



UN Democracy Fund shortlists 65 projects worldwide to receive support



A UNDEF initiative aims to strengthen the leadership of Algerian women in various sectors of civil society

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The United Nations Democracy Fund (**UNDEF**) has identified 65 projects – including 10 in the Arab world, the scene of many popular uprisings this year – to receive funding during the current round of disbursements to support democratization efforts.

Of the projects that pre-qualified for funding, 34 per cent are in Africa, 23 per cent in Asia and 15 per cent in the Arab world, including Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia, according to the latest issue of the UNDEF newsletter, released today.

Thirty-two per cent of the proposals are in community development, followed by 26 per cent in women's empowerment; 15 per cent in youth; 9 per cent in media; 8 in strengthening governance; 6 per cent in rule of law and human rights; and 3 per cent in tools. Overall, 20 per cent specifically address the needs of marginalized communities.

Funding for the proposals, estimated at about \$14 million, is now subject to approval by **Secretary-General** Ban Ki-moon, and to a successful negotiation about the project documents between UNDEF and each shortlisted applicant.

UNDEF received a record 3,754 project proposals for its fifth round of funding – almost twice as many as the average in previous years. The proposals came from organizations in 149 countries, the majority of them local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean. More than 230 proposals originated from North Africa and the Middle East.

The shortlist is the product of a thorough process of assessment, quality vetting, due diligence and lessons learned from previous rounds. The proposals were first vetted by a team of six independent international assessors.

The criteria used to assess the quality of the proposals include: impact, the capacity to promote inclusiveness and gender equality, prospects for successful implementation, track record, technical soundness, value for money and prospects of sustainability beyond the project duration.

UNDEF was established by the Secretary-General in 2005 as a UN General Trust Fund to support democratization efforts around the world. It supports projects that strengthen the voice of civil society, promote human rights, and encourage the participation of all groups in democratic processes.

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