state media and press through educating them to an equivalent level of their male counterparts.
- vi In cooperation with civic societies, raise awareness about gender equality and the importance of unbiased media in an attempt to motivate free speech on such issues.
- vii Enforce and emphasise 'citizenship' i.e. build awareness of citizenship rights.

3 : Education and Culture

- i Changing school curriculums should be a long-term goal and involve engagement with the state. The UK FCO could offer support through advocating for change amongst state authorities.
- ii Pushing for change requires knowledge of the current state of the law. This knowledge has to be collated and presented appropriately in order to raise awareness. For example, there needs to be a thorough survey and analysis of the laws that discriminate against women in order to launch an effective and informed campaign.

4 : Social Mobility and Meritocracy

- i A general Code of Ethics protecting basic human rights should be established. This should address issues around nepotism/Wasta.
- ii It was felt that positive discrimination should be applied across the board i.e. it should not stop at increasing the percentage of women in workforce but also allow women to be promoted to managerial positions.
- iii An assets-based approach should be central to achieving change i.e. an approach that involves working with communities directly and recognises what will work best in any given community. Using influential people within communities can help.

5 : Role of Religious Leaders

- i Some members of the group felt that an acknowledgement of the role that religious institutions play in undermining the freedom of expression is needed, and that society needs to look into diminishing its current role - replacing it with a more secular approach.
- ii Others felt that this was an exclusivist approach and disagreed. An alternative suggestion was that society should acknowledge the role of religion and religious institutions in the community, and bring religious representatives from the community to the table and work with them to promote freedom of expression, women's rights, etc.

Nada Dhaif, Bahrain

"I asked myself about the situation and the future of women in the Middle East, but then I realized that any attempts for me to answer this question will be both unfair and narrow minded, as I am sure that I only represent a small segment of women in the Middle East. Scared of my partial answer and perspective I decided to ask a woman who sells vegetables in the street about her perspective. An illiterate woman in her late 40s, who looks 60, with five children and an unemployed husband, she supports a family of ten (including in-laws and her husband's other children). I asked about her opinion on the future of women, and her answer was not surprisingly "who cares", women are born and die slaves. "We are engaged in a non-stop cycle of service and labour until we die", she continues. When I asked her why, amazingly enough she was able to give me three very interesting pillars:

- The law is against us,
- The government is against us,
- Even the words of God and those who interpret it are against us.

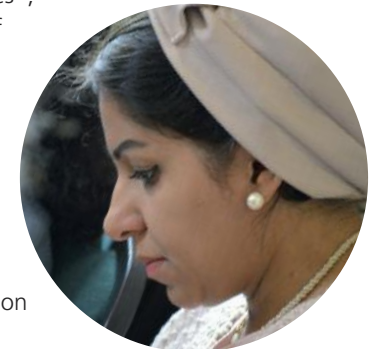
I guess she was able to diagnose the problems in very simple words.

I left her, wondering how can we start the discussion for sustainable action to improve and develop the situation of women in the Middle East. It is imperative to submit to the reality that solving the problems in the Middle East hinges on democratic reforms that cannot take place in the region without enforcing a basic change in the condition of Arab women.

Another pillar that is usually left out of public discussions about development in the region - either because the topic is scary or because it is "politically incorrect" - is the social and cultural barriers that usually hinder rights and freedoms of women, that are guaranteed by the law or even the Islamic Sharia at times. The last thirty years have seen a strict and steady rise of Islamic fundamentalism across the board in most countries in the Middle East, especially the Arab countries. Between extremists' fundamental preaching that order men to lock up "your women" even if they want to seek an education, to informal means of justice that enforce death by stoning and lashing as a punishment for "running away from home", to women who are forced into prostitution rings through trafficking in order to evade violence and rescue their own lives and their children's such as the case for Syrian women.

For women to achieve equality in the region may therefore be enforced through the following actions:

- political freedom and participation in governance
- removal of all discrimination against women
- free and sustainable education for all women
- law reform that guarantees the Rule of Law
- means of protection that safeguard women's rights in times of conflict and unrest



Group Two

Bakhtyar Salih (Iraq), Farah Jadallah (Jordan), Lana Nimri (Jordan), Mona Hejres (Bahrain), Mustafa Field (Iraq), Nabil Frem (Lebanon), Raed Madanat (Jordan), Rashid Khan (Bahrain), Rhea Jabbour (Lebanon), and Riyadh Al Balushi (Oman).

What can we do **now that could have an immediate impact** in the region in terms of the rule of law, women and conflict/Equality and Freedom of Expression/Women Politics, Choice and Voice/ Empowerment - Wealth, Distribution, Technology and Employment in the Future Middle East?

What must we do **for long-term sustainable improvements** in the region in terms of the rule of law, women and conflict/Equality and Freedom of Expression/Women Politics, Choice and Voice/ Empowerment - Wealth, Distribution, Technology and Employment in the Future Middle East?

Observations and Recommendations

1 : Raising Awareness of the Rule of Law

- i It was felt that there was a need for awareness raising campaigns for women on the Rule of Law and their rights.
- ii There was a general agreement that while legal provisions were in place, difficulties lay with a lack of implementation and awareness.
- iii It was suggested that there should be awareness/ capacity building for all, including social media, SMS and face-to-face campaigns targeted at both men and women.
- iv The Fellows wanted to see greater involvement by all people in all aspects of law making and it was suggested that this should be discussed with MPs.
- v Fellows wanted to see greater dialogue with donor agencies to ensure that they were focused on women's issues, as their requirements often set the agenda.
- vi It was felt that MPs/ politicians were not always qualified for the role. In some countries power was given to tribal leader, rather than to those most qualified for the role. As such, Fellows wanted to see capacity building for MPs and potential candidates and improvements in the selection system.
- vii Fellows also wanted to see capacity building to improve the law making process by MPs.
- viii Fellows saw MPs having an important advocacy role in promoting women's issues and believed that they needed to be encouraged to take on this role.
- ix It was felt that the entertainment industry has ample power to challenge the perception of women by portraying women in powerful roles but that many advertisements, even those by the government, at times fall into stereotypes. As such, there was an agreement that greater advantage needed to be taken of the entertainment industry (for example, through a collaboration agreement).

Lana Nimri, Jordan

"Our work is about strengthening the democratic process in Jordan through contributions to developments/changes in the workplace by creating a common language and understanding based on respect, partnership, rule of law and common interests - which are all democratic values. A better work environment will lead to greater productivity and growth that means that individuals will be economically empowered, a key step for human development and indeed a human right in and of itself. This is achieved by presenting local solutions developed by national experts and based on international standards"

"We are acting now - we are not asking why? - we know the answer ... we understand that the future of our region is in jeopardy, we all feel it and know we have to be part of the solution by contributing and not sit on the side-lines and simply talk or complain."



Maya Terro, Lebanon



"Do not ask why there is an under-representation and low electoral turnout among youth as a segment of society within the institutions of democracy and national parliaments? Ask how you can incentivize the youth to be part of the political cycle in Lebanon, from the inside out."

"Do not ask why Lebanon now languishes at the bottom of the table of parliamentary representation of women in the Middle East - side by side with conservative Gulf states like Oman (0%), Bahrain (2.7%) and Yemen (0.3%). Ask how Lebanon can follow the lead of those on top of the scale such as Iraq whose parliament has a 25% quota for women MPs or Tunisia with 22.8%."

"Do not ask why food waste constitutes more than 60 per cent of the waste stream in Lebanon while more than 30% of the Lebanese population is living under the poverty line? Ask how can we link those with more food than they need to those who have less to eat or nothing at all?"

"Do not ask why the western media constantly portrays the Middle East through the single prism of conflict? Ask how YOU act and what you DO can redefine the way "external" viewers perceive the Middle East differently."

"Do not ask why? Ask why not! And go one step further to ask HOW!"

2 : Legislation

- i More needs to be done to encourage Arab countries to pass women equality laws, especially in the area of employment.
- ii Family laws should address women's rights and penal law should include penalties for harassment, rape, etc.

3 : Equality and Freedom of Expression

- i Fellows discussed the idea of quotas for women in employment and politics and called for this to be considered as a way forward.
- ii Concern was expressed that laws designed for traditional press and media are being applied to online media. Fellows wanted to see new, dedicated legislation for online media.
- iii Fellows wanted to see discrimination tackled by better equalities legislation around advertising and for job recruitment.
- iv Fellows called for reform in equality laws to improve current legislation, some of which is badly framed and implemented.
- v Fellows wanted to see change in the education system to encourage more creative thinking and freedom of expression by the next generation.
- vi The group identified issues around rights being caught between religious and cultural sensitivities.
- vii Fellows called for a social media campaign to raise awareness of discrimination against women and women's rights.
- viii There is a need for community outreach, education and advocacy to help women seek assistance, know and implement their rights and secure redress when necessary. For example, when asserting their rights in inheritance cases.
- ix The group discussed inequality in the work place and the idea of using 'anonymous applications' to prevent discrimination at application stage.
- x The group identified the need for equality laws in relation to HR practice, especially in the public sector.
- xi There was a view that regulation requiring more transparent salary structures, job descriptions and recruitment would prevent discrimination.
- xii There was a discussion about how the movie industry could play a role by making films that challenge female stereotypes - with a greater portrayal of working women and less focus on women as glamorous objects only interested in 'getting their man'.
- xiii One idea put forward to increase the protection of women included use of a women's helpline so that they can seek confidential information or ask for help to protect them from abuse.

4: Long-term Interventions

- i The group discussed the need to strengthen the independence of the judiciary – including the protection of judges, better pay, job security and pension rights.
- ii They also discussed changes needed to protect women from domestic violence, rape in marriage and related issues.

5: Women in Politics - short-term changes

- i There were mixed views on quotas and whether these might be a useful short-term tool to address gender imbalance.
- ii Some felt that this would need to go hand-in-hand with capacity building for women to give them the education, knowledge and experience needed to be successful politicians.
- iii Others felt that quotas had not been successful at a local/ municipal level - and were therefore not the best approach.
- iv Some Fellows expressed concern at how female MPs were treated in Parliament and called for better education of male MPs and more respect and acceptance for women parliamentarians.

Raed Al Madanat, Jordan

“The future of the Middle East? This is one of the hardest questions to answer these days even for the smartest politicians and researchers. However, I tend to look at it through two lenses, short term (15 years) and a long term (15+ years). In the short term, the situation in the region will become worse and this is because there are two types of wars taking place these days. The first one is the war for a better life, the war for food, for jobs, for democracy. This is mainly between the people and the current governments and regimes. And the nature of the young Arab communities (35% less than 15 years old) will increase the severity of this conflict in the coming years. The second war is the war for GOD, which is represented by ISIS and the war against ISIS. This war will be bloody and exhausting to all parties and it may lead Israel to enter the game if its security is threatened by the Egyptian - Sinai branch of ISIS. The interesting thing about these two wars is that they are affecting each other positively! Meaning that the war against ISIS is putting more burdens on the Arab countries resources, hence affecting their political and economic reform processes, if there are any. On the other side, higher unemployment is leading to more poverty and more people are feeling oppressed, hence causing more domestic violence and also more people will be willing to join ISIS. All of which is also leading to the escape of foreign direct investments from the region - is a huge employment generating component. It's like two knife wounds that are so close to each other, when you try to stitch one of them, the other one will open!



The other lens however looks brighter as the future remains in the hands of the generations to come, maybe the ones that haven't been born yet and this is what my action plan is trying to achieve. With the little hope that we (good people who care) still have, we are trying to instil the values of respect, coexistence, human rights and finally rule of law in our children so hopefully when they grow up they will be able to fix and rebuild what we have destroyed.

6: Women in Politics - long-term changes

- i There was a feeling by several Fellows that the whole political system needed political maturity and the issue was not just about gender but that a culture change and better education were needed to improve the whole system.
- ii Concern was raised about the cost of running for Parliament – estimated to be approx. £50,000 in Iraq. It was felt that this was prohibitive for many, including most women, and prevents parliament becoming more diverse

7: Economic Empowerment

- i There was a proposal to support women in establishing SMEs as a route to economic empowerment. In particular, support for women's business incubators with infrastructure help and mentorship for women wishing to start businesses.
- ii There was a long discussion about the need for Equality Laws in the field of employment. This covered areas such as
 - Legislating on equal pay
 - Making it illegal to advertise male only roles
 - Supporting anonymous applications
- iii There was a call for legislation that covers both the public and private sectors - it was noted that there are specific challenges due to job tenure and an institutional culture in the public sector.
- iv Fellows were keen on employers being encouraged to offer flexible working to make jobs more accessible for women. It was noted that it is culturally unacceptable in some countries for women to live alone away from their families in the city and that this limits their opportunities. Flexible working and working from home would help overcome this barrier.
- v Increased participation and increasing the number of women in senior leadership roles was called for, including: government incentives to companies that hire women. E.g. tax incentives, priority in government contracts, rating and awards systems celebrating companies that support women.
- vi There was also a suggestion of building more workplace nurseries to help make work more accessible to mothers.

8: International Treaties

- i It was noted that many countries have already signed international treaties ensuring women's rights but that they are not implemented and it was felt that there was work to be done to rectify this.
- ii It was felt that countries should be encouraged to sign up to international treaties securing rights - if they had not already.
- iii Those who had signed up should be encouraged to reconsider their 'reservations' to the main texts of the treaties.
- iv Countries should be encouraged to ensure that domestic law is in line with the international treaties and their international obligations.
- v It was agreed that there should be a short-term advocacy campaign / outreach work to ensure that women know their rights. This should be conducted via social media and through face-to-face encounters.
- vi Encouraging advocacy with legislators to ratify treaties relating to female equality was proposed. (International Treaties and Arab Treaties which were created by Arab countries themselves).

Farah Jadallah, Jordan

“Following the Arab Spring, women began to face various challenges when it came to adapting to the new politics in their countries. Many ‘positive’ changes that were instilled in the previous regimes (e.g. countries endorsing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)) only turned out to be skin-deep. The revolution against the old regimes brought along with it many problems and complications such as the upsurge of violence against women and an increase in gender discrimination.”

“But surprisingly, with the uncertainty of women's role in society came the courage and determination of these women to break free from the stereotypes and conventional norms that they were living under. Women from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds defied their patriarchal societies and embarked on a journey of political participation and human rights activism. As time passed, it became more evident that women's role in society has significantly shifted. It is now up to civil society organisations and donor agencies to support and accelerate these changes. What the Middle East needs most right now is a strong network of empowered women who are provided with the resources to rise as change agents and transform their communities into safe havens with equal opportunities for all, regardless of their creed, ethnicity and most importantly gender.”



Group Three

Ahmed Husain (Bahrain), Ashwaq Al Jaff (Iraq), Falah Shakaram (Iraq), Karim Mrad (Lebanon), Mai Matar (Bahrain), Rabih Kerbaj (Lebanon), Sabah Al-Tememy (Iraq), Tarek Mkanna (Lebanon), Zain Batarseh (Jordan) and Zakeya Zada (Bahrain).

What can we do **now that could have an immediate impact** in the region in terms of the rule of law, women and conflict/Equality and Freedom of Expression/Women Politics, Choice and Voice/ Empowerment - Wealth, Distribution, Technology and Employment in the Future Middle East?

What must we do **for long-term sustainable improvements** in the region in terms of the rule of law, women and conflict/Equality and Freedom of Expression/Women Politics, Choice and Voice/ Empowerment - Wealth, Distribution, Technology and Employment in the Future Middle East?

Observations and Recommendations

1: Perspective, Culture and Customs

- i The main question raised was, how can equality be achieved without contradicting religious laws?
- ii Fellows highlighted that in their various countries, there are people who see things from a different perspective because of their background, the way they are raised and what they have inherited from their home environment. People see women from one view or another as a result of their background.
- iii It was considered that the best way to work through this is by better education from an early age and by investing in a new generation.
- iv Fellows observed that there is often a widespread assumption in the Middle East that women shouldn't be more successful than men and so they are unable to improve themselves or be more successful without the consent of a father, husband, or brother. Therefore, men also need to be educated.
- v Often Middle Eastern habits and customs are stronger than the law. Therefore, there should be a lobby to promote women's rights and human rights, and all need to fight for this, not just women. Men need to be encouraged to play an active role in advocating for women rights.
- vi The international community also needs to change its mind-set and not use language such as, "it is their culture" i.e. when referring to polygamy. This should not be accepted.

Cpt. Tarek Mkanna, Lebanon



"Before the Arab Spring, with all its ups and downs, women were extensively marginalised in public life. Women's participation in public life, especially in the political arena, had been used as a mirror behind which hid a lot of discrimination and violence against women themselves."

"Women are currently taking a significant role in shaping the future of Arab countries and consequently the future of the region. Lebanon, among a few other Arab States, issued in April 2014, Law number 293 to protect women against domestic violence. Before this law, the Lebanese Parliament has issued a good number of legislations in an attempt to fulfil its obligations resulting from its ratification on CEDAW and other UN declarations related to eliminating discrimination against women."

"Different government agencies are now responsible for the implementation of the Law 293 provisions, and among them are the police. However, laws related to family matters are commonly seen as a taboo, with some considering it a breach of privacy or as an assault against religion. One of the major amendments on the Lebanese penal code was the elimination of the "Crime of Honour" in 2011, which was once considered kind of a natural right for men against women."

My action plan was about establishing a police station, which applies a community policing approach. I have insisted on recruiting women in this pilot project in an attempt to empower women in policing their careers and as a first step in proving women's efficiency in my police institute."

2 : Awareness Raising - short-term change

- i Awareness and media campaigns explaining the concept of the Rule of Law, accountability and values about what the Rule of Law is, why it exists, and what value it gives are greatly needed.
- ii There is a lack of awareness of current laws, so awareness campaigns should be carried out to build understanding of existing laws.
- iii There needs to be a firm, objective, establishment of what 'equality' and 'freedom of expression' mean so that people can understand and be aware of it. These definitions should not only be fit for political powers and ruling elites but relevant for the whole of society.
- iv Awareness campaigns should be implemented but need to be backed up by action from those in positions of power e.g. government and media.

Mai Matar, Bahrain

"One may see that there is no future in the Middle East. That what is named "The Arab Spring" was only the beginning of the Middle East collapse. That the Middle East countries are high ranked in corruption. That the rule of law does not apply. Well, although some of the above may apply to some countries in the Middle East, what I really can see is a bright future. Where people became powerful and acknowledged the power of individuals. Where they have learned the lessons of the Arab Spring, rather than given up. What I see now is that people have started to believe that change can be happen from the bottom to the top. That soft power, which is in their hands, can be much more powerful than hard power. If that was really happening now then tomorrow will be just better."

"I am a woman from the Middle East as well who has come up with the idea of establishing a parallel system within the judiciary to overcome the problem of backlog and increase efficiency: believing that justice is more than the mere concept of settling any dispute in accordance with the law. It is about accessibility, promptness, equal treatment, the right to be heard, legal aid and much more. I have the faith that for a brilliant future."



3 : Awareness Raising - long-term change

- i The role of women in society needs to be respected and women need to be respected on a wider level. The current generation of women have an important role to play in order to secure their rights and prove that they are able to do whatever they want. Although it was acknowledged that there is a divide among the current generation of women between those who want change and those who want things to stay the same.
- ii The Middle East is at a transitional crossroads. Now is the time to raise new concepts as things need to be rebuilt and can be rebuilt with new concepts and ideas.

