أضف

Arab Digital Expression Foundation

Overview

CONTENT

Arab Digital Expression Foundation (ADEF)[1] builds spaces, fosters environments for expression and learning, enhances skills and develops knowledge tools to support and empower teenagers and youth, groups or individuals, working on the ground to strengthen their practices and engagement with society.

VISION

ADEF's vision is to have independent teenagers and youth, individuals and groups, who are active, critical and aware and can express themselves and produce knowledge for the benefit of their society.

MISSION

ADEF's mission is to promote the creative uses of media, art and technology, disseminate the concepts and practices of free culture, and support initiatives that aim to produce free Arabic knowledge using open tools.

PROGRAMS

ADEF organizes a set of programs and projects revolving around the use of open-source technology and the belief in self-expression and knowledge sharing, targeting both practitioners and youngsters. ADEF's work ranges from policy advocacy to on-the-ground implementation of the values we advocate through creating diverse mechanisms for the practice of these values through various programs including:

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[1] Registered as a non-profit foundation under the Ministry of Social Solidarity since 2009

1 Arab Digital Expression Camps (ADEC)

Camps in **11 years**

(2007-2017)

632

Trainees
(12 - 15 years old)

247

Trainers
(18 - 40 years old)

from

11

Arab Countries:

Egypt, morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Algeria, Yemen, Syria and Libya

Building on the expertise of its core team members and the wide network of artists, techies, educators and activists around expression, education and knowledge production through the use of information and communication technologies in general and open-source tools in particular; ADEF created a curriculum for its annual Digital Expression Camp (ADEC) to empower Arab youth and develop their skills and ability for self-expression and knowledge production and sharing, encouraging them to create ideas wthat reflect their individual and Arab identity, culture and aspirations.

11 annual successive experiential-based educational and residential **two-week summer camps** were organized to date, hosting an average of **60 youngsters** annually; females and males between the ages of 12 and 15, from **11 Arab countries** and various social backgrounds. ADEF camps present numerous opportunities of artistic and creative self-expression for both youngsters and trainers.

On offer during the camps is a series of tracks in the fields of **video making, sound and music, visual arts, technology and games design**. Individual trainers adapt from the general curriculum to develop the content and learning process in these tracks. They are early and mid-career young artists, techies and writers, recruited from all over the Arab World. In the six-month process of the preparations for the camps, they are exposed to different trainings and encounters fostering experiential learning, insightful ways of working with youngsters through play and collaborative knowledge production. ADEC is usually an opportunity for these trainers to develop their skills, weave partnerships and collaborations with others and find work and projects opportunities.

The four educational goals of the camps are:
Expression, Communication, Collaboration and Critical Thinking.

As for the youngsters, they are exposed to a broad spectrum of ideas and opportunities for self-exploration and expression in a free, yet safe and structured environment that opens up a different possibility than that presented in formal educational settings in the region, which woes are well known and cited.

The process of self-exploration and expression, shared learning and collaborative knowledge production is aided through the series of tracks that are medium oriented (video-making, sound production, visual design, creative web applications, game design, programming) as well as workshops focused on promoting emotional, intellectual and physical self-expression (arts and crafts, dancing and performance, storytelling and sports).

Examples of such workshops include: **1- Text-based video games,** in which participants will collaboratively create a story and implement it as a computer game using only text; **2- Filters,** where campers will learn how digital image filters work, will create analogue versions of them, and create a wall of memories; **3- Lyrics writing**, in which campers will have a series of lyrics writing workshops, followed by music production to create an entire track.

Ghandur (Games design Trainer):
"I couldn't imagine that I will be able to deal with teenagers, and was worried about of not being able to deliver them the message, but since day 1, I was impressed with their level of intelligence and performance!!"
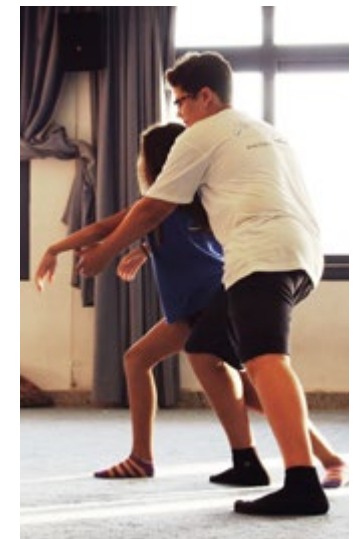
All camp's program content is developed on ADEF's wiki, which is open for public use and ongoing interactions for development and improvement.

