

MEDIA INTEGRITY AND RESILIENCE, SUPPORTING AUDIENCES IN LIBYA

BACKGROUND

Political and institutional divides in Libya have led to a highly manipulated digital landscape. With more than six million active social media users in Libya, local and foreign actors are using social media as a tool to create a polarizing information environment that undermines civic institutions, disrupts efforts by like-minded international actors, and weakens community bonds. Through the Media Integrity and Resilience, Supporting Audiences in Libya (MIRSAL) activity, USAID will strengthen Libyan institutions by prioritizing information integrity, countering divisive narratives, and ensuring factual public interest media.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

MIRSAL will expand an existing partnership with BBC Media Action's El Kul platform, which reaches 1.3 million Libyans with information to promote inclusion and social cohesion; and counter-narratives that empirical data show are the most effective way to build information resilience. MIRSAL will deliver trustworthy information and ideas that contribute to the nation's stability and foster the inclusion of marginalized groups by creating safe online spaces.



GOALS

MITIGATE MISINFORMATION

Support El Kul to provide accessible, accurate, and unbiased current affairs and public interest content - improving information integrity and promoting social cohesion, while running counter-messaging campaigns to combat disinformation

PROVIDE VERIFIABLE INFORMATION

Establish a Public Interest Media incubator to work with nascent media and journalists to improve the media ecosystem in Libya

LIFE OF ACTIVITY 2024-2029

USAID FUNDING \$9.95 Million

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER BBC Media Action

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ANTICIPATED ACHIEVEMENTS

- Establish El Kul as an independent media organization based in Libya that provides public interest media, training, and tools to improve the information environment
- Highlight Libya's diversity and unity, improve readers' media literacy to challenge hate speech and disinformation, and question discriminatory norms
- Amplify marginalized voices by creating a media platform offering communities a space to share their stories and build advocacy networks
- Launch an incubator to enhance the skills of journalists, content creators, and information activists in Libya through grants, workshops, competitions, and networks and collaboration
- Improve public perception of civil society organizations, minorities, elections, and freedom of speech by telling stories of underrepresented communities and debunking misinformation
- Enhance civic engagement by providing citizens with verifiable information, improving information integrity
- Increase public trust in the democratic process by countering misinformation campaigns targeting electoral processes and election outcomes
- Create content that will counter the destabilizing influence of mis/disinformation from malign actors in Libya's southern region and the fragile Sahel
- Incubate organizations and ideas to improve the media ecosystem in Libya such as using artificial intelligence to combat hate speech against women in political and public life in Arabic



For victims of natural disasters, information is a lifeline. In a crisis, trusted information is as critical as food, water, and shelter. Communication allows people to make informed decisions for themselves and their family. In September 2023, as Storm Daniel approached Libya, El Kul, Libya's largest public interest media outlet, pivoted its content to lifesaving information that reached more than 3.7 million people on Facebook alone. El Kul's courageous team of local reporters ensured that flood affected Libyans had information vital for their recovery.