4 : Sectarianism/Conflict Transformation

- i It was highlighted that, in Bahrain, the social system reinforces conflict between Sunni and Shiite, which needs to be combatted through open and mixed communities, instead of the current closed communities. The cycle needs to be broken and people need to belong to their country, e.g. Bahrain, and not their sect. Youth programmes and education can be used to combat this e.g. through shared projects and mixed schools.
- ii It was observed more generally that society becomes fragmented in times of conflict and that this can be solved through education, religious tolerance and more open communities.
- iii It was raised that women fighting Middle Eastern conflicts may lead to greater changes such as women fighting in Kurdistan leading to empowerment.
- iv Fellows felt that there needs to be a practical approach to change that can actually work within the country and that another country's law cannot simply be copied.

Nart Dohjoka, Jordan

"As we stand at a critical moment in the history of the Middle East, millions of people live in fear, despair, doubt and hopelessness. Undoubtedly, as the episodes of violence continue to mount and populations agonise; we face an age of "human dignity deficiency." As a result, people are searching for answers to the fundamental questions regarding a bleak and uncertain future. At the heart of such turmoil, it seems that traditional forms of diplomacy have offered little room for hope. While political and ideological extremism that has plagued the entire region for many decades are continuing to capture news headlines, the region's greatest challenges are yet to be addressed.

The future of the Middle East relies upon the continuity of an open and inspired dialogue between the nations within the region to address common and existential challenges. These challenges are not ideological and they need collaborative solutions. They are global issues with particular characteristics in the Middle East that require local responses, and above all, regional coordination to attain circumstantial resolutions. These issues include: water scarcity, poverty, energy and food security, and climate change.

The growing era of 'Science Diplomacy' could offer a paradigm shift in responding to these challenges. Science Diplomacy is pivotal for the success of nations working actively and collectively to improve the quality of their citizens' lives and to address local and regional challenges. The key to the notion of science and diplomacy nexus lies in the application of scientific collaboration among countries to tackle common and existential challenges facing humanity and to establish or enhance constructive knowledge based on collaborative efforts sprouting from more conducive international partnerships.

Thus, the unpredictable future of the Middle East is in need of solid initiatives in shaping it constructively, to enable governments in addressing uncertainties. The real challenge is to build trust, to promote peace and to refocus sustainable dialogue to restore prospects for a durable regional peace through science and technology. In recent years, countries in the region have realised the importance of such important endeavours. This has been evident in a number of initiatives such as SESAME project and UN-ESCWA Technology Centre."



5 : Education and Culture

- i Fellows felt that there needs to be a change in the views of people in society, drawing on the experience of both men and women. UN and worldwide governments should also play a role in the region to lead development. Yet, change needs to come from within through the support and encouragement of young people to travel/study abroad and come back with new ideas, slowly feeding in ideas leading to change.
- ii However, the group agreed that there exists currently a problem with the structure of society that prevents this. For example, closed communities and the emphasis on children to attend only local/sectarian schools restrict them from mixing with children of different faiths and reinforces divides.
- iii Fellows felt that more after school activities would be a good way to combat this and that extracurricular activities including all sectors of the community should be made part of the education system.
- iv. It was felt that keeping children busy means they won't have time to focus on differences. Therefore a better school curriculum that raises awareness of the Rule of Law and its implications should be developed in order to create more open communities.

6 : Gender and Equality

- i It was felt that a fundamental change is needed for people to really accept differences. It is not just about saying the words, there has to be a change in beliefs.
- ii Fellows agreed that equality starts with the law and it needs to be established by legislature but that it cannot be forced.
- iii The group felt that open-door policies should be established over and above the use of quotas.
- iv They highlighted a misunderstanding between gender equality and gender justice: justice should be the base for everything whereas equality is about all members of society, whether male or female, having the same access to opportunities.

7 : Freedom of Expression

- i Fellows felt that media bias is a big problem, as media outlets are often politically motivated. Their solution was less state funding and separate, independent funding for the media in order for it to be free in what it reports.
- ii Freedom of expression requires active listening from an audience.
- iii Fellows also felt that there is a need for the establishment of laws guaranteeing freedom of expression.

8 : Women, Politics, Choice & Voice

- i The group felt that solving the problem of gender inequality in the Middle East is not just about the establishment of laws but about its implementation.
- ii They highlighted that everything has been monopolised by men and now there is a lack of female political participation but that female political participation in government is vital. One suggestion put forward was that women sometimes do not support one another because of jealousy. For example, it was mentioned that women often have to face both men and other women as obstacles, where typically men only face other men. Thus, the workplace should be a mix of men and women, not just all men or all women which is reinforced by a patriarchal system.

9 : Quotas

- i Fellows discussed Iraq's quota system, which started in 2005 and operates at a ratio of 2 men: 1 woman. It was agreed that where there are models in the region, whether successful (as in the case of Iraq) or unsuccessful, those models should be used to disseminate lessons across the region.
- ii There was a concern that quotas can be discriminatory in that they could/can result in positions not being merit-based and could lead to lack of self-motivation in women. As such, it was agreed that quotas should only be a short-term solution but that they can form a starting point for change.
- iii It was suggested that quotas should be used like regulators i.e. that regulation is needed to achieve deregulation, offering encouragement and enforcement.
- iv However, careful KPIs need to be set so that an end date to the use of quotas can be reached.
- v Quotas should not only operate on a parliamentary level but need to be extended to employment as well as into the cabinet of government. It was concluded that quotas should be applied as part of an overall strategy; they are not enough on their own.

10 : Sexual Harassment

- i Fellows stressed that sexual harassment/'honour' customs need to be acknowledged as a major issue in the Middle East as they are a major barrier for women in the region.
- ii They discussed sexual harassment as an overarching problem, particularly for women in the workplace and that often cases of harassment go without investigation because there is no clear policy/knowledge within institutions about what constitutes sexual harassment. This is a key barrier to gender equality that often keeps women at home.
- iii Sexual harassment is also used as a reason/excuse for men to issue orders to their wives, daughters, sisters etc. such as, "don't go out for your own protection". While women tend not to talk about it.
- iv It was agreed that there is a need to break the sexual harassment taboo, raise awareness, and promote trust within families so it can be talked about.
- v Fellows felt that greater effort is needed to ensure that police investigations need to be enforced.

Maysaa Al Tameemi, Iraq



"Experience around the world has shown that educating and economically empowering a woman will benefit her whole family, so that the fruits of her success are shared amongst a broader circle. Getting women involved in the labour force is even more crucial in Middle Eastern countries and those witnessing governmental changes and the accompanying chaos and fighting extremist groups in Iraq, Syria, Yemen. The unstable security situation in such countries has its burden and effect on the populations' gender diversity. The number of female-headed households has increased showing an increase in the number of widows and divorced women or wives with elderly or handicapped husbands."

"Empowering women educationally and economically has become a necessity and a must to build their countries and be effective partners with men to fight terrorism and move on towards democracy, progress and prosperity."

"Empowering women, specifically vulnerable ones (widows and divorced), economically is the key that opens the doors to raising the economy of the whole country. A wealth of opportunities can be found in vocational, craft careers and computer engineering. Work opportunities allow for career mobility, the possibility of working for private companies, and the chance to work from home. Therefore, supporting developing centres offering such vocational training and computer skills improvement, in addition to small grants projects, will help in creating work opportunities for women."

Group Four

Ali Al Saeed (Bahrain), Alia Gharaibeh (Jordan), Badriya Al Harrasi (Oman), Jana Bou Reslan (Lebanon), Mohammed Altawash (Bahrain), Nart Dohjoka (Jordan), Omaira Al Marikhi (Oman), Rabih Dandachli (Lebanon), Razaw Ahmed (Iraq) and Wafa Nimri (Jordan).

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Ali Al Saeed, Bahrain

"Using "tweets" and various posts on social media as a device ... [have] completely changed the way people in the Middle East express themselves, helping them find the courage to voice their opinions, be braver, louder and more daring."

Observations and Recommendations

1 : Equality and Freedom of Expression

- i Fellows highlighted that freedom of expression is a fundamental right for all citizens and that men and women are affected equally.
- ii The idea of freedom of expression is endorsed by both religious bodies and the law, but cultural norms and traditions sometimes act as a barrier to its application.
- iii Jana Bou Reslan's I-Poetry action plan can be used as an example of changing the Freedom of Expression culture on a pragmatic, grassroots level. Channelling fears and concerns through creative outputs (literature and poetry) and providing a means of communication for the disenfranchised.

Alia Gharaibeh, Jordan

"Jordan, like the majority of other Arab states, suffers a gender gap in economic activity between men and women, where almost two thirds of men are economically active and only 14 % of women are. Compared to men, women are more likely to reinvest their earnings in their families and communities, sponsoring health, education, and commerce, yet their economic contribution is hindered by cultural and social challenges."

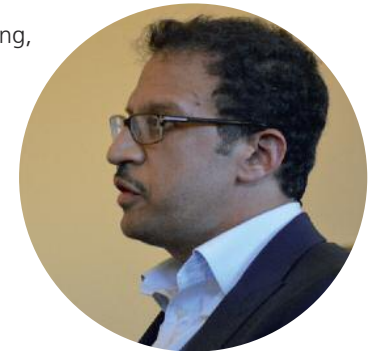
"The case for women as drivers of innovation in the Arab World proves to be twice-fold; not only will more women behind programing consoles, design tables, and in boardrooms across the Arab World bring about more innovation, but it will also have a multiplier effect which facilitates the integration of other women in the workforce. The reason being is that innovation has the utility to surpass cultural and social barriers through creating flexible and adaptable solutions. We see applications of that daily, for example, through communication technology, which has enabled both youth and women by giving them access to markets."



Mohammed Altawash, Bahrain

"In the Middle East, young people, a driving force of the recent Arab Spring, will give way to a gradually ageing population. With new technologies beginning to provide the world with other sources of oil and gas, the region's economy will need to become increasingly diversified. But the Middle East's path will depend on its political landscape. On the one hand, if Iran maintains power and is able to develop nuclear weapons and Israel remains the region's Superpower, the Middle East will face a highly unstable future. On the other hand, the emergence of moderate, democratic governments or a breakthrough agreement to resolve the region's conflicts could have enormously positive consequences.

The future is toward democratic states that will enable more economic prospects. The determinants of democracy agree that economic development is a primary factor that allows the formation of a stable and healthy democracy. Thus, as some others have argued, economic development also plays a factor in the establishment of peace."



2 : Rule of Law, Women and Conflict: short-term change

- i Fellows agreed that individual action can be mobilised to make an immediate impact via a bottom-up approach, which is inclusive of civil society, volunteerism and advocacy and can be achieved at community level.

3 : Rule of Law, Women and Conflict: long-term change

- i Fellows agreed that the law needs to develop in accordance with individual actions. For example, a law to promote women's roles and position in society which perhaps uses UNSCR1325 as a basis for the legislation.
- ii Better education to change perspectives, understand the rights of women and empower women to challenge their roles in society. Education must be aimed at both men and women: to re-educate men is to re-educate women.
- iii Build capacity on the ground through the work of CSOs and bringing organisations working in the field together to enhance their roles through an umbrella support network.
- iv There needs to be a sustainable cultural change in women and men's attitudes.

4 : Women, Politics, Choice and Voice

- i Most of the group agreed that quotas are needed in order to allow the first step in female representation in parliament. These should be seen as an interim measure that will lead to further participation by women in the long-term.
- ii Implications were discussed in terms of where the quota is enforced as it currently operates only in legislative chambers and not within the judiciary, executive bodies, etc.
- iii The example of Iraq was given where the quota system has been largely a success with a number of women now being elected over and above the quota level in Iraq.
- iv However, some Fellows questioned whether positive discrimination could lead to women being treated as a 'minority' and felt that women should be accountable on the basis of merit (the same as men).
- v Capacity building of women at a grassroots level through training and education is needed to create more politically aware female citizens and ensure that women are able to move past the 'glass ceiling'. Bahrain was given as an example where there is a high number of educated women but very few female CEOs in business areas such as financial services and transportation.
- vi There also needs to be more support for rural-based women in SMEs, such as training 'boot-camp' style programmes. However, there is great difficulty at present in accessing these women, an issue also seen in Europe!

Group Five

Ali Al Sudany (Iraq), Elie Fahed (Lebanon), Ghaith Al Amaireh (Jordan), Haissam Riad Minkara (Lebanon), Lama Afana (Jordan), Maimuna Al-Sulaimani (Oman), Maryam AlManaseer (Bahrain), Mohammed Al Yahyae (Oman), Melkar El Khoury (Lebanon) and Tamara Alabbadi (Jordan).

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General observations about the question

- i The Fellows felt that inclusiveness of vulnerable members of society, not just women and women's issues, must be woven within all other activities.
- ii Support is needed to build resilience against barriers and obstacles
- iii There is a need for benchmarks to evaluate the progress of change, e.g. education, access to work force etc.
- iv Fellows did not consider immediate impacts to be possible, seeing both 'immediate' and 'long-term' changes as interlinked. The group therefore revised the question as "What immediate action can we take to have an impact in the region?" and "What must we do to turn these into long term sustainable improvements in the region?"
- v The group stressed that a multi-layer approach to any action is needed, i.e. systemic empowerment and people's empowerment (men and women).
- vi Thus, actions need to include different levels in order to be effective and induce sustainable change. They are:
 - Grassroots level: empowering the community, influencing customs and values
 - Policy level: ensuring the participation of women at all levels
 - Media level: tackling problems of perception/ biased marketing

Observations and Recommendations

1 : Legal and Policy Changes

- i Fellows called for the legalisation of civil marriages across region/between regions.
- ii They discussed the need for greater protection for women who have experienced violence. For example, creating specialist units at police stations to support victims.
- iii One idea forwarded was to encourage young judges to enforce human rights in their judgements to create precedent - even if that judgement might later be overturned by a higher court.
- iv Fellows raised issues such as a lack of professionalism and lack of capacity among judicial officials in upholding the law in some instances.
- v The group identified that the public sector also needs to be more accountable and incentives need to be put in place to increase the participation of public servants (men and women alike).

Haissam Minkara, Lebanon

"In the midst of the Arab Spring (summer 2011) I was accepted in the first JST Middle East cohort with a proposed action plan to establish a network of election professionals in the MENA region - a promising project in the era of democratisation and empowerment of citizens' rights.

Since that date, the promising scenes of millions of citizens protesting against authoritarian regimes have changed into dramatic scenes of armed conflicts causing more than 12 million cases of displacement (Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Yemen). This change has drastically changed the priorities of people in the region, including mine where I shifted into the support of grassroots organisations responding to the needs in their respective areas."

"Thinking forward, [we need] to encourage the role of local civil society in responding to the needs and the means to develop resilience and self-sufficiency ... [and challenging] the negative impact of the donor-grantee approach."



Wafa Nimri, Jordan

"It is true that the Middle East is today being portrayed through the single prism of conflict and that its future will be as much determined by periods of peace and how countries at peace manage themselves and contribute to the region. Today's world, where national boundaries are blurring and bleeding into each other make the hope of dreaming things that never were and asking ourselves the question "why not" very bleak. The reason is not because of our inability to question the status quo but because of our ability to challenge it. Tides of resistance are high, ideologies of extremism seem resolute and our human capital is ill managed.

"It appears as though everybody is playing to a different tune and dancing to a different drum. Except, many of us have challenged the status quo. By his/her own means and in their own way, each Fellow has created a tiny ripple of hope that is yet to form a powerful grid for sustainable development, peaceful co-existence and innovative learning. My concern is that they are few and far between. Taking a stand requires strength of character, but more importantly, it requires recurring, persistent and strategic action in order for the effective mobilisation of these actions to be meaningful and ground breaking."

2: Culture and Attitude

- i There was a strong feeling among the group that positive examples of women need to be talked about more often, i.e. sharing success stories to create role models for upcoming generations. By changing a woman's self-perception and encouraging women to demand/claim a different future.
- ii Awareness campaigns targeting women, men, leaders and communities are crucial to achieving such change and making women more aware of their rights. Campaign methods suggested by the group include: social media to generate interest around the issues and using the entertainment industry as a means of showcasing role models.
- iii Most Fellows agreed that quotas should be introduced within parliaments to address women's issues.
- iv Fellows felt that the self-narrative of a woman as "less capable than a man; vulnerable; as victims" is inculcated from early on and reinforced through the family, community interactions and schooling. Therefore the influence of a woman's environment on her empowerment is very important.
- v Family, neighbourhood, community, society are important target groups for awareness campaigns and their engagement is crucial in closing the gap between written law and lived customs.
- vi It was agreed that tribal structures also need to be considered as change can only be sustainable when the tribal leaders support change.
- vii Fellows discussed the sensitivities in talking about women's rights in that many community leaders feel the issue to be an imposition of Western values and do not see inequality as problem within their communities. Fellows therefore called on the need to reframe the debate in different terms, such as making it a wider issue than simply "gender" and introducing gender sensitive elements within different policies, e.g. humanitarian relief.
- viii Fellows also highlighted the importance of bringing men into the frame when discussing women's rights.

3: Entrepreneurship

- i Fellows called for more programmes dedicated to promoting female leadership in the private sector, especially at board level. The group also discussed the importance of financial independence in helping women to become equal.

5 :Conflict Transformation

- i Fellows discussed the problems of increasing numbers of women (mainly refugees and underage women) being entered into unregistered marriages and, as a result, having no to access the usual rights and benefits that wives are entitled to, especially inheritance. This problem also extends to the children born through these marriages who are not registered. As a result, there is a growing number of 'stateless' children across the region. The main reasons behind this growing trend include: economic hardships forcing families to marry-off their daughters and a lack of awareness/ knowledge of official processes amongst IDPs and refugees in camps.
- ii The group called for the following actions to address such problems:
 - Launch a campaign amongst religious leaders to encourage/convince community members to register marriages
 - Provide greater access to information on how/where to register in refugee camps
 - Implement registration for refugees/IDPs with the help of NGOs
- iii Fellows also discussed the problem of minority representation in the Levant, which has been amplified by the Syrian conflict. They stressed that the emergency situation should not be confused with development and overtake the latter's importance and goals.

“Women should not be described as the “recipients of rights”... we should give women their rights. Rights are inalienable and inherent in every single human being according to the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Thus, rights are not given - so they are at risk of being suspended, restricted or even “taken back” - rights are recognised.”

Melkar El Khoury, Lebanon



Group Six

Afif Tabsh (Lebanon), Ali Al Museimi (Jordan), Dana Al Dairani (Jordan), Fadi Khalil (Lebanon), George Kara'a (Jordan), Ghassan Jawad Kadhim (Iraq), Nadine Saba (Lebanon), Nigar Sardar Mohammed (Iraq), Nimati Eman (Jordan), Malak Al-Hasoun (Jordan) and Vida Hamd (Lebanon).

What can we do **now that could have an immediate impact** in the region in terms of the rule of law, women and conflict/Equality and Freedom of Expression/Women Politics, Choice and Voice/ Empowerment - Wealth, Distribution, Technology and Employment in the Future Middle East?

What must we do **for long-term sustainable improvements** in the region in terms of the rule of law, women and conflict/Equality and Freedom of Expression/Women Politics, Choice and Voice/ Empowerment - Wealth, Distribution, Technology and Employment in the Future Middle East?

Major Engineer Fadi Khalil, Lebanon

"The Middle East is being shaken by an intensifying sectarian war stretching from the Mediterranean coast to Iran. All signs suggest that the situation created by the on-going war in Syria - which has spilled over into Lebanon - and the insurgency of extremists in Iraq will get much worse before it gets better."

"Women living in the Middle East, despite the diversity in their lifestyle, are similar to other women in the world. They have experienced throughout history all kinds of discrimination and restrictions of freedom and rights. Based on culture, beliefs and "misinterpretation" of religion; societies in the Middle East have issued oppressive laws at all levels that restrain women from fulfilling their rights and enjoying their liberties. The problems of Middle Eastern women are still severe, especially with the expansion of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). The real challenge to their future is neither the conservative culture nor the strict religious men with perceptions of masculinity and gender."

