# Innovation for Change (I4C)
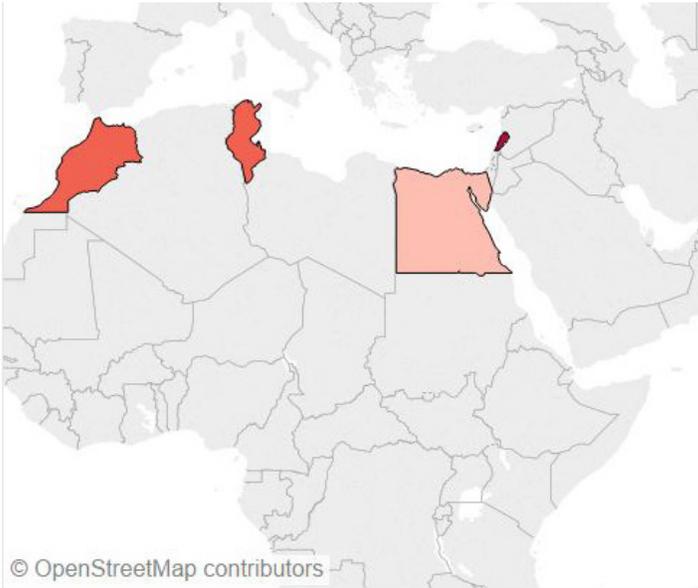## Middle East and North Africa Hub

## Challenge

Human Rights violations continue to plague the MENA region making the work of civil society organizations (CSOs) more difficult and riskier. The closing of civic spaces has become a regional problem that must be tackled across borders.

Several countries are amending their laws to restrict the work of CSOs. Collaboration is more important than ever for CSOs, activists, technologists, human rights defenders and legal advocates to connect and share resources with one another.

## Engagements in MENA



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The MENA Hub co-creates solutions and partnerships to put into practice Arabic-language innovations around digital security, campaigning and knowledge sharing to strengthen and defend the region's civic spaces.

## Innovations

**Accountability and Transparency**:  Built tools to allow citizens to be more involved in decision-making processes at the local level.

**Advocacy**: Development of an advocacy train the trainer network to assist with campaigns in the region.

**Digital Security**: Provided trainings on digital privacy and censorship circumvention tools for activists throughout the network.

**Global Partnerships**: Acted as a network coordination point for other regional hubs on issues such as advocacy, legal assistance to human rights defenders and digital security.

**Innovation Pipeline**: Facilitated local discussions among activists, technologists, and entrepreneurs to pilot and scale up new approaches that improve the current state of civil society in the region.

**Knowledge Sharing:** Extended the use of the ComuniDAS platform – one developed by the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) Hub – to exchange services among CSOs in different regions.

**Research and Development**: Used applied research to understand the potential for access and usage of digital money to increase civil society sustainability.

The MENA Hub is one of six hubs across the global south in the I4C network. The Helper Hub, comprised of Counterpart and CIVICUS for direct technical support, and Tides, the fiscal agent, assists the regional hubs to become self-sufficient.

COUNTERPART INTERNATIONAL
In partnership for results that last.

CIVICUS

TIDES
A Force for Social Good

## About The Hub

The MENA Hub's mission is to build a collaborative and innovative network of activists and CSOs to facilitate the exchange and development of expertise and resources to combat shrinking civic space in the MENA region. The MENA Hub launched initial activities in October 2016. More than fifty CSOs from across the MENA region have been engaged in the incubation phase of the network. The MENA hub will be formally launched in 2018.

## Our Focus



## Our Work

👫 **187** Event Participants

👥 **165** Members

🌐 **9** Engagements

📍 **18** Countries

## Successes

**Digital Money Research**:  Published pioneering research in the MENA region to understand the potential for access and use of digital money, such as crowdfunding and cryptocurrency, as a means for increasing civil society sustainability in the region.

**Website Development**: Developers helped CSOs technically secure their websites and also increased CSO digital security awareness.

**Minimizing Harm to Civil Society Actors**: Digital security and privacy trainings organized by I4C will help activists and human rights defenders minimize threats towards them by teaching tools and strategies for individual country threats and mitigation of those risks.

## Contact Information

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