Background

Four years after the Arab uprisings led to radical political change across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), many societies continue to grapple with insecurity, fluid transitions and aggravated identity politics. Dialogue plays a crucial role in countries undergoing a transition towards democracy and it is needed now more than ever before.

Building on its 23 years of experience working in the MENA region and 33 years worldwide with a physical presence in 35 countries including 6 countries in the MENA, Search for Common Ground (SFCG) engages at this critical time by initiating the MENA Common Ground Institute (CGI).

The MENA CGI is a regional initiative to enhance dialogue quality in the MENA region, with the overall goal to foster collaborative dialogue on local, regional and national levels in the region. In order to achieve this goal, MENA CGI aims at building the capacity of a new generation of Arabic-speaking dialogue design and dialogue facilitation experts; supporting dialogue initiatives and raising their acceptance by communities, unions, civil society, media and local governments; and researching, celebrating and rewarding best dialogue practices.

MENA CGI has commenced its operations in January 2015 with a one-year pilot project “Promoting Dialogues” targeting civil society organizations in Tunisia and Egypt. In the framework of this pilot initiative, MENA CGI will first enhance the skills of local civil society organizations in convening and designing effective community facilitation and dialogue processes. In the first round of the accredited online dialogue facilitation training (March – April, 2015) offered by Soliya, MENA CGI has already engaged with twenty CSOs in Tunisia and Egypt.

Second, MENA CGI will award small grants to civil society organizations in Egypt and Tunisia to implement community dialogue initiatives. Third, MENA CGI will also advance research and knowledge on conflict resolution and dialogue facilitation by supporting professional researchers in Egypt and Tunisia through the MENA CGI Fellowship program. Finally, MENA CGI in partnership with Soliya will produce and disseminate a Dialogue Facilitation Training Manual in Arabic in order to secure a wider reach and replicability of the program throughout the region.

About the Call

In the framework of the long-term goal to build the capacity of a new generation of Arabic-speaking dialogue facilitation and design experts, MENA CGI is launching a call for applications for the second
round of the online Dialogue Facilitation training offered by Soliya. In this round, MENA CGI and Soliya will run for the first time the training in Arabic in order to secure a wider reach and replicability throughout the region.

In the second round, the online training is composed of one continuous basic and advanced levels. The basic level caters to trainees with beginner dialogue facilitation experience who need more time to build their dialogue facilitation skills. As for the advanced level, it is tailored for applicants that have a stronger foundation in conflict resolution and dialogue facilitation and are ready for more advanced and specific methodologies. Trainees who will successfully finish the first two levels will qualify to become facilitators for Soliya’s Connect Program.

The training will last for 9 weeks with one two-hour session per week. The online training will begin on 20 July and last until 17 September 2015.

The call is open for civil society organizations in Tunisia interested in piloting dialogue initiatives to address community issues. Participants selected in the framework of this call will be representing their organizations. Each organization should nominate up to two individuals (members of the Board of directors, advisers, volunteers or staff) with sufficient background and experience in dialogue projects who will enroll in this program.

The trainees from rounds 1 and 2 will be invited to gather for a one-day national event to connect offline, deepen their learning, and exchange best practices of dialogue methodologies applied in their communities.

**Logistics and Fees**
All courses are online, using Soliya’s web-conferencing application. Participation will require a typical web-cam, a microphone/headset, and a high-speed internet connection. Courses are free of charge.

**Eligibility and Selection Criteria**
The MENA CGI Selection Committee will select CSOs based on the following criteria:

- Legally registered civil society organization in Tunisia;
- Actively engaged civil society organization with sufficient capacity and prior experience in piloting dialogue initiatives to address community issues;
- Nominated individuals should demonstrate interest and prior experience engaging in dialogue facilitation and dialogue process design to address community issues.

**Deadline for Submission**
Interested Tunisian civil society organizations must complete and submit the online application form by 22 June, 2015 at 18.00 Tunis time.

*For queries and/or more information, please contact us at menacgi@sfcg.org*