"What is dominating is the fear from altering, listening and hacking. Most telecommunication laws in the area are old or weak. People are therefore facing severe judicial problems concerning their rights, and government officials are no longer able to implement the rule of law, protect democracy and preserve human rights. Being a member of the board of the Pan Arab Observatory for Cyber Crime and Cyber Security, my action plan was drafting a new telecommunication law for Lebanon and therefore helping in the rise of new telecommunication laws in the whole area."



Observations and Recommendations

1 : Rule of Law, Women & Conflict Transformation

- i The main challenges were identified by the group as: culture, family/clan structures, power structures, traditions, lack of supporting environments, institutions, weak implementation of the law and a lack of transparency.
- ii The Fellows called for the appointment of 'Ambassadors for Cultural Change', who are representative of the community constituents. Their suggested work might include town hall meetings, think tank activities, awareness raising campaigns and lobbying for rights.
- iii Another suggestion was the development of rehabilitation centres for displaced victims of war and violence to reintegrate them into the community.
- iv Fellows called for a revamp of the educational system focusing on civic education, gender equality and citizenship through better teacher training and more extra-curricular activities.
- v Legislation updates were considered important to incorporate equality and fair measures for inclusion but better law enforcement was felt to be more vital. Thus, actions need to be taken to strengthen law enforcement agencies.

vi There was a call for more representative females to occupy positions of power.

vii Fellows felt strongly the need to challenge the culture of fear/abuse of women in society by showcasing more (attainable) women as role models.

viii There is a need to work with the media on crafting stories on gender and looking into barriers of female mobility.

ix The private sector should be incentivised to introduce more inclusive policies through tax incentives etc.

x The group called for more female support groups/peer networks to provide psychological and emotional support.

2 : Gender, Equality and Freedom of Expression

- i The main challenges identified by the group were: culture, lack of consensus on what 'freedom of expression' means, contradictory and discriminatory laws in terms of recruitment, voting, inheritance etc.
- ii Fellows suggested taking action by creating better channels of communication among stakeholders in order to start voicing society's concerns over certain topics.
- iii There is a need to reach a common ground on the meaning and limitations of the terms 'equality' and 'freedom of expression' via awareness campaigns, community meetings, and focus groups.
- iv Legal reform is needed to incorporate gender, equality and freedom of expression.

3 : Women Politics, Choice and Voice

- i The Fellows discussed the idea that the dynamics of politics in the Middle East may not be women friendly and highlighted that political systems in most of their countries were not fair, free or transparent – problems that also affect men.
- ii It was suggested that it might be more realistic if women started by entering politics at a local level in order to gain momentum and work up to a national level.

Afif Tabsh, Lebanon



"The side effects of conflict are plenty, from refugees to unemployment of youth and women, to economic and political crises among others ... Taking Lebanon as a case study, we'd clearly see that with a dysfunctional government, un-constitutional parliament and no president to head the country, the country is still working. The question is, how? This goes back to multiple factors that form the Lebanese culture, systems, way of living and mode of functioning. Civil society, private sector, a huge network of diaspora and external interventions are what keeps the country on its feet."

"From the civil society perspective, it is about absorbing the shock of conflicts, crises and disasters to avoid the collapse of the community, buying time and sedating the "pain". This, in return, allows the other stakeholders to act accordingly and find possible ways out. With enough knowledge of the history of Lebanon, the current situation inside Lebanon and the regional context, we can easily project this forward and say the following: the resilience of the Lebanese community in times of conflict and crises has been proven to play a key factor in the country's stability and sustainability."

"Civil society is mostly run by youth and women, and thus there is a great role for both in sustaining the peaceful context in Lebanon in spite of all that is happening in the surrounding countries. The government is incapable of ruling itself without taking the regional context in mind and most of the time caves in to external intervention from other countries. Therefore, for a new form of capable and reliable government to come in, there needs to be an investment in key players in civil society and the private sector to better understand the political arena, governance best practices, and to eventually run for office."

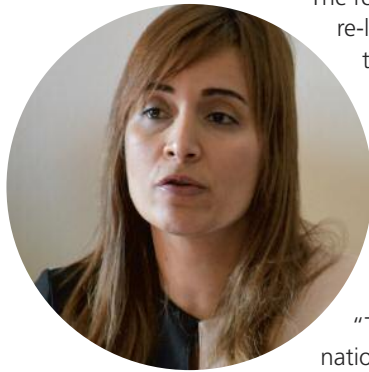
Group Seven

Abdalla Mkanna (Lebanon), Asmaa Al Ameen (Iraq), Christine El Cheikh (Lebanon), Elias Diab (Lebanon), Haitham Al Lawati (Oman), Hamze Ahmad (Lebanon), Haval Raoof (Iraq), Isa Alarabi (Bahrain), Nazar Al-Ibrahim (Iraq), Suzan El-Hajj (Lebanon) and Yousif Al Nuaemi (Iraq).

What can we do **now that could have an immediate impact** in the region in terms of the rule of law, women and conflict/Equality and Freedom of Expression/Women Politics, Choice and Voice/ Empowerment - Wealth, Distribution, Technology and Employment in the Future Middle East?

What must we do **for long-term sustainable improvements** in terms of the rule of law, women and conflict/Equality and Freedom of Expression/Women Politics, Choice and Voice/ Empowerment - Wealth, Distribution, Technology

Vida Hamd, Lebanon



"The re-emergence of terrorist organisations following the killing of Bin Laden, the re-launching of the 'war on terror' in Syria and Iraq, the armed conflict spill-over to neighbouring countries, and the challenges of hosting large refugee communities will continue to impact the geopolitical environment of the Middle East for the upcoming decade. Against this background, realistic perspectives on the future of the Middle East should observe the dominance of hard-core security approaches, in addition to inter- and intra-state conflict in the region. The nature and dynamics of existing conflicts warrants a reflection on the following conflict outcomes that have an imperative effect on the rule of law in the Middle East."

"The establishment of a so-called 'Islamic State' in the heart of the Arab nation, and the rise of political Islam indicates a dangerous shift in the identity of the Middle East from an Arab Nationalist identity to a Religious/Sectarian identity with little room for tolerance and co-living with religious minorities. We need to think how our action plans represent our real identity and how our 'networking' strengthens our cultural identity."

"Violent conflict and counter terrorism approaches left us with various human rights violations, such as arbitrary arrest, summary executions, intimidation of political opponents, etc. In order to transition towards the rule of law in the Middle East, we should ensure that our action plans deal with these violations as symptoms of conflict, and tackle the root causes that threaten the rule of law in the Middle East. These root causes include non-participation in public affairs, uneven access to resources, exclusion of minorities, discrimination in job opportunities, etc."

General observations about the question

- i Fellows started by defining 'immediate' and 'long-term' change. They reasoned that immediate changes are actions that may take a year or two to develop and implement, such as law changes and lobbying. While long-term change may take generations/decades and involve a change in cultural mentality.

Observations and Recommendations

1 : Rule of Law and Women: recommendations for immediate change

- i Fellows recommended carrying out a baseline survey to identify which laws are discriminating against women in order to see what areas need to be addressed. For example, the law relating to women's issues that was passed in Sept 2014 in Lebanon.
- ii There were calls for drafting new laws and/or making small amendments to existing laws to make them fairer for women. It was suggested that small/simple concepts and changes to existing laws are easier to make and more efficient to implement.
- iii In association with any law change there needs to be some sort of awareness campaign among key stakeholders and parliamentarians.
- iv One Fellow suggested using a UN behaviour change model to measure/track the success of interventions.

George Kara'a, Jordan



"During the January 2013 election in Jordan, women won 18 seats in parliament exceeding the quota and taking 29% of municipal seats. The quota system has contributed to measurable improvements for women's political participation but the attitudes towards women as political and social leaders are still disputed. An "enabling environment" where women are both welcomed into and confident about entering leadership arenas is still not in place."

"Tribal identities and the region's growing dominance of religious conservative discourse on the appropriate roles of males and females may reduce the positive gains made by men and women in terms of gender equality in Jordan in the last decade. A critical link to women's political participation is women's economic participation and independence. Women's economic participation remains among the lowest in the world (2014 World Economic Forum Gender Gap report, Jordan rank 140 out of 142) and without access to and control over financial assets women's political engagement (at least in terms of running for political office) may not improve. Mobility challenges are also highlighted repeatedly as limiting both women's economic opportunities and thus political participation. Even if people feel empowered, absent opportunities of meaningful engagement means that their options and incentives for action are limited. Targeting norms and attitudes - around gender equality as well as democracy - may help to make some progress and represents an area of opportunity for women to politically engage."

- v Fellows discussed the issue of quotas and decided that while quotas should not be a permanent solution, they are an initial, necessary step in achieving change. However, they should be phased out after 5/10 years.
- vi The group felt that quotas are needed in the private sector as well as the public sector to achieve cultural change.
- vii There was a debate among the group over which is more useful and impactful, changing the law or changing the culture. Oman was given as an example in that they do not have many laws detailing women's rights yet there are many women in visible public positions and gender equality is not really an issue. For example, Oman is one of the leading GCC countries for women's rights. Oman's standardised education system (a system which does not send indirect discriminatory messages) was put forward as being the reason for this success, creating a balance of custom and awareness in society that women are equal. There was a discussion as to how the Omani education system may be used as an example for other countries - sharing their curriculum and policies across the region to achieve similar results.

2 : Rule of Law and Women: recommendations for long-term change

- i To achieve long-term change Fellows cited better enforcement of laws and the need create a change within the culture to ensure a fair representation of women in society.
- ii A need was also articulated to establish greater conformity between international legislation and national laws.
- iii Fellows suggested that bringing messages down to community/religious leaders would be the most effective means of creating behavioural change i.e. adopting community leaders as agents of change. Reference was made to an on-going UN project that is bringing tribal leaders of Iraq to Lebanon. Celebrities, teachers, UK political leaders were also mentioned as possible agents of change who may be able to lobby governments in the region.

3 : Role of Religious Leaders and Sectarianism

The issues of sectarianism, instability and religious influence kept arising as a challenge to achieving gender equality in the region. It was agreed that changing the culture in terms of sectarian views must be the starting point. Two key solution ideas were proposed:

Solution 1

Target less extreme religious leaders and engage them by raising their awareness and using their influential position to change the mentality of their followers. It was suggested that this is something each Fellow can work on individually through their connections with influential stakeholders.

Solution 2

Promote and develop a civil state and national identity through citizenship education.

Rule of Law and the JST Network

During the final day of the conference Fellows were encouraged to think about the value of the network and how its impact might be enhanced. Their thoughts are summarised below.

Enhancing Professional Capacity: knowledge sharing between Fellows and thematic networking

Fellows identified the main benefit of the network as being the diversity of Fellows’ expertise which can be used to help implement Action Plans. They felt that there are individuals within the network who can be of high value – through sharing lessons learned with regard to addressing specific challenges as well as sharing knowledge and experience - and one should invest in developing these contacts.

The majority of Fellows felt that the network would have an increased value if networking could be facilitated by theme, e.g. diplomacy, cultural, public policy and governance, health/welfare. It was suggested that holding networking conferences around a single theme and exploring it in greater depth would be beneficial to Fellows’ professional development. However, one Fellow pointed out that they already attend many conferences and meetings with people in their sector and the value of the programme was the diversity of topics.

Promoting the Rule of Law: joint projects

Fellows felt that through their participation in the programme they had developed a greater sense of public service and civic responsibility and that there should be additional obligation on them, as Fellows, to pass on the knowledge gained during the Fellowship within their own networks in their countries. Most felt that it would be beneficial to channel this through the development and delivery of joint Action Plans or projects to further promote the Rule of Law in the region. One group suggested that there should be a set annual conference (alternating between countries) to develop these Action Plans (aided by JST) and that they should look to tackle overarching, regional challenges. There was a small degree of debate around this idea, however, as some Fellows believed the development of network/pan-regional projects might be too challenging logistically, but they were supportive of smaller group projects. It was suggested that there should be a ‘Network Mission Statement’ to guide such work, providing a working example: ‘hanging cultural perceptions for women across society and re-shaping a generation of women and men across all areas.’ Several ideas were also put forward as to they type of project that might be developed:

- Utilise social media to promote Freedom of Expression (including disseminating stories, infographics etc.)/ use I-platforms, experiential hubs (like TedX)
- Make use of science, technology, and innovation platforms: building a nexus of innovation and entrepreneurship through technology
- Facilitate investments through seed funding, connecting venture capital with start-ups etc.
- Make wealth distribution more of a priority than wealth creation i.e. inclusive growth
- Support access to training/capacity building for economic purposes
- Create a data-driven advocacy network built on research in the field and specific areas
- Broker science/culture for peace purposes i.e. use culture to teach tolerance, learn about one another and change cultural perceptions
- Support bottom-up, grassroots programmes

Extended Learning and Support: regular conferencing

In order to keep the Network active and relevant it was recommended that regular networking meetings could be held every six months, rotating between Fellowship countries. It was felt that while these meetings could be arranged around a particular theme, the main focus should be on building Fellows’ practical/technical capacities and the further development of leadership skills/bridging and bonding. It was thought that these conferences could look more closely upon Action Plan implementation as a learning experience and reflect more on lessons learned. For example, what went well, what would you do differently, how can they be pushed forward? These ‘advanced’ conferences should also provide more guidance and share methods of best practice with regard to working on issues of rule of law, social justice and inclusivity in the Middle East. One idea was that during these conferences Fellows may be able to set up ‘attachments’ or visits for other Fellows visiting from other countries to learn more about how things work in a different context.

Vision and Voice: Recommendations and Conclusions

This table summarises the recommendations and conclusions from the group discussions:

Conclusions on Priority Areas	Source
1 Legal and Policy changes	All Groups
2 Cultural changes	All Groups
3 Economic changes	All Groups
4 Conflict Transformation initiatives	All Groups

General Recommendations	Source
i Justice Sector reform needs specific and interconnected initiatives	All Groups
ii Baseline review of existing legislation and proposal of new laws to promote equality as needed, for example on property/inheritance rights	Group 3
iii Strengthening the implementation of, and compliance with, existing laws on discrimination	Groups 1, 2, 3 & 5
iv Promotion of legal knowledge and enhancing the capacity of the judiciary	Groups 1 & 7
v Recognition that women’s rights are innate and not given	Groups 3 & 5
vi Need for legislation to promote equality in employment and rights in the workplace	Group 2
vii Ensure that countries conform to international treaty obligations, e.g. CEDAW and withdraw reservations	Group 2
viii Need for the enhancement of Parliament as a source of equality initiatives and mainstreaming of gender issues	Groups 1 & 2
ix Consideration of quotas on a country-by-country basis for women’s representation in Parliament	Groups 2, 3 & 4
x Legal and political challenges to existing culture through awareness-raising, law, politics and the media	Groups 1, 3 & 6
xi Research on ways to reconcile religious law with civil law	Groups 1 & 6
xii Multi-level long and short term interventions to change culture	Groups 1 & 2
xiii Issues around citizenship and the status of different groups in society need to be directly addressed	Group 6
xiv Grassroots level awareness-raising of women’s rights need to be supported across the region through social media campaigns that reach the young	Groups 1 & 5
xv Change of school curriculum to present a positive image of women and promote equality	Groups 3 & 6
xvi Education of boys and changes in male attitudes are central, and the promotion of citizenship education is necessary	Group 3
xvii Freedom of Expression should be properly protected by law with an understanding of the different contexts of online media	Groups 2, 3 & 4
xviii Media should be free from political control and financial influence	Groups 2, 3 & 4
xix Greater support for start-ups and incubators targeting women	Groups 2 & 5
xx Programmes to support women’s membership on the Boards of companies, perhaps including quotas	Groups 2 & 5
xxi Mediation training to help with conflict transformation	Groups 2 & 4
xxii Innovations in diplomacy, such as Science Diplomacy	Groups 2 & 4

Specific Recommendations	Source
1 Research and discussion into of the role of religious leaders in promoting equality and mitigating conflict	Groups 1, 4 & 7
2 Provision and support for helplines so that women can report abuse and seek advice	Groups 1, 2, 3 & 5
3 Fellows should lobby MPs on legal awareness of women’s rights already protected in law	Groups 1 & 2
4 Civil marriage should be legalised across the region and recognised across countries	Group 5
5 Social and conventional media should promote positive female role models	Group 5
6 Develop a model for Ministry of Women’s Affairs	Group 6



Actioning Change

“Do not ask why there is an under-representation and low electoral turnout among youth as a segment of society within the institutions of democracy and national parliaments?

Ask how you can incentivise the youth to be part of the political cycle in Lebanon, from the inside out..”

Maya Terro, Lebanon

What is the JST Action Plan?

Every John Smith Fellow applies for a place on the programme with an Action Plan idea that they want to see realised over the course of the Fellowship. For some Fellows, this is a project directly related to their current position. For others, it is more of an aspiration or something that forms part of the voluntary or social action work they do. During the residential programme each Fellow has a bespoke programme of individual ‘attachments’ which allows them to meet and discuss their projects with UK experts in their field. On the final day they present their Action Plan, including the benchmarks they will reach over the course of their year-long engagement with the Trust, to an audience of their peers and a panel of experts.

All 120 Fellows presented Action Plans on the way in which they would implement their experience on return to their own countries, all Fellows have been monitored and mentored in hitting their implementation benchmarks and around 80% are on course or have achieved their objectives. Some, who have not, have faced serious political obstacles and others have taken new directions in their working life. 98% of the Fellows are still in close touch with the Trust, with each other and some have developed professional contacts across cohort groups.

To date, out of the 120 Fellows participating in the Rule of Law programme since 2011:

- 38% have initiated training programmes (ranging from training for students on their constitutional rights to improving women’s skills in enterprise);
- 32% have contributed to or influenced policy reforms ;
- 31% have created partnerships and networks to promote the Rule of Law at local and national levels;
- 20% have set up their own organisations or NGOs to promote the Rule of Law in their countries;
- 18% have launched full-scale advocacy campaigns on issues including anti-corruption and journalists’ rights;
- 13% have published analytical research papers;
- 11% have pursued higher education in either the UK or US;
- 11% have published their work in national or international media;
- 4% created online media hubs;
- 4% have won industry-recognised awards;

During the Vision and Voice conference thirty-eight Fellows from the last two cohorts reported on their Action Plan progress. The following section is divided into seven themes (Legal Reform, Women’s Rights, Human Rights and Knowledge of Rights, Children and Youth, Private Sector, Refugees and Humanitarian Intervention, and details how Fellows are working to support the Rule of Law in these areas, in their own way.

Action Plans Reports 2014

Legal Reform

- Ali Al-Museimi, Jordan: Community Sentences
- Mai Matar, Bahrain: Courts of the Future
- Malak Al-Hasoun, Jordan: Strengthening Rule of Law within the Ministry of Justice
- Rami Salah, Jordan: Reforming Prosecution
- Hamze Ahmad, Lebanon: Improving Training of Police

Women's Rights

- Nazar Al Ibrahim, Iraq: Campaigning on Violence Against Women
- Razaw Ahmed, Iraq: Coordinating Services to Prevent Violence and Respond to Crisis
- Badriya Al Harrasi, Oman: Raising Awareness of Rights
- Falah Shakaram, Iraq: Freeing women from FGM and Da’ish
- Farah Jadallah, Jordan: Educating and empowering young girls

Human Rights and Knowledge of Rights

- Vida Hamd, Lebanon: Human Rights -Theory to Practice
- Karim Mrad, Lebanon: Putting Human Rights at the Heart of Policing
- Rhea Jabbour, Lebanon: Fighting Discrimination at Work
- Asmaa Al Ameen, Iraq: Protecting Prisoner & Youth Rights
- Maryam Al Nasser, Oman: Establishing a Community Law Library

Children and Youth

- Zakeya Zada, Bahrain: Promoting Tolerance Through The Arts
- Nour Al Rasheed, Jordan: Education For Refugees
- Raed Al Madanat, Jordan: Seven Up – Investing in the Future
- Maryam AlManaseer, Bahrain: Raising Awareness Disability Rights
- Elie Fahed, Lebanon: Building Bridges Between Youth and Police

Private Sector

- Mohammed Altawash, Bahrain: Creative Class & Business Hubs
- Alia Gharaibeh, Jordan: Doing Business Differently
- Ali Al-Sudany, Iraq: Investing in Development
- Nigar Sardar Mohammed, Iraq: Empowering Women through Enterprise
- Haitham Al Lawati, Oman: Raising Legal Awareness with Business

Refugees and Humanitarian Intervention

- Elias Diab, Lebanon: Strengthening Local Communities
- Bakhtyar Salih, Iraq: Securing Refugee and IDP Rights
- Christine El Cheikh, Lebanon: Reporting on Syria’s Refugees
- Tamara Alabbadi, Jordan: Vocational training for Syrian refugees in Jordan
- Zain Batarseh, Jordan: Ending Human Trafficking
- Nabil Frem, Lebanon: Securing Legal Rights for Refugees

Public Policy and Civil Society Reform

- Lama Afana, Jordan: Professionalising Civil Society
- Rabih Dandachli, Lebanon: Monitoring Policy
- Ali Alsabbagh, Bahrain: Using Social Media Effectively
- Dana Al Dairani, Jordan: Honouring Syria’s Heroes
- Rashid Khan, Bahrain: Promoting Peace and Tolerance
- Rabih Kerbaj, Lebanon: Empowering Minority Rights
- Mohammed Al Yahyae, Oman: Campaigning for Parliament

Action Plans Reports 2014: Legal Reform

Ali Al-Museimi, Jordan: Community Sentences. With custodial sentences the only form of punishment meted out in Jordan and where even minor offences are awarded up to 2 years imprisonment, Jordanian prisons are overcrowded and conditions poor. Recognising the need for an alternative Ali Al Museimi, a Jordanian Judge and Director of the Human Rights and Family Affairs Department in the Ministry of Justice, devised an Action Plan which would introduce a Community Sanctions Service. The aim being to reduce the chances of reoffending through rehabilitation and reintegration measures while at the same time respecting the rights and needs of victims. Since completing the John Smith Trust programme in March 2014, Ali has run a pilot project with students at the Al Balqa’a Applied University trialling unpaid community work and an anger management programme with a team seconded from within the Ministry of Justice, the findings of which were subsequently applied to the Community Sanction Hours Order. Since then, a National Advisory Group for Community Sanctions was established through the NCCJ and Judicial Council; while draft legislation for the Community Sanctions Service has been finalised and is working its way through the parliamentary process. Ali is pleased that there is now a clear vision for community sanctions legislators, judges and decision makers are showing support for the project.

Mai Matar, Bahrain: Courts of the Future. Delays in securing justice are commonplace in Bahrain where overwhelming bureaucracy has led to a serious backlog in the number of cases going to court which, in turn, can lead to years of waiting for justice. Female Judge Mai Matar believes that failures to reform the justice system have been caused by a focus on fighting the old rather than building the new. Her Action Plan, ‘Courts of the Future’, is designed to build upon the existing appetite for judicial reform and to establish new, more efficient courts that operate in a parallel system, fast-tracking new cases while the old courts continue to reduce the backlog. Having gained the support of the president of the Supreme Judicial Council, Mai is using the opportunity provided by her new appointment as Head of the Rent Dispute Resolution Committee - a new judicial committee responsible for solving rent disputes - to introduce a ‘Court of the Future’. It is a new court, operated by new staff, applying a new method of case management. Her vision is for expedited justice, an average case lifetime of three months, a clear and predictable court management system and an energised staff believing in the importance of the Rule of Law. If this ‘Court of the Future’ model succeeds it will be rolled out across Bahrain.

Malak Al-Hasoun, Jordan: Strengthening Rule of Law within the Ministry of Justice. The World Justice Project’s Rule of Law Index lists constraints on government powers, lack of transparency in governmental structures and ineffective law enforcement as serious challenges to the Rule of Law in Jordan. Malak Al Hasoun’s JST Action Plan aims to address this by institutionalising Rule of Law concepts and best practice within the Jordanian Ministry of Justice (MoJ). As such, less than a month after the JST programme, Malak delivered a workshop on basic Rule of Law concepts for a group of managerial staff within the MoJ and developed a project proposal to increase awareness of the Rule of Law institutionally. Malak is now hoping to embed Rule of Law principles within the MoJ’s 2014-16 operational strategy with the aim of improving access to justice by the general public. Using the local JST network of Fellows, Malak is liaising between the MoJ, other government departments and NGOs to improve access to justice and raise awareness of the reforms amongst the public. Indeed, she has already used knowledge she gained in the UK to develop a Memorandum of Understanding between the MoJ and the private sector about “social media and spreading awareness of MoJ services”.

Rami Salah, Jordan: Reforming Prosecution. Faced with a population of up to 8.2 million, the capacity of Jordan’s small Public Prosecution Office to investigate and deal with cases is restricted and criminals often walk free. Having worked as a public prosecutor for over 15 years Rami Salah identified a lack of resources and trained staff as one of the key barriers to the Office’s efficient operation. Rami’s Action Plan is to increase the capacity of the Public Prosecution Office by training more qualified public prosecutors to hone their investigative skills and produce more evidence. Since the programme, Rami has been developing an updated curriculum for public prosecutors focusing on technical developments in cybercrime, money laundering and human trafficking with the assistance of specialised investigators. He also hopes to implement a Train-the-Trainers initiative by working with UK institutions to train senior public prosecutors who can then apply their knowledge as local experts in running training courses for junior prosecutors.

Hamze Ahmad, Lebanon: Improving Training of Police. Police training that reflects society’s needs is at the heart of Lebanon’s police reform initiative but an out-dated curriculum, no evaluation, a shortage of specialised trainers and no code of ethics have all contributed to a delay in the implementation of the reforms. Lieutenant Hamze Ahmed, Head of Training at the Police Academy in Beirut, has credited the Fellowship with providing the skills and resources he needed to finally reform police training and raise awareness of human rights principles among recruits. Following his UK experience, Hamze appointed a dedicated team to conduct an evaluation of the Internal Security Force/ISF (Police) curriculum - the results of which enabled him to introduce new modules on Human Rights and Domestic Violence using the 2015 training curriculum for police which he received from Canterbury Christ Church University. In February 2015, he used further connections made during his UK programme to visit the Bristol Cyber Academy, with whom he is now working to introduce courses on cybercrime. Hamze hopes that through these initiatives, he will have a progressive and positive impact on policing across all ISF departments.

Action Plans Reports 2014: Women's Rights

Nazar Al Ibrahim, Iraq: Campaigning on Violence Against Women. Violence against women is common practice in Iraqi Kurdistan. And a culture of impunity for perpetrators and stigmatisation of victims means that many women are unwilling to disclose abuse to health professionals who might otherwise be able to help. Nazar Al Ibrahim's JST Action Plan centres on improving women's access to justice by strengthening the awareness and institutional responses of health workers in cases of violence against women; and using research to create an environment within which this can take place. After attending the JST programme Nazar established a local NGO, the Kurdistan Health and Social Research Organization, to begin the research. Projects undertaken include examining: women's perspectives of antenatal and labour services with Hawler Medical University; a barrier analysis of female genital mutilation in Chamchamal; women's knowledge, attitudes and response to intimate partner violence with the Ministry of Health; and the rates and trends of caesarean sections in Iraq with LSE. Several papers have already been produced and published in accessible journals or as policy papers which will help policymakers, media and civil society organisations take direct action to address social and health issues for women in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Razaw Ahmed, Iraq: Coordinating Services to Prevent Violence and Respond to Crisis. While services exist for women victims of violence in Iraqi Kurdistan the response is fragmented. Governmental organisations lack guidelines and formal procedures while the work of NGOs is ad hoc and un-coordinated with neither addressing the causes of the problem. Razaw Ahmed's Action Plan looked to strengthen coordination between NGOs and governmental agencies and train each on human rights and international treaties, case management and advocacy. By developing these skills and networks Razaw sought to establish a coordinated response to tackle violence against women, ultimately aiming for Iraq to meet international standards. Since returning to Iraqi Kurdistan in November 2014 Razaw found she had to change the emphasis of her Action Plan to focus on the country's emergency situation as the humanitarian crisis was impacting the tens of thousands of people forcibly displaced by the armed group, ISIS. Working with the OCHA, Razaw is now leading the coordination effort between the government and humanitarian actors; while the new objective of her Action Plan is to provide coherent support to the government on how to respond to the crisis and ensure that the Internally Displaced Persons rights are respected and needs met. Razaw has worked with the Humanitarian Country Team to establish an internal cluster system to provide coherent support to government authorities. Her view is that when emergencies occur coordination is vital as otherwise needs can be missed or overlaps take place in whatever is delivered by humanitarian organizations.

Badriya Al Harrasi, Oman: Raising Awareness of Rights.

In May 2014 a new law on children's rights came into force in Oman banning the employment of any child under 15 but lack of awareness has seen it violated a number of times. The situation is similar for Omani women who have many legal rights and yet no knowledge of their status resulting in tradition being observed over the law. Badriya Al Harrasi's Action Plan is to educate and raise awareness among women and children of their rights and help see these rights enforced under Omani law. Since the programme, Badriya has launched a strategic communications campaign, distributing information leaflets explaining how women can access their rights using very simple language. Badriya has also successfully recruited a team of volunteers to help implement her project and opened a legal helpline for women. So far the helpline has solved two cases and less than three months into its operation has more waiting.

Falah Shakaram, Iraq: Freeing women from FGM and Da'ish. Falah Shakaram has campaigned for women's rights for over a decade and played a significant role in bringing the region's Family Violence Bill to parliament in 2007. The law criminalises forced marriage, domestic violence and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) but without funds or a mechanism to implement the law, ending the crimes remains difficult. Drawing on support from top-down initiatives i.e. a new legal mandate to combat violence against women and increased pressure from the international community, Falah's main objective is to work with civil society to eliminate violence by raising awareness at a community level. So far, Falah has initiated a community dialogue on issues relating to the Family Violence law, organising three big conferences reaching over 6000 participants including representatives from the Kurdistan Parliament. He has also secured agreements from key decision makers to monitor the implementation of the law and launched a local, national and international media campaign to raise awareness about FGM. Thanks to the JST UK attachments, Falah has formed a 2-year partnership with UNICEF and become part of the Girls Not Brides network with whom he is working to build their Iraqi network. Finally, Falah has been using his skills to help Yazidi girls who have escaped after being rounded up and used as sex slaves by ISIS.

Farah Jadallah, Jordan: Educating and empowering young girls. 14% of the population in Jordan suffers from extreme poverty. Children affected have little chance of education which leads to a lack of confidence and hampers their ability to achieve financial security as adults. Farah Jadallah believes that by empowering vulnerable young girls to take control of their lives she can help break this cycle and reduce poverty. Her Action Plan is to provide girls aged between 15-18 years with financial literacy and life skills training. Since the UK programme, Farah has produced a 3-minute documentary to help publicise her project and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Women to Women International (which she met while in the UK) to establish a partnership. These developments have encouraged Farah to set up her own NGO which she is now in the process of registering. Over the next twelve months she will develop financial literacy material accessible for girls with low levels of education and recruit volunteers to run the training programmes. By giving girls the confidence and determination to make better life decisions Farah hopes to see them become change agents in their communities – shifting behaviours and amplifying their voices.



Action Plans Reports 2014: Human Rights and Knowledge of Rights

Vida Hamd, Lebanon: Human Rights -Theory to Practice. One of the many challenges faced when promoting the Rule of Law in the Arab World is turning human rights awareness into action. Vida Hamd's JST Action Plan is to create an interface between the theoretical understanding of human rights and professional development fieldwork. Working in collaboration with JST Fellows from Bahrain, Vida has delivered capacity building workshops in the UAE to government officials, diplomats and law students intending to work in development as well as facilitating a networking and policy roundtable with the Bahraini National Institute for Human Rights on mainstreaming human rights in Arab governance contexts. Other projects she has worked on include the design and presentation of a practitioners' conference on constructive human rights policy practices in the Gulf and coordinating with the Bahraini Ministry of Culture as part of a national plan to mitigate and transform conflict by promoting human rights among Bahraini youth. Believing that Arab countries should not work in isolation, Vida hopes that such initiatives will contribute to more effective reconciliation and development-based policymaking in the future.

Karim Mrad, Lebanon: Putting Human Rights at the Heart of Policing. While Lebanon has seen significant progress in re-development and reconciliation, protecting human rights remains a serious concern particularly with regard to the Lebanese Internal Security Forces/ISF (Police). Between 2010-2013 the ISF set out a strategic plan detailing the protection of human rights as its main priority. A Human Rights Department charged with delivering training, taking disciplinary action and safeguarding human rights was established but failed to become effective. JST Fellow and Officer Karim Mrad's Action Plan sought to address the problem and ensure that human rights were at the heart of policing. By March 2015 he helped relocate the ISF's Human Rights Department to new offices and is now working with one of his UK attachment hosts to improve and secure its online internal communications system. The department has gained political support locally as well as international recognition and is on the way to changing the ISF from a traditional police force to a modern and contemporary operation that performs its tasks in accordance with democratic principles and the Rule of Law. Karim believes that building government capacity to safeguard human rights in Lebanon is central to the development and growth of the country.

Rhea Jabbour, Lebanon: Fighting Discrimination at Work. Discrimination in all its forms is a pervasive problem in Lebanon, particularly against women, foreigners and the elderly. Lebanese Labour Law contains only a single article referring to gender- based discrimination, which is arbitrarily applied, while all other forms of discrimination are not even acknowledged. Rhea Jabbour's Action Plan challenges workplace discrimination. She has started implementation by submitting a proposal to amend the language in article 26 of the labour code that, if approved, will redefine 'discrimination' to include that based on age and ethnicity. Recognising that discrimination is both social and cultural Rhea is working on awareness raising initiatives to break stereotypes across society. She will target schools to promote civic education and anti-bullying as well as with local media to raise awareness. She is also trying to find ways to influence private companies by working with Human Resource departments to offer training on how to fight bias in recruitment; and has met with a consultant to the Minister of Labour to discuss how these changes might be encouraged.

Asmaa Al Ameen, Iraq: Protecting Prisoner & Youth Rights. Kirkuk is an oil rich, ethnically divided city in the north of Iraq occupying an interim space that is neither part of Iraqi Kurdistan nor under the direct jurisdiction of Baghdad. Left to its own devices, Rule of Law in the province is weak and unstable - there is a lack of awareness and understanding of the legal culture and prisons in particular suffer from a lack of resources and overcrowding. Asmaa Al Ameen's Action Plan focused on the rights of prisoners and detainees in Kirkuk but the escalating emergency situation means she has had to postpone her original plan and devised a new project working with the Syrian and Iraqi children affected by the conflict. Her project is to help them access quality educational opportunities in learning environments that are safe and healing. She has secured funding from the UNHCR to strengthen educational governance and community support for inclusive, quality education in targeted schools and centres that enrol Syrian refugee and Iraqi IDP children; and she has initiated teacher training programmes to improve the quality of education and student wellbeing in targeted schools.

Maryam Al Nasser, Oman: Establishing a Community Law Library. There is a significant lack of legal awareness in Oman as many people do not understand the importance of the law and how it can affect their daily lives. Consequently, people do not know how to stand up for their rights legally. Maryam Al Nasser believes that an increased understanding of the law in Oman can support study, research and intellectual growth as well as facilitate the free exchange of ideas and respect for the rights of individuals. Maryam's Action Plan hopes to do this by establishing a community law library, which would offer lending, reference and other information services to the general public - such as seminars and training on legal processes. Since taking part in the JST Programme, Maryam has refined her plan to include a social media presence and to develop online resources aimed at a wider audience to raise legal awareness among all sectors of society. She has made several short films with individuals talking about the problems they have experienced with legal access. She is also working with local organization Ooredoo on a social project for women to develop her Action Plan. In terms of the community law library, Maryam is currently in the process of collecting legal books.

Action Plans Reports 2014: Children and Youth

Zakeya Zada, Bahrain: Promoting Tolerance Through The Arts. With its rich and diverse trade and cultural history Bahrain is home to many different nationalities, religious and ethnic groups. Sadly, recent political events have caused tensions and divisions particularly amongst children who unwittingly adopt the values and beliefs of their peers and adults. This has led to mistrust and lack of acceptance while there have also been cases of violence in schools and other public places where the different groups interface. Zakeya Zada's Action Plan is to promote tolerance through the arts and she has used many of the UK contacts made during the programme. The Head of Education at the Saatchi Gallery and Head of Postgraduate study in Art Education at Goldsmiths University both visited Bahrain and conducted workshops at the Nakhool City Festival. These workshops included: Cultures through Collage for 7-16 year olds encouraging them to use recycled materials from across the world; Photo Magic, aimed at younger children and encouraging creative thought; and one designed to help the Bahraini public understand issues of culture and conflict based on street art. Zakeya also worked closely with Lebanese Fellow Vida Hamd on a project promoting human rights among youth, focusing on the UNICEF Declaration on Principles of Tolerance. This was achieved through a series of workshops tailored against the background of the 2011 events in Bahrain and their aftermath which sensitised Bahraini youth from different backgrounds to ideas of individuality, common identity and respect for diversity through art.

Nour Al Rasheed, Jordan: Education For Refugees. With over 300,000 refugees in Jordan aged between 15-24 and eligible for formal education, the education system is under tremendous strain. International assistance has been vital in ensuring access to schooling. However, with 100+ organisations working in the field and little coordination key issues such as adapting to a new curriculum and bullying have not been addressed. Nour's Action Plan looked at how to enhance the quality of education for young refugees. First, she tackled the lack of coordination between education service providers by making each carry out needs assessments and introducing referral pathways so that everyone working in the sector knew where to go to for support. Secondly, Nour has developed a programme to combat the lack of access to higher education and has submitted a proposal to provide Syrian refugees with these opportunities. Finally, Nour planned to establish a library in the Zaatari refugee camp and has so successfully mobilised her community, family and friends to collect books that she was able to open the library in September 2014 housing over 3000 books.

Raed Al Madanat, Jordan: Seven Up – Investing in the Future. With 35% of Jordanians under the age of fifteen, Raed Al Madanat believes that the best way to achieve change is through better early years education and awareness among children. His Action Plan is to introduce civic education to Jordanian primary schools – teaching future generations to respect rather than fear the law. Working with the Queen Raina Foundation, he plans to target children aged 6-8 years old and help them look at basic concepts around the Rule of Law and human rights. After revising the models and information he gathered in the UK and connecting them with civic education initiatives already existing in Jordan, Raed has started to build partnerships with key stakeholders including the British Council, the King Abdullah Fund for Development and USAID. At a grassroots level he has partnered with two NGOs to conduct workshops with their younger members and started to build a league of interested academics to support its implementation. He now plans to trial his model in a number of schools in Amman before refining the initiative and taking it to scale across the rest of the country. His ultimate aim is to see civic education become part of the primary school curriculum.

Maryam AlManaseer, Bahrain: Raising Awareness Disability Rights. The story of Ghanim al Muftah, a young boy with Caudal Regression Syndrome that affects the development of lower back and limbs, has been an inspiration across the Gulf challenging stereotypes about disabled children. Despite having the lower half of his body amputated Ghanim is fiercely independent and a keen sportsman. Unusually his family have treated him as an equal to his siblings rather than hiding him away. Publicity about Ghanim's story drew attention to the serious failings in public health and social care policies which overlook the needs (psychological and physical) of disabled children and encourage social discrimination. Maryam AlManaseer's Action Plan challenges such discrimination and she has established an independent advisory committee consisting of health professionals, government officials and the media. It currently meets twice a week and is in the process of developing a communications strategy to address the problems of child abuse and care for those with special psychological needs. A social media campaign has already been launched to increase awareness and promote the community's role in caring for such vulnerable children.

Elie Fahed, Lebanon: Building Bridges Between Youth and Police. Ras Beirut is a model police station that opened in January 2014 to pilot community policing in the capital, where corruption, abuse and civil war have all contributed to a serious lack of trust and fear of the police, particularly amongst the youth. Elie Fahed was determined to change this and it is the focus for his Action Plan. During his Fellowship Elie spent time with police officers and youth groups surveying the methods they use to encourage greater cooperation. On his return to Lebanon Elie developed a Safer Schools Partnership (modelled on a UK initiative) to help students build better relations with the police. Having gained the approval from his headquarters to start building the project, Elie has started developing links with schools in the city. So far, initial contacts between the station and schools have gone well, with some schools already reporting issues and increased patrols outside school entrances providing greater security. Elie's next step is to set up a forum for youth dialogue, which he hopes will bridge gaps in understanding and encourage future cooperation.

Action Plans Reports 2014: Private Sector

“My level of influence
has changed because
I am more encouraged”

Fatma Al-Ajmi, Oman

Mohammed Altawash, Bahrain: Creative Class & Business Hubs. With over fifteen years’ experience in real estate and construction Mohammed Al Tawash felt the need to rebalance the sector’s focus on building lucrative high-rise luxury apartments and promote affordable social housing. The problem he faced, however, was building effective partnerships to make this happen within a divided society and, as a result, developed an Action Plan to unite young entrepreneurs through diverse and creative business ventures i.e. ‘the Creative Class’! By nurturing young entrepreneurs in business and the creative industries Mohammed aims to build reconciliation and mediation between people of different backgrounds as well as diversifying Bahrain’s economy to promote social equity and national capital growth. In the twelve months since the programme Mohammed has developed a business plan and secured a location from which the Hub can operate. He aims to see it providing the best-in-class infrastructure for entrepreneurial development that, in addition to providing technical support, will establish a unique environment to foster collaboration and peer development.

Alia Gharaibeh, Jordan: Doing Business Differently. Despite the fact that 50% of university graduates in Jordan are female, only 14% women make it into the workforce; and, while 98% of businesses in Jordan are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), there is no support system in place to safeguard their rights. Alia Gharaibeh believes that these two facts are largely responsible for many of the social problems faced by Jordan and her Action Plan is to develop businesses to address both issues. In March 2014 Alia’s aim was to help women who have been out of work by connecting them with SMEs as a way of reintegrating them within the workforce. She then planned to promote the idea of fact-based research and input it into policymaking so that women’s needs in the workplace were reflected. Since returning, Alia has developed a business process outsourcing project titled Grant Watch, helping non-profits and SMEs grow. In the three months since its launch, Grant Watch has had six organisational subscribers. She has also finalised an agreement with the Kuehne Foundation to provide resources for the Humanitarian Supply Chain Simulator which has enabled her to train over 40 leaders in the humanitarian sector.

Ali Al-Sudany, Iraq: Investing in Development. The main challenge to the Rule of Law in Iraq is the country’s instability compounded by a lack of accountability, weak private sector and rundown public services. As an Assistant Professor of Strategic Management at the University of Baghdad Ali Al-Sudany believes that investing in the economy is the most strategic long-term solution. Ali’s Action Plan sets out a national roadmap for sustainable development that promotes small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as a means to boost growth. As such, Ali has developed a 4-year plan to campaign for changes in legislation, encourage a better investment climate and set up the Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Development Centre (SMEDC) to offer advice and support to entrepreneurs about to start up. He has met with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs who are supportive of the initiative and put him in touch with the Employment and Loans Directorate to take the idea forward. Ali’s vision is that by 2030 SMEs will be a sustainable source of income for Iraq and encourage greater stability.

Nigar Sardar Mohammed, Iraq: Empowering Women through Enterprise. With the threat of Da’ish (ISIS) becoming increasingly severe in Iraqi Kurdistan so has the economic situation deteriorated. The number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) has swollen while the Iraqi Federal Government has cut funding to the region. Seeing economic growth as a way to support and empower refugee women Nigar Sardar Mohammed’s Plan is to help them gain access to finance and manage these financial resources effectively. She also sees this as being a way of easing tensions between the refugees and host communities. Working in partnership with the Business Information Center of the Sulaymaniyah Chamber of Commerce, Nigar conducted an initial needs assessment in the host community and in refugee/IDP camps in the Sulaymaniyah Governorate. She identified a group of 30 women and developed two training courses; one called ‘Start your own Business’, the other in hairdressing. Nigar is also supporting three women to apply for a UNDP tender which would have the potential to provide job opportunities for a further 15 women. If successful, Nigar will secure jobs for at least 30 women and provide job opportunities for 45 IDPs through the UNDP. This should also help decrease community tensions among IDPs, Syrians and members of the host communities, as well as giving women more financial confidence and eventually contribute to the overall economic growth of the region.

Haitham Al Lawati, Oman: Raising Legal Awareness with Business. Working as a commercial lawyer in Oman Haitham Al Lawati noticed a lack of legal awareness within the business sector. Recognising that this could be detrimental to the country’s overall economic, legal and social development, Haitham designed his JST Action Plan to boost the business and capital markets through a legal magazine which would target investors and company stakeholders. During the last year, Haitham has approached government and non-government financial institutions for funding and is in the process of securing the relevant licence to begin publication. His aim is to release a bi-monthly high-quality magazine to educate people legally and to ultimately provide a better and healthier business environment in Oman. The magazine is specifically designed to promote more compliance with local law and generate more commercial legal awareness as a source of legal updates. Working in collaboration with the Omani Lawyers Association, Haitham has prepared a magazine prototype and gathered articles relating to how the law should be implemented in relation to business and capital markets.



Action Plans Reports 2014: Refugees and Humanitarian Intervention

Elias Diab, Lebanon: Strengthening Local Communities. Decades of war and conflict have left Lebanon divided and, although progress has been made in terms of peace building and easing transition, significant religious and ethnic tensions remain. The influx of Syrian refugees has had an additional impact on Lebanon's financial and political stability threatening to escalate tensions. Elias Diab believes that the main causes of such tensions are due to increased pressure on public services and access to social security by the rapidly growing refugee population, as well as an unfair dispersal of essential resources which by-pass some of the most needy marginalised and minority groups. Elias's JST Action Plan involves strengthening municipal governments to lead, coordinate, and monitor Rule of Law, community policing and peace building programmes so that both refugees and other Lebanese citizens have access to services. Working with the Ministry of Social Affairs, Elias has held roundtable discussions and town hall meetings with targeted municipalities in central and southern Lebanon discussing the issues that trigger conflicts and offering training to community leaders. As a result of these meetings conflict mitigation measures are now in place and Elias is developing a project aimed at peace building through technology. So far he has raised 70% of the funds and looks to launch the project within the next six months. As a result of his work an increased level of trust and an "institutionalised" dialogue framework between refugees and host communities is now in place and locally owned.

Bakhtyar Salih, Iraq: Securing Refugee and IDP Rights. Since June 2014, a surge in violence between armed groups and government forces has resulted in an estimated 1.2 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in central and northern Iraq and a further 1.5 million people needing humanitarian assistance. While the majority of IDPs have sought shelter within host communities, rented accommodation, or are staying in hotels, a significant number are currently located in public buildings such as mosques and schools. These populations are in dire need of assistance, as they currently have no access to even basic services and supplies. Given the situation, Bakhtyar Salih adapted his Action Plan to respond to the growing emergency and has played a significant role both in delivering that response and in championing policy changes to support IDP and refugee rights. Thanks to Bakhtyar's work every refugee can now give power of attorney to a lawyer and receive free blood tests - a pre-condition for residency. Activities for which he had direct responsibility include: providing over 500 children with new clothes and shoes, supporting new arrivals from Syria and providing 1000 IDP families with food packages and air coolers. In recognition of his role in responding to the IDP emergency Bakhtyar was invited to participate in the Civil Society Dialogue Network meeting which took place in Brussels in 2014 where the EU was seeking to gather civil society insight into the situation in Iraq.



Christine El Cheikh, Lebanon: Reporting on Syria's Refugees. Since 2010 more than 100,000 people have been killed as a result of the Syrian crisis, the proliferation of violence and torture among civil populations has risen and there have been vast increases in internal displacement and forced migration. By March 2014 the UNHCR had registered 2,513,654 refugees costing around US\$4.2 million to support. Lebanon currently hosts over 1 million of these refugees and while international governments and agencies have recognised the strain on its capacity to cope, little has been done to help alleviate the pressure. Christine El Cheikh's JST Action Plan is to raise greater international awareness of the plight of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Working as a freelance journalist, she now offers an impartial and independent reflection of what is happening through her online blog 'Middle East Life Stories' - highlighting the untold stories of refugees. She has also covered numerous stories related to the Syrian war and refugee crisis including insights into UK policy which she gathered during her time on the JST Programme. Through this work Christine hopes to alleviate the suffering of Syrian refugees in Lebanon by giving individuals a voice to freely express themselves, shed light on international policies toward the conflict and the humanitarian response, and generate the interest of other bloggers, journalists and activists to take up these stories.

Tamara Alabbadi, Jordan: Vocational training for Syrian refugees in Jordan. Jordan is currently host to over half a million Syrian refugees. 52% are under the age of 18 and only 5% are registered in formal education. Tamara Alabbadi's Action Plan is to provide vocational training for this 'forgotten' group and harness both their potential and economic power encouraging them to integrate into Jordanian society. She has visited the Al Za'atari refugee camp and met with UN agencies and international organisations which has led her to form a strategic partnership with the International Red Cross office in Irbid. They are currently reaching out to a target group of potential participants who have now left the camps and are residing in Irbid. She plans to run capacity building programmes which will look at personal development, boost aspirations and self-confidence as well as developing workplace skills through recreational activities. Although, the project was put on hold in February due to the escalating security situation, Tamara is now expecting to hold the first meeting with a view to start conducting workshops imminently. Her aim is to deliver a cohort of ready-to-work skilled professionals and promote business enterprise from among these 'forgotten' refugees and help them integrate into society.

Zain Batarseh, Jordan: Ending Human Trafficking. Today there are 27 million people affected by slavery across the world. 800,000 are trafficked across international borders every year and 80% of those trafficked are women and children. In Jordan, as the Syrian refugee crisis worsens the risk of trafficking grows. Moreover, Jordan's limited resources mean it has struggled to cope with the influx of refugees and many issues that should be addressed - such as human trafficking - are unavoidably sidelined. Working with the International Organisation for Migration Zain Batarseh's Human Trafficking Project aims to end the practice in Jordan. She has recruited 30 colleagues and devised learning games and awareness raising materials to use with refugees at risk of exploitation. She has also conducted direct assistance interviews with potential victims of trafficking to make sure they know their rights. Finally, she is planning to produce 'Untold', a short film telling the personal stories of victims which will be used to raise awareness of trafficking amongst the wider public.

Nabil Frem, Lebanon: Securing Legal Rights for Refugees. With the Syrian refugee problem in Middle East resulting in the worst humanitarian crisis since the Second World War, the burden on neighbouring countries is reaching extreme proportions. Lebanon does not have the status of an official asylum country, yet by the end of 2014 was host to over 1 million refugees with infrastructure and public resources stretched to breaking. Many host communities lack understanding of the needs and legal rights of refugees and are unable to offer effective assistance. As a JST Fellow Nabil Frem plans to improve the provision of legal advice to refugees by working with detention centres to assess the needs of detainees and signpost NGO support. To date, he has successfully mapped all five prisons and all twelve police stations in northern Lebanon. Through this exercise he has established the location of all detained Syrian refugees and given them assistance. Nabil has also established a basis for cooperation between UNHCR offices and the ISF as well as between the UNHCR offices and local NGOs to provide legal advice and counselling services.

Action Plans Reports 2014: Public Policy and Civil Society Reform

Lama Afana, Jordan: Professionalising Civil Society. After three decades of martial rule, participation in civic and voluntary life in Jordan has been lacking. However, in the last few years, protests and popular movements demanding government reform, and measures to tackle corruption have been a regular. A number of civil society organisations (CSOs) have emerged calling for greater government accountability and promoting participative decision-making but most are inexperienced and lack the structured support and professionalisation needed to achieve their aims. Lama Afana's Action Plan is to empower civil society organisations to actively participate in policy making by creating an umbrella body of successful CSOs to provide role models and support systems. On returning to Jordan after the programme Lama started by conducting research. She held a number of focus groups in Jordan and Lebanon to map out the feasibility of her plan and develop additional ideas. As a result of the consultation, Lama modified her plan to offer capacity building to CSOs through a specialised entity 'Good Governance for Civil Society'. Her overall objective is to make Jordanian civil society more professional and efficient.

Rabih Dandachli, Lebanon: Monitoring Policy. Public policy in Lebanon is often value-based and driven by the political agendas of those in power that can mean some policies are ill thought-through and lead to social and financial problems. The Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs has reported that public policy development in Lebanon suffers from the absence of any structured decision making apparatus and a lack of engagement with key stakeholders. Rabih Dandachli's Action Plan, 'The Whistle', aims to develop this policy research by conducting a needs assessment of Lebanese public policy in order to understand the origins of policy failures. He will then use this research to identify a sustainable mechanism to monitor and implement public policy which may include establishing an Independent Monitoring Body or an evidence-based research team. Since returning to Lebanon Rabih has completed the needs assessment, highlighted public policy areas which need changing and secured the support of key people and stakeholders. Linking this to Lewin's Change Management Model – Rabih describes the project as being in an 'Unfreeze' stage as he is gathering momentum to achieve change. Rabih accepts that this is a long-term project but hopes it will lead to changes in the culture of policy making with increased level of support and training for policy makers.

Ali Alsabbagh, Bahrain: Using Social Media Effectively. Following the Arab Spring, social media consultant Ali Alsabbagh shifted his focus from promoting the use of social media by business to promoting public awareness on media laws and regulations that affect the freedom of speech and expression. Ali sees that social media offers the opportunity for greater public debate and participation in decision-making whilst also acting as a watchdog on the government. However, he believes that for it to reach its potential, social media reporting needs to be accurate and fact-based. Ali's Action Plan encourages best practice and ethical standards in social media use. Since the programme he has reached over 80 young activists through the delivery of training workshops in cooperation with the General Organisation for Youth and Sport in Bahrain and two workshops with the Bahrain Youth Society and Bahrain Youth Pioneers Society. He has also launched a national campaign with a live interview on Bahrain National TV and in the next year aims to reach over 20% of computer literate people, create a network of citizen journalists and establish a national charter on social media ethical and professional standards.

Dana Al Dairani, Jordan: Honouring Syria's Heroes. As the conflict in Syria continues it is easy to forget the individuals who work to maintain normality for those still living there. There is Gaby, a musician who is blind and physically disabled who volunteers to teach music to refugee children and Rasha, who works with a team to engage communities for the rehabilitation of schools and hospitals. Dana Al Dairani, designed her Action Plan to honour these unsung heroes through a Syrian Development Academy. The Academy's aim is to empower young Syrian leaders so that they can positively contribute to the country's re-development; and Dana plans to launch a campaign to award 10 young Syrians with the chance of winning a place on an Academy training programme which will help them launch projects designed to boost economic empowerment and re-development. Since the UK residential programme, Dana has attracted 406 young Syrians between the ages of 18-36 to participate in focus groups and completed surveys to help guide the establishment of the Syrian Development Academy. This has resulted in 63 signing up as volunteers to help deliver activities in its first year. Several local Syrian NGOs have also been supportive and funding proposals been submitted to international donors. Dana has also worked with Syrian refugees in Jordan to help shape the design of the Academy and examine its objectives and structure. Her ultimate vision is to rebuild a stable, prosperous and healthy Syria.

Rashid Khan, Bahrain: Promoting Peace and Tolerance. The 2011 Bahraini uprising stretched and tore the fabric of society, exacerbating sectarian tensions and resulting in a starkly divided community where violence is widespread and human rights increasingly violated. Among the Bahraini people, however, is a vision to reclaim their country and see the return of a civilised, tolerant and prosperous society. Rashid Khan plans to capture this spirit through the establishment of I,CAN: Civil Awareness Network. The network will include an online forum where responsibilities and rights can be discussed and complaints relayed to relevant bodies. He has discussed his Action Plan with two relevant ministries in Bahrain but has been delayed by a Cabinet reshuffle. He has discussed his idea with various different parties and other JST Fellows so he can decide on the right legal status for the network. Once this is finalised, he will recruit up to 20 volunteers who can give relevant and useful advice. It is Rashid's overall dream is to see citizens and residents exercise their rights.

Rabih Kerbaj, Lebanon: Empowering Minority Rights. Lebanon is a state divided among eighteen different religious, political and ethnic groups. Many experience endemic institutional discrimination. Consequently, there are low levels of social integration, socio-economic development and political participation among minorities. It is Rabih Kerbaj's aim to remove such exclusion by working with government, civil society and the international community to strengthen relationships between minority and majority groups. His Action Plan intends to empower minorities by reinforcing the meaning of citizenship and helping them exercise their rights. Rabih's first step is to organise a conference involving young people, intellectuals, government officials and politicians with the target of devising a work-based approach that will result in the Lebanese government amending the articles in the constitution which result in discrimination. Rabih then plans to mobilise civil society and the media to hold the government to account so that citizenship and human rights standards to eliminate discrimination and strengthen relations between minorities and majorities are upheld. Having done this he sees national unity being strengthened, as empowering minority groups will promote greater public and economic participation and prevent discrimination.

Mohammed Al Yahyaee, Oman: Campaigning for Parliament. Mohammed Al Yahyaee's Fellowship experience was transformative. During his three weeks in the UK he came to conclude that to achieve real change he would need to develop himself so that he was in a position to create change from within the system. As such, he developed a new Action Plan to run a campaign to win a seat in the parliamentary elections in Oman scheduled for Autumn 2015. Mohammed is hopeful that if he has the chance to develop his constituency, be active in parliament and sit within the executive that he can boost the Rule of Law. Mohammed has spent much time since attending the JST Programme building relationships with his community and engaging with his constituents. He has held a number of meetings to discuss local needs and found that there is a strong desire for change. He has specifically worked with the government to see an Autism Centre become fully functional. Mohammed submitted his application for candidacy in January 2015 and has recruited his campaign team.

“Using “tweets” and various posts on social media as a device ... [have] completely changed the way people in the Middle East expressed themselves, helping them find the courage to voice their opinions, be braver, louder and more daring.”

Ali Al Saeed, Bahrain

Annex 1: The Fellows

“The Fellowship network is fantastic,
it is always good to know there
are people you can count on.”

Nour Al Rasheed, Jordan

Bahrain



Ahmed Husain is Founder and Director of Reload Consulting Services which specialises in tackling cyber threats. Ahmed is working to make Bahrain a regional hub for developing the legal and enforcement frameworks to ensure cyber security.



Ali Abbas Yusuf is an IT expert specialising in cyber security. He is working to create a bilingual online volunteerism directory to increase the employability and professional skills of unemployed young people.



Ali Al Saeed is a journalist and award-winning author. In 2006, Ali founded Elham, a creative and interactive arts group to enable artists to present their work to wider audiences. Ali is developing Elham to help with the process of reconciliation in Bahrain.



Ali Alsabbagh is Senior Business Development Officer at the Bahraini Economic Development Board. He is working to raise awareness among social media users about the importance of employing a rigorous fact-based approach when reporting on politics, corruption or social justice.



Fahad Al Binali is Head of International Co-operation and Development at the Ministry of Interior Ombudsman Office. Working with UK experts, he is developing best practice in the monitoring of rehabilitation and detention facilities.



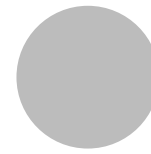
Fatema Ali is an art and community development researcher and project manager. She has headed up projects for the British Council and other international funders. Since her Fellowship, Fatema has published research on reconciliation in Northern Ireland.



Ghada Hasan is Director of International Cooperation and Development at the Ministry of Interior Ombudsman Office. Ghada is working to implement a nationwide human rights education programme.



Isa Alarabi is Assistant Secretary-General of the International Gulf Organization for Human Rights, President of Step for Human Rights and Assistant Chief Editor of "Insight", the first human rights magazine in the MENA region. He is a researcher on issues of national reconciliation and peace building. He founded the Bahrain Charter for Peace.



Islam Al Tayeb is a Senior Policy Analyst working in the Bahraini government. She is working on youth engagement projects advocating dialogue, social cohesion and national identity through media, public discussions, and education.



Khalil Almarzooq is the Secretary General Assistant of the Al-Wefaq National Islamic Society. Khalil is working on increasing accountability and developing the constitutional and legal frameworks to fight impunity independently, impartially and effectively.



Khawla Al Muhannadi is the President of the Environment Friends Society. She is creating a network of activists working to promote the idea of sustainability and social responsibility among all sectors of society.



Mai Matar is a Civil Court Judge at the Judicial Supreme Council heading the Rental Dispute Resolution Committee. Mai is working on judicial reform projects to establish a new, more efficient court system in Bahrain.



Maryam AlManaseer is Head of Media at the Department of Health and Editor of a live TV morning show devoted to health issues. She is establishing a committee of experts to develop projects providing health and social care for children with special needs.



Mohammed Altawash is an entrepreneur working on national reconciliation with an economic focus. He is nurturing young entrepreneurs in business and the creative industries in order to encourage diversification away from gas and oil and towards a knowledge economy.



Mona Hejres is a doctor and WHO medical expert. Since the Fellowship Programme Mona has established 'Together For Human Rights', an NGO that focuses on Human Rights Defenders capacity building, raising awareness about rights in the community and monitoring and documenting human rights violations. As one of its first projects, the NGO monitored the recent Bahraini elections.



Nada Dhaif is Founder of the Bahrain Rehabilitation & Anti-Violence Organisation (BRAVO). BRAVO's mission is to end torture and violence and to support victims without discrimination. Nada is working to obtain consultative status for BRAVO with the United Nations Economic and Social Council.



Nazeeha Saeed is a Correspondent for Radio Monte Carlo and France 24. She is creating a training programme for journalists in the Arab region to better understand their rights. Nazeeha also works with international organisations to defend freedom of the media.



Rashid Khan is a social entrepreneur. He is creating an online network, 'i,CAN: Civil Awareness Network', which will bring together professionals to promote a greater sense of civic responsibility, tolerance and awareness among the public.



Zakeya Zada is an events consultant specialising in high quality cultural and artistic programmes for young people. She is a self-taught artist and interested in using art to promote tolerance and diversity among children.

Iraq



Ali Al-Sudany is Assistant Professor of Strategic Management at the University of Baghdad. Ali is working to create structures to support small and medium-sized enterprises and set out a national roadmap for sustainable development.



Ali Kareem is Head of the Kurdistan Institute for Human Rights which aims to ensure that Kurdish human rights law is reformed to meet international standards. Ali is promoting the position of an Attorney General in the Kurdistan Region.



Amina Thekri Saeed is a Member of Parliament in the Kurdistan Regional Government. She is an expert in public opinion polls, women's issues and journalism and a strong advocate for transparency.



Ashwaq Al Jaff is a Member of Parliament. She is Deputy Chair of the Parliamentary Human Rights Committee and is working to improve the culture of human rights through raising awareness and better education.



Asmaa Al Ameen is Co-ordinator at the UN Iraq Operations Centre and is involved projects related to the National Dialogue and Reconciliation Programme. Her work supports the rights of prisoners and detainees, as well as protecting vulnerable women in Kirkuk.



Aveen Ahmed is a Member of Parliament in the Kurdistan Regional Government where she is responsible for scrutinising the legislative process as well as monitoring the performance of the cabinet. Aveen is working on improving the monitoring and scrutiny of government.



Aziz Ahmed is an employee at the Kurdistan Regional Government Department of Foreign Relations. Aziz compiles reports about the region's development as well as writing speeches, drafting official correspondence and media relations.



Bakhtyar Salih is Project Coordinator for the Civil Development Organization. He delivers training to police officers on human rights and prevention of torture. He has successfully introduced a human rights curriculum into schools in Kurdistan. Since the rise of ISIS, he is involved in the emergency response of refugees and IDPs in Kurdistan.



Dadyar Sulaiman is a Judge in the Erbil Investigation Court and Kurdistan's Judicial Council, where he is the official Speaker. He is working to establish an independent Judicial Appointment Commission.



Falah Shakaram is a lawyer specialising in managing human rights programmes in Iraqi Kurdistan. He has campaigned for women's rights and against FGM for over 10 years. He helped bring the Family Violence Bill to parliament in 2007 and he is now campaigning to ensure the enforcement of this law.



Ghassan Jawad Kadhim works for UK company PGI in Iraq. Following his Fellowship Ghassan assisted central and local government to create the official Tribes Councils, establishing a direct line of communication between individuals, tribes, political parties and the Government.



Haval Raoof is a Rule of Law Advisor to the United States Consulate in Erbil. Haval is working to bring together rule of law related institutions and organisations to explore access to justice issues.



Hazim Hamed is an Adviser to the Presidency, specialising in public policy and government affairs. He has recently completed a PhD in Public Policy and established a non-political working group, involving civil society and civil servants to build a roadmap for development.



Maryam Al-Rayes is Political Advisor to former Prime Minister of Iraq, Nouri Al-Maliki. Maryam is working to redress the marginalisation of women by lobbying government to address gaps in the law as well as drafting legislation to ensure equality across all levels of society.



Maysaa Al Tameemi is Manager of the Women's Community Centre in Baquba. She campaigns for the rights of widowed women and aims to empower them through leadership and training programmes.



Mustafa Field is the Director for the Faiths Forum for London and the Fayre Share Foundation. He has helped establish an Arab TV media-monitoring project. In Iraq he continues work with youth NGOs and in the development of faith based institutions and how they can promote the Rule of Law.



Namo Majeed is Founder and the Executive Director of the Civil Society Initiative, an NGO in Iraqi Kurdistan. Namo is developing a network of NGOs to lobby the government for the implementation of the United Nations Rule of Law Indicators.



Nazar Al Ibrahim is a Lecturer and Researcher at Hawler Medical University in the Kurdistan. His research focuses on public health and he has helped to develop medical education relating to women's health and violence against women.



Nigar Sardar Mohammed is a humanitarian aid and socio-economic development consultant. She is currently working for Relief International, an organisation that provides humanitarian relief and rehabilitation to vulnerable communities. Nigar's work provides support for small and medium-sized businesses.



Razaw Ahmed is a Lawyer at the Kurdistan Lawyers Syndicate where she represents female clients on a pro bono basis. She is working on a project to prevent gender-based violence by strengthening coordination between NGO service providers and government institutions.

Iraq



Sabah Al-Tememy is a Member of the Baghdad Provincial Council and a Professor in the Faculty of Political Science at Baghdad University. Sabah is working on legal mechanisms for promoting gender equality as well as empowering women to set up small businesses.



Safa Mahdi Ubeid Al-Waali is Senior Chief Security Manager at Global Communities (formerly CHF International) and a consultant and expert on security and Intelligence. Safa is leading a research project analysing security and rule of law.



Tariq Hassoon is the Media and Documenting Officer for the Iraqi National Symphony Orchestra. He engages young people in music, art, event coordination, media, communications and leadership as a means of bringing divided communities together. Tariq is also working for the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.



Torhan Al Mufti is an Adviser of the President of Iraq and Chairman of Turkmen Right Party. As a leader of the Turkmane people, he is working for the return of IDPs to the provinces seized by ISIS. He is also interested in developing a sound strategy for advancing international relations in the MENA region.



Yousif Al Nuaemi is Assistant Dean for Scientific Affairs in the Al-Kindy College of Medicine at the University of Baghdad and is Vice President of the NGO 'Health for All'. He is leading the Curriculum Committee to modernise the medical curriculum in Al Kindy College of Medicine to ensure highly qualified leaders in medical organisations.

Jordan



Adi Khair is a member of the political team representing Jordan at the UN Security Council for the term 2014-2015. He is also working with civil society organisations advancing the Rule of Law among young people in Jordan.



Ali Al-Museimi is Director of the Human Rights and Family Affairs Department for the Ministry of Justice. Ali is working on the implementation of community sanctions as an alternative to custodial sentences to promote rehabilitation and create a fairer criminal justice system.



Alia Gharaibeh is Founder and Manager of ShapeShifters M.E., a business training and consultancy company that advises entrepreneurs. Alia is implementing USAID programmes to support female owned small and medium-sized enterprises.



Dana Al Dairani is Training Manager at AMIDEAST, Jordan. Dana is creating the Syrian Development Academy to identify and celebrate young leaders' achievements and contributions to improving social, cultural and economic life in Syria.



Dana Said Shuqom is Director of AMIDEAST Jordan. Dana is developing an awareness and advocacy campaign to challenge attitudes and promote the role of women in society, focusing on economic rights.



Diala Khamra is Chief Executive Officer at the Haya Cultural Centre and founding member of the Justice Centre for Legal Aid. Diala is working with the government on the development of policy for funded legal aid services run in partnership with civil society.



Farah Jadallah is the Programme Development Manager at the Queen Rania Foundation for Education and Development. She is designing basic life skills and financial literacy training for 15-18 year old girls not in education and vulnerable women living on low incomes.



George Kara'a is Technical Director for the Democracy, Rights and Governance office for the US Agency for International Development in Jordan. As a Fellow his focus was on promoting criminal and justice reform. He is currently co-ordinating the national strategy on gender equality.



Ghaith Al Amaireh is a Policy Analyst in the Political Affairs Directorate in the Office of His Majesty King Abdullah II and part of his role is to follow on the works of the Parliament, the Independent Election Commission and the Constitutional Court. He is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Public Policy at UCL.



Hazar Khasawneh is a managing partner at Lead Advisory Group, a newly established law firm that offers services including litigation, legal research and training. She is currently working on life coaching as a means of promoting equality.

Jordan



Lama Afana is a Consultant for the International Labour Organisation advising on local economic development and institutional capacity building of community based organisations. She is working on a project to empower civil society to participate in policy-making processes.



Lana Nimri is currently the Legal Advisor and Policy Reform Specialist at the USAID Jordan Competitiveness Program. In 2013 she founded the Jordan Better Workplace Association to offer legal support and promote workers' rights.



Lina Salah is a social and traditional media analyst for the Levant Region at the US Embassy in Amman. She is using social media to educate young people about political processes and citizenship - to give them a voice and raise their level of political participation.



Maha Oudat is Vice President of the General Federation of Jordanian Women, an NGO focused on enhancing the political, social and economic status of women. She has developed training workshops to raise awareness amongst students about the country's constitution and the Rule of Law.



Malak Al-Hasoun is Institutional Development Specialist at the Policy and Development Unit of the Ministry of Justice. Malak is working on incorporating Rule of Law principles into the Ministry's strategic plan and co-ordinating training for the management.



Malik Shishtawi is Executive Director of y2d Holding Group and the Founder and President of the Arab Social Media Forum. He plans to launch further forums in Qatar and Bahrain, as well as develop his current events and increase community engagement with his work.



Nart Dohjoka is Project Manager of the Science for Peace Initiative at the Royal Scientific Society. Nart is working on Science Diplomacy as a means of achieving conflict transformation.



Nimati Eman is a Strategic Planning Director at Cheil Worldwide. Nimati aims to create the first online magazine for women in the Middle East. The magazine will provide a platform for women to learn, work and discuss issues relevant to contemporary society.



Noor Homoud is Director of Programme and Initiatives at the King Abdullah II Fund for Development. She works closely with NGOs, INGOs, and governmental organisations to help to development in the regions. Her work aims to empower citizens to bring about change in their society.



Nour Al Rasheed has extensive experience initiating and managing social, educational and economic empowerment programmes in Jordan and other countries in the region. She has newly relocated to Abu Dhabi and is currently focusing on promoting technical and vocational education to young people.



Raed Al Madanat is Founder and Managing Partner of Beyond Excellence, a training company. He is designing workshops and training programmes to teach values of respect, honesty, and responsibility to schoolchildren aged 6-8 years.



Rakan Madi is the General Manager of Maersk Line Jordan, an international shipping company. Rakan is working with the community to analyse what they are looking for from Members of Parliament and elected officials, therefore enabling individuals to make more informed decisions when they vote.



Rami Salah is Deputy Attorney General and an expert in mutual legal assistance. Rami is developing a national training strategy which will become integral to the curriculum of the Judicial Training Institute.



Rasha Batarseh is a National Field Officer for the UNHCR. She is working on a campaign to raise awareness of violence against women and to address the causes. By challenging perceptions and supporting victims, Rasha hopes to empower women.



Taghreed Jaber is MENA Regional Director of the Penal Reform International. She is promoting the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders to create a criminal justice system that is more responsive the needs of female prisoners.



Tala Abu Taha is Founder and Managing Director of VARCC Communications and Public Relations, a leading agency with a track record in carrying out successful campaigns. She is using her experience in communications to raise political awareness among the public.



Tamara Alabbadi is a trainer and project manager. She is designing and delivering vocational training programmes and self-development workshops for 15-22 year-old refugees to help them to discover and explore their interests and talents.



Wafa Al Makhamreh is Head of the International Organisations Division at the Directorate for Cultural and International Relations in the Ministry of Education. She is working to ensure the integration of human rights education into the school curriculum.



Wafa Nimri runs Write Pilot, a translation and communications company. She is working to combat corruption by developing online tools and translation services to create greater public access to information online.



Zain Batarseh co-ordinates the Communications Office at the International Organisation for Migration. Zain is developing a programme of assistance to Syrian refugees who have been victims of torture, trafficking and other forms of violence.

Lebanon



Abdalla Mkanna is an Emergency Public Health Specialist at the International Organization for Migration. He is working on a health plan for Syrian refugees in Lebanon – conducting a needs assessment to analyse their health requirements and coordinating international responses.



Afif Tabsh is the operations manager at a consulting and training firm, Instructor at AUB University and founder and board member of several NGOs. He focuses on empowering young people and giving them the skills to develop their own communities.



Christine El Cheikh is a freelance journalist. She reports on the political, socio-economic and security situation, with a particular focus on Lebanon, Iraq and Syria. She is working on a media campaign addressing the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon.



Elias Diab is Political Affairs Advisor at United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq based in Baghdad. His previous work was addressing the affects of the influx of Syrian refugees on public services in Lebanon.



Elie Fahed is a First Lieutenant in the Internal Security Forces. Elie aims to encourage greater trust in the police among young people. His Safer School Partnership will see the police working with schools in order to reduce crime and improve behaviour.



Fadi Khalil is a Major Engineer in the Internal Security Forces where he is Chief of the Technical Office in the Telecommunications Department. He is drafting a new telecommunications law which reflects the right to confidentiality and privacy.



Ghada Sabbagh is Project Officer at the International Monetary Fund. Ghada is establishing a network of legal clinics. The clinics will provide pro bono legal services to vulnerable communities and give legal students the opportunity to train as socially responsible lawyers.



Haissam Minkara is Humanitarian Partnerships Programme Manager for Oxfam in Lebanon. As a Fellow, Haissam planned to establish a regional network of elections professionals and observers to ensure free and fair elections.



Hamze Ahmad is Head of Training at the Police Academy of Internal Security Forces. Hamze is working on developing the Academy's curriculum and assessment to improve all aspects of teaching.



Jana Bou Reslan is an educator with more than 10 years of teaching experience. She has developed 'iPoetry', an online platform that encourages young people to express themselves through poetry and creative writing.



Karim Mrad is a First Lieutenant and Assistant Head of the Human Rights Department at the Internal Security Force. He is working to introduce comprehensive training programmes and improvements to the complaint mechanisms.



Marina Chamma is an economist, freelance writer and blogs at EyeontheEast.org. Marina runs workshops with university students to promote a culture of blogging and highlight its value as an awareness-raising tool.



Maya Terro is a food activist. She co-founded 'FoodBlessed', a community- based hunger-relief initiative that tackles food poverty while addressing and spreading awareness on food waste. Maya has found fear of legal liability is a major obstacle to securing food donations, so has drafted a law to protect donors. She recently started the slow food youth movement in Lebanon.



Melkar el Khoury is the founder and director of Central Research House, a human rights and cultural intelligence research company. He has experience in democracy and human rights education, political media and political management. He is working on raising awareness about civilians' rights in times of war and internal conflicts.



Nabil Frem is Senior Protection Assistant at the UNHCR in Beirut. Nabil is developing a local programme to provide legal assistance to refugees. He is collaborating with detention centres and service providers as well as working directly with refugees.



Nadine Saba is founder and Project Manager of the Akkar Network for Development, an NGO empowering youth in rural areas of Northern Lebanon. She runs projects raising awareness of rights and encouraging people to exercise their rights during elections.



Natacha Sarkis is a Regional Project Analyst at the United Nations Development Programme. She is working to promote transparency and accountability within the public sector and among civil servants through a campaign to curb the abuse of official resources.



Nezar Chaaban is a legal expert specializing in the international protection of vulnerable groups, civilian crisis management, and peace building. He is working with UNHCR Lebanon as a legal focal point involved in legal aid programmes and representation to Syrian refugees.



Outeiba Merhebi is a human rights lawyer. She is also the President and Director of Justice and Empowerment, an organisation that empowers women and youth in the rural areas of Northern Lebanon. Her work focuses on the protection of legal professionals working on human rights cases.



Rabih Dandachli is a political official for a Lebanese political party. He is planning to establish an evidence-based research team for public policy that also acts as a monitoring body for public policy projects in Lebanon.

Lebanon



Rabih Kerbaj is a Managing Director of MGI-KICA International, an independent accounting and consulting firm. He is a Board Member at Libnor, affiliated to Ministry of Industry and Co-Founder of the Lebanese Development Forum. He is developing a series of workshops to empower ethnic minorities.



Raja Abinader is head of the Prisons Directorate within the Ministry of Justice. He is working on reforming the prison system.



Ramy Lakkis is Founder of the Lebanese Organisation of Studies and Training, an NGO and research centre dedicated to education and networking. He is working to promote the Rule of Law in all civic education and youth engagement programmes that his organisation runs.



Rhea Jabbour is Legal Manager at L'Oreal handling legal work for the Levant region and holds a PhD in Comparative Employment Discrimination Law. She is campaigning to eradicate workplace discrimination based on gender, race or age.



Suzan El Hajj is Head of Intellectual Property and the Prevention of Cybercrime in the Internal Security Forces. After her Fellowship, she founded a Gender Equality Office within the Internal Security Forces and established a specialist training programme for female cadets.



Tarek Mkanna is a Captain in the Internal Security Forces. He has been actively involved in the introduction of community policing and has implemented a pilot project to improve police accountability and reinforce society's trust in the force.



Vida Hamd is a Research Officer and Foreign Policy and Natural Resources Coordinator at the United Nations Development Programme. Vida is working to strengthen the Rule of Law by providing policy and advisory support for constitutional bodies and expert dialogue groups on key national reforms.



Yousef Wehbeh is a Programme Officer for Geneva Call. He is developing a legal framework for armed groups to improve the Rule of Law and humanitarian assistance in Palestinian camps. He recently launched a legal support unit with the PLO and is now working to develop a code of conduct for the armed groups.



Zeina Chedid is a practicing attorney and partner of Chedid Law Offices. She is working to protect migrant domestic workers through the development of new legislation. She is also creating a network of NGOs to build support for a change to the law.

Oman



Anwar Al Battashi is an Urban Planning Specialist managing and regulating the planning of the Al Duqm town and the industrial zone within the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. Anwar is working to raise awareness of the principles of sustainable development and social equity in urban planning.



Bader Al Abri is a prominent blogger who is writing a book on the history of the Internet in Oman. The book will focus on the period between 2007 and 2012, when the digital world underwent dramatic changes with significant impact on the lives of individuals.



Badriya Al Harrasi is Head of the Case Follow-Up Team in the Legal Investigation Department of the Public Authority for Consumer Protection. She campaigns to educate disadvantaged women about the law and how to address violations of their legal rights.



Fatma Al-Ajmi is an Economic Researcher at the Directorate General of Economic Affairs. Since her Fellowship, she has conducted a series of reports on economic and public policy development and established her own consultancy firm.



Haitham Al Lawati is a corporate and commercial lawyer who is establishing a law magazine to raise legal awareness among the business and financial community.



Hussein Al Jabri is the Head of Training in the Directorate of Customs within the Royal Oman Police. He is developing a new customs training centre and is modernising customs training. He is currently completing two Master's degrees in Australia.



Maimuna Al-Sulaimani is the Head of Legal at Alizz Islamic Bank. After her Fellowship she established Law and Life, the first a legal magazine in Oman.



Maryam Al Nasser is a Civil Servant at the General Directorate of Legal Affairs and Directorate of Legislation in the Ministry of Legal Affairs. She is working on opening a public law library to develop legal awareness.



Miad Al Balushi works as a Senior International Relations Specialist in the Department of International Relations. She is working with the British Council on economic diversification to promote growth through creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship.



Mohammed Al Marzouqi is a Chief Public Prosecutor and the Official Spokesman for the Public Prosecution Authority. He is working to change the approach to fighting maritime piracy and improving the reporting system of incidents so the law is more consistently applied.

Oman



Mohammed Al Yahyaee is a lawyer and Deputy Head of Members' Affairs for the Legal Committee of the Shura Council, the appointed house of the Omani Parliament. Mohammed is working on projects to increase the legal literacy of citizens.



Muadh Al Hinai is Director of Veterinary Control Department at the Ministry of Regional Municipalities. In his previous role he was working to create an independent food safety authority. He has government support for this project and has set up his own private company to deliver food safety training.



Omaima Al Marikhi is an entrepreneur running her own ICT business 'Tafaseel-Tech', specialising in design and virtual reality applications. She also runs 'Blood It' a project which aims to save lives by improving the co-ordination of blood donations to ensure supplies are always available where needed.



Riyadh Al Balushi is an Assistant Legal Advisor at the Ministry of Legal Affairs. He organises campaigns to raise awareness about intellectual property and copyright reform. He is currently pursuing a PhD on Intellectual Property and Human Rights.



Sarah Al Sharj is a lawyer working for the Omani government. She is establishing a legal clinic that will provide women with legal advice on a pro bono basis.



Sulaiman Al Marjabi works as a Chief Public Prosecutor in the Public Prosecution Authority. He is working to ensure that the law complies fully with international standards in the area of maritime piracy and terrorism.



Thamer Al Shahry is a corporate and commercial lawyer. After his Fellowship, he created a network of lawyers to run pro-bono workshops promoting the Rule of Law and legal awareness amongst the public.



Annex 2: Conference Programme

Vision and Voice from the Middle East: A Networking Conference for John Smith Trust - FCO Rule of Law Fellows

Friday 6th March 2015

9.00	Welcome by Janet Boston, Director of John Smith Trust Voices from the Middle East - Introduction by Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean and Julian Reilly Head, MENAD Strategy Department FCO
9.20	Plenary One: The Rule of Law, Women and Conflict Transformation Speakers: Amanda Pinto QC and Kirsty Brimelow QC, Chair of the Bar Human Rights Committee Fellows Responding: Falah Shakaram, Haval Raoof, Nadine Saba, Nart Dohjoka, Vida Hamd, Tarek Mkanna
10.20	Breakout 1 Fellows will divide into teams of 5 to examine: - What can we do now that could have an immediate impact in the region in terms of the rule of law, women and conflict? - What must we do for long-term sustainable improvements in the region in terms of the rule of law, women and conflict?
10.50	Action Plan Reports 2014: Fellows from 2014 report on the progress of their projects Nazar Al Ibrahim, Razaw Ahmed, Ali Alsabbagh, Nour Al Rasheed and Falah Shakaram
11.15	Coffee
11.30	Plenary Two: Gender, Equality and Freedom of Expression Speaker: Jacqui Hunt, UK Director of Equality Now Fellows Responding: Dana Al Dairani, Elias Diab, Ali Alsabbagh, Nazeeha Saeed, Wafa Nimri and Christine El Cheikh
12.30	Breakout 2 Fellows will divide into teams of 5 to examine: - What can we do now that could have an immediate impact in the region in terms of gender, equality and freedom of expression? - What must we do for long-term sustainable improvements in the region in terms of gender, equality and freedom of expression?
1.00	Lunch
2.10	Action Plan Reports 2014: Fellows from 2014 report on the progress of their projects Nigar Sardar Mohammed, Haitham Al Lawati, Zain Batarseh and Elias Diab
2.30	Plenary Three: Women, Politics, Choice and Voice - Shaping the Future of the Middle East Speaker: Kate Nevens, Head of MENA Programme at Saferworld Fellows Responding: George Kara'a, Dadyar Sulaiman, Ali Al-Museimi, Haissam Minkara, Afif Tabsh and Zeina Chedid
3.30	Coffee
3.45	Breakout 3 Two teams will combine. Each team will share their thoughts on Breakout 1 and 2 before moving on to examine: - What can we do now that could have an immediate impact in the region in terms of women, politics, choice and voice? - What must we do for long-term sustainable improvements in the region in terms of women, politics, choice and voice?
4.15	Action Plan Reports 2014: Fellows from 2014 report on the progress of their projects. Rami Salah, Vida Hamd, Farah Jadallah, Ali Al-Museimi and Dana Al Dairani
4.45	Plenary Four: Empowerment - Wealth, Distribution, Technology and Employment in the Future Middle East Speakers: Iman Abou Atta, Founder, SCEME - Social Change through Education in the Middle East and North Africa and Mandana Hendessi OBE, Women to Women International Fellows Responding: Ahmed Husain, Alia Gharaibeh, Farah Jadallah, Ali Al Sudany, Fadi Khalil and Anwar Al Battashi
5.45	Breakout 4 Fellows will continue to work in their teams of 10-11 to examine: - What can we do now that could have an immediate impact in terms of empowerment, wealth, distribution, technology and employment in the future Middle East? - What must we do for long-term sustainable improvements in terms of empowerment, wealth, distribution, technology and employment in the future Middle East?
6.15	Closing Remarks

Saturday 7th March 2015

9.30	Introduction
10.15	Workshop Reflections on the conference themes: The Rule of Law, Women and Conflict Transformation Gender, Equality and Freedom of Expression Women, Politics, Choice and Voice - Shaping the Future of the Middle East Empowerment - Wealth, Distribution, Technology and Employment in the Future Middle East Fellows will finalise feedback on the themes discussed in Friday's plenary sessions so that it can be incorporated into the Policy Paper.
11.30	Bridging and Bonding: Creating a Network – with Tony Hall from Extended Mind
12.30	Lunch
1.30	Action Plan Reports 2014: Fellows from 2014 report on the progress of their projects. Mai Matar, Maryam AlManaseer and Rashid Khan
1.45	Afternoon introduction
2.00	Workshop: Reflections on the Meaning of International Women's Day for the Middle East Fellows to develop presentations in their Friday groups to reflect on the meaning of International Women's Day. Fellows will be asked to choose one medium – such as performance, poster, visual display, newspaper front page, Facebook page, etc. - to communicate their ideas and explain why they matter.
3.00	Action Plan Reports 2014: Fellows from 2014 report on the progress of their projects. Lama Afana, Ali Al Sudany, Asmaa Al Ameen, Christine El Cheikh, Malak Al-Hasoun and Raed Al Madanat
3.30	Coffee
3.45	Workshop: Reflections on the Meaning of International Women's Day for the Middle East (cont.) Fellows to develop presentations in their Friday groups to reflect on the meaning of International Women's Day. Fellows will be asked to choose one medium – such as performance, poster, visual display, newspaper front page, Facebook page, etc. - to communicate their ideas and explain why they matter.
4.45	Action Plan Reports 2014: Fellows from 2014 report on the progress of their projects. Zakeya Zada, Mohammed Altawash, Badriya Al Harassi, Mohammed Al Yahyaee and Rabih Dandachli
5.15	Closing Remarks

Sunday 8th March 2015

9.30	Introduction
9.45	Bridging and Bonding: Building the Network Developing the Fellows' Network
10.45	Action Plan Reports 2014: Fellows from 2014 report on the progress of their projects Maryam Al Nasser, Rabih Kerbaj, Tamara Alabbadi, Elie Fahed, Hamze Ahmad, Nabil Frem, Rhea Jabbour, Karim Mrad and Alia Gharaibeh
11.30	Coffee
11.45	Group Presentations: Final preparation for presentations based on Saturday's workshops
12.45	Lunch
1.45	Afternoon introduction
2.15	Group Presentations: Presentations based on Saturday's workshops
4.00	Coffee
4.15	Policy Paper Presentation
4.45	Bridging and Bonding: Building the Network Developing the Fellows' Network
5.30	Close / Farewell Speeches

Annex 3: Speaker Profiles

The Rt. Hon. Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean

Trustee of the John Smith Trust

The Rt. Hon Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean is a senior Labour Party member of the House of Lords and a business leader. Formerly Deputy Leader of the House of Lords, Baroness Symons was a Minister in the UK Government from 1997 until stepping down in 2005. Her government posts included Minister for the Middle East, Minister for International Trade and Minister for Defence Procurement, and the Prime Minister's envoy to the Gulf. She has a wide range of experience in the Middle East in particular, and currently chairs the Arab British Chamber of Commerce. Previously a trade union general secretary, she was an Equal Opportunities Commissioner and a Governor of the London Business School. As well as working closely with DLA Piper, Baroness Symons is now involved with other commercial organisations including several with strong Middle Eastern links, and with a number of not-for-profit organisations, including the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Julian Reilly

Head, MENAD Strategy Department, FCO

Julian Reilly has recently taken over leading the Middle East and North Africa Strategy Department (MENAD) at the FCO which is now responsible for the JST Fellowship Programme. Prior to this he was serving both as Deputy Head of Mission and Director UKTI in Saudi Arabia. For much of his career Julian has worked on Middle Eastern and Northern African issues, with a particular focus on Sudan, Egypt, Iran and the Gulf. Other experience includes service in Russia, with an emphasis on foreign and security policy; and work in Europe in relation to EU enlargement and the Western Balkans.

The Lord McCluskey

Trustee of the John Smith Trust

John is Trustee of the John Smith Trust. After service in the Royal Air Force, where he was awarded the Sword of Honour at the Officer Cadet Training Unit, he was admitted to the Scottish Bar. He became a QC in 1967 and was appointed Solicitor General for Scotland from 1974 to 1979. He became a life peer in 1976 and a judge in 1984. He gained substantial experience in both the criminal and civil courts often sitting as the Chairman of Appeal Courts. He was a friend of John Smith. They worked together on Devolution legislation in the Labour Government of 1974 - 1979. He has written books on Human Rights and on Criminal Appeals in Scotland. He was Chairman of the John Smith Trust from 1997 -2004. He has also chaired many charities dealing with mental health, age concern, and programmes for young offenders. He writes for The Times and Scotsman newspapers on legal and planning issues.

Amanda Pinto QC

Barrister, 33 Chancery Lane Chambers

Amanda Pinto is a Barrister specialising in international financial crime and cases raising intricate cross-border questions. Amanda has built a niche practice, both prosecuting and defending, in some of the most high-profile cases in the field, specifically focusing on insider dealing, fraud and corruption cases with an international dimension.

Kirsty Brimelow QC

Chair, Bar Human Rights Committee

Kirsty Brimelow is a Barrister at Doughty Street Chambers specialising in criminal law, public international, constitutional, human rights law and international criminal law. She is instructed in the most serious, complex and prominent cases nationally and internationally. Kirsty has appeared before a range of international courts including the European Court of Human Rights, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the International Criminal Court and the UN judicial processes. In 2012 she was elected as the first female Chair of the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales. Kirsty was twice listed in Management Today's most influential 35 women under 35 and is a regular legal commentator in the media. In 2014, Kirsty was part of the team submitting proposals to the Home Affairs Committee to combat Female Genital Mutilation. These proposals were adopted and are being passed into legislation.

Jacqui Hunt

UK Director, Equality Now

Jacqui Hunt is a lawyer who trained and worked with international law firm, Linklaters. She started her professional career with Amnesty International, working in campaigning and research at the United Nations and in press and special projects. She joined the Board of Equality Now in 1992, the year of its founding, and was later asked to start the London office, which she opened in 2004. Equality Now advocates for the human rights of women and girls around the world by raising international visibility of individual cases of abuse and wielding strategic political pressure to ensure that governments enact or enforce laws that uphold the rights of women and girls. Its areas of focus include Discrimination in Law, Sexual Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Trafficking. Jacqui has a Masters' degree in International Relations from the London School of Economics.

Kate Nevens

Head of the Middle East and North Africa Programme, Saferworld

Kate Nevens manages Saferworld's work in the MENA region. Her work focuses on political inclusion, gender, police sector reform and community security. Kate previously worked as the manager of the MENA programme at Chatham House particularly focusing on youth and political inclusion issues in the region and international involvement in fragile states. She has also worked in international social welfare, with a focus on asylum, migration and children's rights. Kate has a post-graduate degree in International Politics from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.

Mandana Hendessi OBE

Regional Director of Europe, Middle East and Asia, Women for Women International

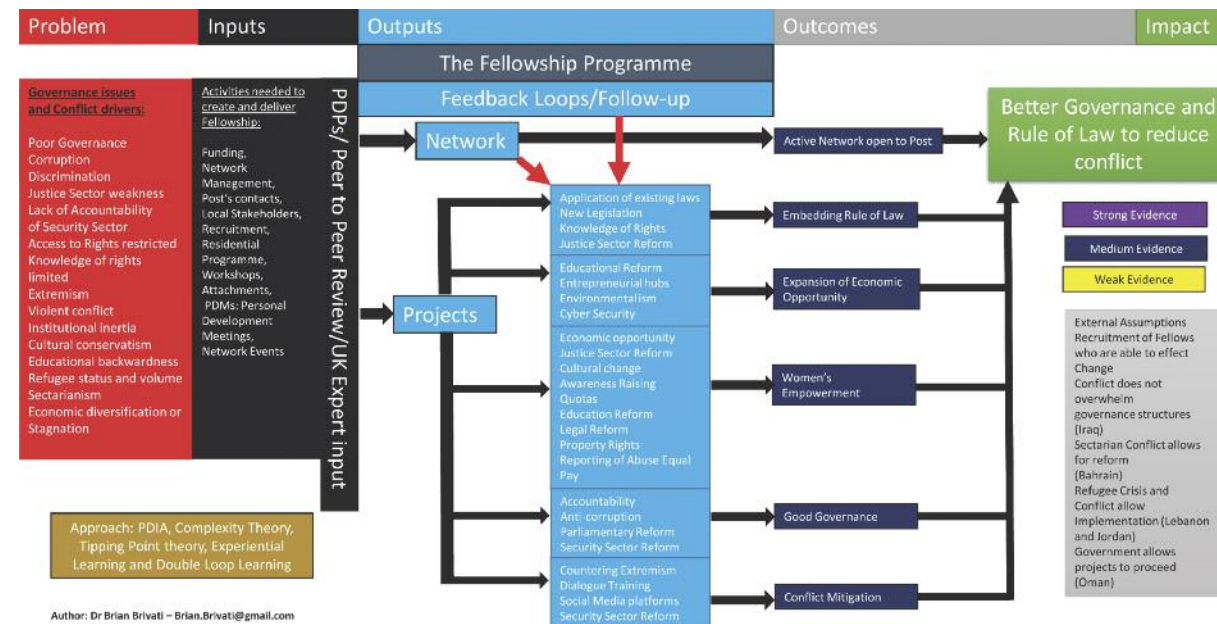
Mandana Hendessi is a development professional with over 25 years of experience of managing programmes for civil society organisations and NGOs, and more recently the UN covering social development, human rights and rule of law matters. She has a background in programmes ranging from gender mainstreaming to gender-based violence and strengthening women's political leadership. Ms Hendessi has worked on projects in sensitive and conflict-affected countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan, interfacing with political and civil society leaders on developing strategies for the inclusion of women in governance and democratic structures, the elimination of violence against women and their access to justice. In addition, Mandana has developed comprehensive capacity-building programmes targeting civil society, government officials and international institutions. For her accomplishments in this role, she was awarded the Order of the British Empire in 2005.

Iman Abou Atta

Founder and Director, SCEME - Social Change through Education in the Middle East and North Africa

Iman is founder and Director of SCEME - Social Change Through Education in the Middle East and North Africa. SCEME works on promoting education for women and families and on stopping the trafficking of young females in the Middle East. For over 10 years, Iman has built bridges between Europe and Middle Eastern communities through a range of NGOs that work on women's rights, the trafficking of young children and on interfaith and intercultural international projects. She also delivers lectures and workshops internationally to interfaith groups.

Annex 4: Theory of Change - John Smith Trust Middle East Fellowship Programmes



The John Smith Trust Theory of Change is outlined in the diagram above. The problems of a region or transitional state can be helped by inputs from external actors that are designed to enable key internal actors deliver the change they want. In this case, the inputs include a series of Fellowship Programmes that are focused on individual projects that produce outputs aimed at making change happen at organisational and societal levels, whilst also enhancing the skills, networks and knowledge of the individual Fellows. The UK experts who deliver the Fellowship, the other Fellows and the alumni network together provide on-going and structured feedback loops on project planning and implementation to support the individual's development as a leader. Taken together, the network produces a set of outcomes that deliver progress on the overarching goal of better governance and rule of law to help reduce conflict. The Fellowship methodology can apply to any strategic priority or policy area but can only work if the problem and project concept is locally generated and embedded in local organisations and practice. The diagram illustrates the results chain and programme flow from the perspective of a Fellowship model that focuses on the rule of law and good governance and in the context of and based on the external assumptions that are relevant to the MENA region at the present time.

The Fellowship Programme methodology developed over the last five years by Dr Brian Brivati, who is Academic Director of JST, is at the heart of the Trust's work. JST's use of Fellowships in this way is based on a Problem Driven Iterative Adaptation approach and the twin theories of social change that are often known in short-hand as "Complexity Theory" and "Tipping Point Theory" as well as taking influence from learning theories centred on "Double Loop Learning" and "Experiential Learning". The JST Theory of Change thus assumes that individuals can affect change in key areas if they select the correct change strategies and are supported in so doing over an extended period of time. JST's Fellowship methodology therefore begins with individuals and builds through their organisations and networks to effect change in their societies and ultimately their region. These theoretical approaches have been changed and adapted through the delivery of over 200 individual projects and a dozen group training and capacity building programmes since 2010.

Fellowships delivered include:

- The FCO Arab Partnership/John Smith Trust Rule of Law Leadership Network in the Middle East - which has so far supported 120 projects in Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Oman - including projects focused on law enforcement in Lebanon and security sector reform on Iraq, 2011-2015
- The MOJ/John Smith Trust Good Governance Fellowship Programme in Former Soviet Union - which has supported over 90 projects in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Turkmenistan and Ukraine, including judicial reform, law enforcement capacity building and security sector reform projects, 2010-2014

The on-going design, planning and implementation of the JST methodology/Theory of Change is based on a Problem Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA) approach as articulated by Andrews, Pritchett and Woolcock in their June 2012 Harvard CID working paper where the key message is, "interventions are successful if they empower a constant process through which agents make organisations better performers". The aim of the PDIA approach is to avoid falling into the prevalent 'capability traps' of international development i.e. "a dynamic in which governments constantly adopt reforms to ensure on-going flows of external financing and legitimacy yet never actually improve". The JST Programme is thus informed by the four core principles of the PDIA approach which attest that efforts to build state capability should:

- Aim to solve particular problems in local contexts/ identifying problems**

All Fellowship projects are designed by the Fellows based on particular problems identified by the participants in each country or regionally. The programme aims to broaden Fellows' perspectives and offer insights into identifying the root causes of these problems that perhaps have not been considered before and help develop the Fellows' initial project ideas into meaningful action, acknowledging the Fellows' awareness of the local context to establish what methods will/won't work.

- Create an "authorising environment" for decision-making that encourages "positive deviance" and experimentation** (as opposed to designing projects and programs and then requiring agents to implement them exactly as designed)

JST's experience suggests that gradual and incremental change based through a broad set of agents will produce consolidated, sustainable change encouraged through positive deviance. However, this gradualism should be adapted from a 'learning from precedent' approach that can involve international experts but might also be based on the precedent of success in other sectors and from the experience of other Fellows. The combination of which creates an authorising environment.

- Involve active on-going and experiential learning and the iterative feedback of lessons into new solutions**

The development of Fellows' projects is based on dynamic learning including experiential 'attachments' and personal development meetings, encouraging "active learning through real-world experimentation." During the Fellowship the projects are exposed to the intense scrutiny of the delivery team, the peer network and external experts. On completion of the residency programme, each Fellow presents their project proposal for feedback. After the programme, the benchmarks are reported on regularly, reflecting upon any issues and/or lessons learned. During the Follow-Up conferences experiences are shared and analysed enabling approaches to be adapted and changed as necessary.

- Engage broad sets of agents to ensure that reforms are viable, legitimate, and relevant**

The Fellowship brings a broad set of agents together in a space where they can have meaningful interactions and become part of a network with shared values and a drive for change. The network represents individuals across government, civil society, the private sector and the media with the aim of embedding change across the whole of society that is viable, legitimate and relevant. This is the essence of the Fellowship approach, and, as the networks build, the influence of the broad set of agents engaged will also expand. Peer review further builds-in assessment of projects as to their viability, legitimacy, relevance and sustainability.

Complexity Theory applied through a PDIA prism seems to fit best with the experience of transition states where the barriers to change are often attitudinal as well as politically structural, enabling these nuances to be understood properly before a project is initiated. Indeed, democratic consolidation is not necessarily achievable all at once; progress might be more effective if there is a particular focus, for example, on a single sector such as local government. If there is a critical mass of individuals in leadership positions who have chosen the path of modernisation because they see it as being in their long-term interests culturally, economically and politically, local government will operate at a point some way ahead of the central polity in terms of transparency and accountability which may then spill over into other systems or sectors.

The iterative approach of the JST Fellowship that allows for experimentation and for Fellows to change and adapt their project plans rests on two related theories of learning, Experiential Learning Theory and Double Loop Learning (a variant of the PDIA principle), which have been tested, adapted and improved over JST's twenty years experience and through over 200 projects implemented since 2010 - these theories influence but do not determine implementation mechanisms.

Experiential Learning Theory believes that people learn best by doing and/or by rooting their learning in their own experience and in the experience of their peers. There are two different kinds of experiential learning. The first involves focusing learning directly on a deliverable outcome or project rather than on the abstract absorption of information. The second is achieved through reflection upon everyday experience, adaptation from theory to practice and rapid response to real situations. Participants are usually concerned with concrete experience and therefore tend to conform to what is sometimes called a 'diverging learning style' favouring group work, listening and personalised, rapid and applied feedback loops.

Double Loop Learning assumes that all actors, whether in business or politics, begin with mental maps of how to act. These mental maps are called theories-in-use and are implicit in an individual's perception of how the world works and their reactions to this. Theories-in-use influence the way actors plan, implement and reflect on projects as well as encouraging them to think about and describe what they are trying to achieve and why. JST believes that it is crucial to get local actors and leaders to think about and consider these issues as, as summed up in the PDIA approach, "government and organisations pretend to reform by changing what policies or organisations look like rather than what they actually do".

Accordingly, the JST methodology is based on four pedagogic principles:

- **Professionals learn better by doing**

Experiential learning has proven to be the most effective way of engaging professionals in new material because it allows them to root their learning in their own experiences and working lives. The Fellowship is therefore always focused around an individual action plan that connects the Fellow's experience with their work and allows them to explore themes related to this action plan through workshops, individual meetings and attachments. This is based on learning theory but also on feedback from Fellows on the kind of programme that works for them.

- **Content should be useful**

Participants must see the relevance to their professional development of the material and speakers they are engaging with if they are to actually use the experience to change their approach to problems or be motivated to take on the mantle of change agents. If the content of the programme is too academic, abstract or theoretical they will not engage with the learning experience. If the topics are generalised current affairs discussions then there will be no lasting impact on their professional development. This does not mean that they will not enjoy the Fellowship or that they will not score the sessions highly but it will mean that they might not think about new ways of achieving their objectives or rethink their overall strategic and tactical priorities.

- **The team learns from each other**

The formal workshop sessions of a programme are the beginning of a learning process but not the end. Learning occurs between participants, in networking events and in the follow-up that occurs after the event and through the alumni networks that are formed as much as it does from speakers and attachments. This process of engagement with each other does not happen by accident but is carefully built into the fabric of the Fellowship from the first time they meet via email or social media, through the first weekend of team building and at each step along the way to their final preparations for and presentation of their action plans.

- **The different elements of the programme are reinforcing**

The individual mentoring that takes place during the Fellowship Programme is focused on the Fellows as leaders within their own organisations and communities through the development of an action plan. From the beginning of the Fellowship through to the final presentation they reflect on this project and how they can improve its design and achieve its delivery. Fellows diagnose their problems during a range of activities, each designed to reinforce the effect of what went before - individual tutorial sessions, facilitated JST workshops, the attachment experience and the informal learning environment of the Fellowship cohort. They are also encouraged to ask themselves what they are trying to accomplish, what stands in their way of achieving these objectives, what must they realistically work around and what can they confront through stakeholder analysis, power relationship analysis, and exploring new ways of thinking and communicating which they experience through sessions with leading thinkers and politicians.

"We are living at a time of great change,
a time of enormous challenge and opportunity.
We are the architects of the 21st century...
and if we are to provide
a blueprint for a better future,
we must be ready to change and
to think how things could be different"

The Rt Hon. John Smith QC MP

Action Plan Attachment Hosts

Special to the JST Fellowship Programme, and one of its most highly praised aspects, is the schedule of bespoke meetings or ‘attachments’ individually designed for each Fellow. The tailor-made schedule includes meetings and visits with organisations, institutions and individuals working across the UK (often involving visits to Scotland and Northern Ireland) relevant to each Fellow’s particular area of work, expertise and Action Plans.

Through the visits Fellows have the chance to learn from a range of different models and experiences (such as how to set up a social enterprise, campaign or change the law) that can assist them in delivering their Plans. The benefits, however, are not usually ‘one way’ rather the meetings provide a mutually-beneficial chance to network which gives hosts an insight into their own area of interest or even build a long lasting relationship potentially leading to collaboration or new opportunities in the region.

Since 2011 JST Attachments Director, Emily Carr, has lead a small team which has seen Fellows hosted by over 400 organisations and institutions within the UK - all of which should be listed below. JST would like to thank each for the time and effort they have given both during initial meetings with Fellows and subsequently.

39 Essex Street Chambers	British Retail Consortium
5 Paper Buildings Chambers	British Telecom
ACAS	British Transport Police
Accelerator	Business in the Community
Action for Children	Cabinet Office
ActionAid	Campaign Company
Administrative Justice & Tribunals Council	CAN Social Enterprise
Advocates for International Development	Canterbury Christ Church University
AFME	Canterbury Combined Court
Against Violence and Abuse	Carmelite Chambers
All Party Parliamentary Group for Kurdistan	Causeway Institute for Peace-Building and Conflict
Amnesty International	Resolution
Anglo Omani Society	Central London Law Centre
Anti-Slavery International	Central Working
Article 19	Centre for Creative Collaboration
Asfari Foundation	Centre For Entrepreneurs
Association for Citizenship Teaching	Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation
Association of Chief Police Officers	Centre of Excellence for Women's Entrepreneurship
Association of Electoral Administrators	Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport
Asylum Aid	Chatham House
Atkin Chambers	Children of Peace
Bail for Immigration Detainees	CIT Group
Bank of England	Citizens Advice Bureau
Bar Human Rights Committee	Citizens UK
Barnardo's	Citizenship Foundation
BBC	City of London Corporation
BBC Media Action	City University
Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law	Cleave & Company Limited
Birkbeck University	Coffey International Development
Blue State Digital	Colchester University Hospital
BRAC	College of Policing
Bradford Metropolitan District Council	Compass
British Arabs Supporting Integration, Recognition & Awareness	Conciliation Resources
British Association for Women in Policing	Connexions
British Council	Creative England
British Future	Crosby Textor
British Institute of Human Rights	Crown Prosecution Service
	Cultural Industries Development Agency

Culture + Conflict
D Group
Dan Rogerson (former MP)
David Muir
De La Rue PLC
Delfina Foundation
Democratic Progress Institute
Demos
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
Department for Culture, Media & Sport
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Department For International Development
Directory of Social Change
DLA Piper
Doctors of the World
Doughty Street Chambers
ECPAT
Endeavour Maritime
English Speaking Union
Environment and Technology
Equalities and Human Rights Commission
Equality Now
European Council on Foreign Relations
Everywoman
Faith Matters
Fareshare
Food and Drink Federation
Food Standards Agency
Foodcycle
Foreign & Commonwealth Office
Foreign Affairs Parliamentary Select Committee
Forward
Freedom from Torture
Garden Court Chambers
General Medical Council
Girls Not Brides
Global Guardian Resources
Goldsmiths College
Government Digital Service
Greater London Authority
Green Alliance
Greenpeace
Hammersmith and Fulham Volunteer Centre
Hand in Hand International
Hansard Scoiety
Helen Bamber Foundation
Helen Goodman MP
Henry Jackson Society
HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HM Treasury
Holloway Prison Independent Monitoring Board
Holman Fenwick Willan
Home Office
House of Commons Library
Houses of Parliament

Howard League for Penal Reform
Impact Hub
Ince & Co
Independent Commission for Aid Impact
Independent Police Complaints Commission
Index on Censorship
Institute for Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship
Institute for Government
Institute for Human Rights and Business
Institute for Public Policy Research
Institute of Education
Institute of Government
Integrity Action
Intellect
International Alert
International Association of Women Police
International Centre for Prison Studies
International Electoral Reform Services
International Institute for Environment and Development
International Maritime Organization
International Medical Corps UK
International NGO Training and Research Centre
ivo
John Howkins
John Taylor International Partnership
Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants
Judicial Appointments Commission
Judicial College
Justice
Kalayaan
Kent County Council
Kids Company
Kingston Police Station
Kingston University
KPMG
Kurdistan Refugee Women's Organisation
Labour Party
Lacuna
Law for Life
Legal Week
Liberty
LINKS
London Borough of Lewisham
London Borough of Southwark
London Borough of Wandsworth
London Business School
London Metropolitan University
London School of Economics and Political Science
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
Luton Council
Maidstone HM Prison
Marie Claire
Maternity Action
Media Diversity Institute
Media Intelligence Partners

Meg Munn (former MP)
Metropolitan Police
MicroLoan Foundation
Migrant Resource Centre
Migrant Rights Network
Ministry of Justice
Money Advice Service
Mulcahy Conway Associates Ltd.
Mumsnet
MyBnk
Nadhim Zahawi MP
National Association of Music Therapists
National Centre for Citizenship and the Law
National Children's Bureau
National Council for Voluntary Organisations
National Crime Agency
National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
National Police Improvement Agency
National School of Government
NESTA
North London Waste Authority
Northern Ireland Assembly
OFCOM
Office of the Advocate General for Scotland
Operational Research Society
Opportunity Now
Orchid Project
Orphans in Need
Overseas Development Institute
Oxfam
Oxford Business Group
Oxford Internet Institute
Parliamentary Outreach Team
PEN International
Penal Reform International
Petrofrac
Police Federation
Prince's Trust
Prison Reform Trust
Prisons and Probation Ombudsman
Privacy International
Prof Jeff French
Project Associates
Prospect Magazine
Protection Group International
Reading Agency
Refugee Action
Refugee Council
Refugee Studies Centre
Refugee Support Network
Restorative Justice Council
Restorative Solutions
Richard Bacon MP
Rights of Women
Royal College of Defence Studies

Royal Courts of Justice Group
Royal Society of Arts
Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security
Saatchi Gallery
Saferworld
Save the Children
School for Start Ups
Scottish Parliament
Scottish Youth Parliament
Security Association for the Maritime Industry
Sheila McKechnie Foundation
Shell International
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP
Skillforce
SOAS, University of London
Solace Women's Aid
South London Gallery
Speakers' Corner Trust
Spirit of Peace
St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace
St George's Hospital
St Mungo's Broadway
St Thomas the Apostle College
Stephenson Harwood LLP
Steve McCauley
Strand News
StreetGames
Student Action for Refugees
Studio AKA
Supreme Court
Surrey Energy Economics Centre
Tate Britain
Team London
Thames Valley Police
The Baroness Stern CBE
The Challenge Network
The Economist Magazine
The Fabian Society
The Guardian
The Independent
The Rt Hon. Charles Clark (former MP)
The Women's Organisation
TimeBank
Tom Brake MP
Total Politics Magazine
Tower Poetry
Town and Country Planning Association
Transparency International
Transport for London
Trussell Trust
UK Chamber of Shipping
UK Feminista
UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)
Unchosen
Universities UK

University College London
University of Essex
Unseen UK
Waste Watch
Westminster Foundation for Democracy
Whale and Dolphin Conservation
Which?
Widows for Peace through Democracy
Widows' Rights International
Wolfson College
Womankind Worldwide
Women for Women International UK

Women in Prison
Women's Health and Equality Consortium
Women's Resource Centre
Woodcraft Folk
WRAP
WWF
You Gov Stone
Young Enterprise
Young Fabians
Young Scot
Youth Outreach
YouthNet

“The experience of being a John Smith
Trust Fellow helped me not only in
my Action Plan but also in my life”

Omaima Al Marihki

Speakers

Each of the UK Fellowship Programmes involves a series of workshops and debates with UK experts and practitioners invited by Trust Academic Director, Dr Brian Brivati, to explore and discuss a range of key issues related to the Rule of Law and associated subjects. Topics have included: old and new challenges to the Rule of Law such as conflict and communications; the Rule of International Law; Accountability of the Executive; and exploring the UK Inquiries system.

JST is very grateful to all speakers who participated in the Programme, all of whom shared their time and expertise freely.

Dean Armstrong QC, 2 Bedford Row Chambers
Jane Ashworth OBE, Street Games
Robert Barrington, Transparency International
Phil Booth, Campaigner
Professor Sir Anthony Bottoms, Cambridge University
Stephen Bowen, British Institute of Human Rights
Professor Ben Bowling, King’s College London
Martin Bright, New Statesman
Kirsty Brimelow QC, Doughty Street Chambers
Howard Burton, Extended Minds
Professor Jeremy Carver CBE, Transparency International
Professor Brian Cathcart, Hacked Off campaign
The Rt Hon. Charles Clark
Ian Cochrane, Ministry of Justice
Dan Corry, New Philanthropy Capital
Graham Cundy OBE, Protection Group International
Dr Paul Dixon, Kingston University
John Donald, Author of Cataxis
The Lord Dubs of Battersea
Ben Emmerson QC, Matrix Chambers
The Rt Hon. Lord Falconer of Thoroton
The Baroness Falkner of Margravine
Simon Fanshawe OBE, Writer and broadcaster
Judith Farbey QC, Doughty Street Chambers
Anna Fielder, Privacy International
Nick Fishwick CMG, PWC
The Rt Hon. Lord Fowler
Dr Hywel Francis, Former MP
Jonathan Freedland, Journalist
Professor Duncan French, Lincoln Law School
Professor Jeff French, Strategic Social Marketing
Mike Gapes MP
Professor John Gardner, Oxford University
Alex Gee, Project Associates
Benoit Gonis, Chatham House
Roger Graef OBE, Award-winning filmmaker
Dr David Green, Civitas
Duncan Green, Oxfam
Ian Gregory
The Baroness Hale of Richmond
Tony Hall, Extended Minds
Nick Hardwick CBE, HM Inspectorate of Prisons
Mike Harris, Index on Censorship
Justin Hedges, Former Commander of the SBS
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“The idea of building a Rule of Law network in the Middle East, I believe, is a must and an urgent need”

Yousef Wehbeh, Lebanon

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The John Smith Trust is grateful for the support of all its funders who span the public and private sectors as listed below. As the main supporter of the Middle East Fellowship Programme, JST is especially grateful to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office who have helped with promotion as well as in hosting pre-departure events and orientation through local Embassies. Several of these have also worked with Alumni Co-ordinator, Corrine Vibert, to help develop the alumni network and invited Fellows to a range of events sometimes co-ordinated by the British Council. In the UK the FCO have generously hosted receptions for groups of Fellows as part of the Arab Partnership Programme with the Minister frequently presenting certificates.

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“How many young Arabs
are waiting for the opportunity
to serve their community -
what would happen if
they were given it?”

Raed Al Madanat, Jordan



“The opportunity to
serve our country -
that is all we ask.”

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The Trust was created to provide a permanent memorial to one of Britain's most respected politicians, who died suddenly in May 1994. John Smith was held in high affection because of the sincerity with which he promoted democracy, social justice and good governance. The aim of the Trust is to honour him by promoting the ideals that he held close to his heart.

Based in London the Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees and run by a small team led by Chief Executive, Janet Boston. It is supported by funding from Government Agencies, Corporates, Foundations and the generous contributions of speakers and attachment hosts who are drawn from the academic, not for profit, private and public sectors.

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