In 2016, ADEC celebrated its 10th anniversary and in August 2017, the 11th round was successfully held for the first time in Lebanon to be our second experience in organizing the camp outside Egypt after holding it in Tunisia in 2012. It is worth mentioning that ADEC last two rounds were led and managed by its first and second generation campers; meaning ADEC ex-campers who participated in the camps between 2007 and 2011 and who grew and developed to become capable of running the entire camp themselves.
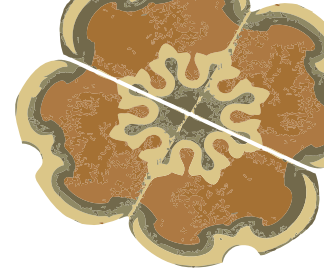
Arab Digital Expression Camps

2 Digital Expression Community Area (DECA)

Digital Expression Community Area

ADEF's Digital Expression Community Area (DECA) is a free and safe community space for young amateur and professional artists, techies, writers and researchers, that aims to foster skills development and critical thinking.

DECA encourages and supports creative expression, collaborative ventures and knowledge production, particularly in the fields of culture and technology.

While DECA started its first activities in 2012, the idea was born in 2010, when the community built around ADEC grew more powerful and engaged and the knowledge produced demanded that the impact reach out to more than 100 trainers and trainees benefiting from ADEC annually. The endeavour was thus directed to establish a space that could provide the community with ongoing activities throughout the whole year.
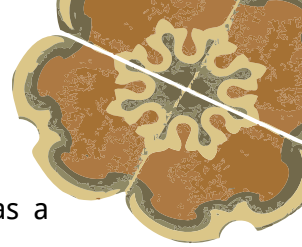
Till September 2017

75
Workshops
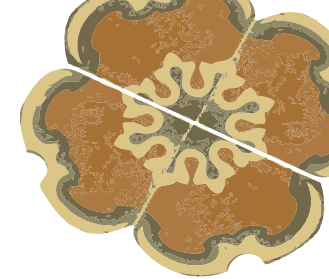
77
Trainers

735
Participants

DECA organizes a series of workshops such as a three-month **filmmaking workshop,** held three times so far, in response to a huge demand by young adults seeking to learn the basics of filmmaking; **a writing marathon**, held twice and followed by a training of trainers in attempt to empower more participants to spread the idea and practice leading their own marathons in other locations.

Furthermore, DECA's two major regular activities as a cultural and social venue for the community in the Mokattam area are:

1) Sima DECA, a weekly film screening led by a theme, such as education, obsession, romance, cartoon, and investigative documentaries and

2) Sahret El Khamis, a weekly entertainment night featuring a diverse program of music by local bands, poetry reading, karaoke, jamming, open microphone and group activities.

Reda (Sima DECA fan):
"I Love ADEF DECA and I am keen to visit the place regularly because you open up new horizons for me in learning more about new countries and cultures through the diversity and quality of films you present"

DECA has had

135

Sima film screenings

38

Artistic & activity nights

The utilisation of DECA' spaces between 2013 and 2017 was

4158

hours

In addition to the programming activities and workshops, DECA continues to serve as a community space hub for its local community members as well as a significant rental space for organizing events and activities of other organizations, collectives and students through the provision of its different resources in terms of rooms, studios, labs and equipment and make it available to them.

f DecaAdef

Check out DECA's Page on Facebook for more information

3 Youth Digital Empowerment Project "Shamshar"

Shamshar in 2016-2017

46
Trainers

547
Trainees "teens"

10
Digital Expression Spaces

With the strong development of ADEC and DECA, a new ambition rose to further develop our content to create a more in-depth and intensive summer program engaging also community organizations working with youth. The idea was to engage the horizontally wide and diverse Arab network of ADEF with the locality of both Cairo and Alexandria. The Youth Digital Empowerment Project is a three-year project with the objective to foster the capacity building and self-expression of teens and youth aged 12-21, in selected areas in Cairo and other governorates.

To reach this objective, ADEF developed - in collaboration with a group of experts - four curriculums in the fields of Digital Expression: Sound and Music, Video, Visual Expression, and Computing, based on ADEF' summer camps (ADEC) modules employing the same methodology, relying on the use of free & open-source softwares in order to be implemented in a three month summer program.

In such context, ADEF has successfully trained 71 trainers on the four curriculums in addition to trainings related to Child protection policies, free software and social education.

Also, partnerships and cooperation agreements have been formalized with nine foundations[2] in Cairo and Alexandria, in addition to ADEF's DECA to organize the Summer Schools and youths' trainings.

Nouran (Video Trainer):
"The Learning approach in ADEF is different than the traditional education model in schools. Curriculum are flexible to make you learn by doing"

Accordingly, two consecutive summer schools rounds have been successfully organized in 2016 and 2017 in partnership with ten spaces in Cairo, Alexandria, and other governorates hosting approximately 547 male and female teenagers with the participation of 46 male and female trainers.

Following the summer schools, teens will go back to their communities where ADEF has set up digital expression spaces, replicating its open Digital Expression Community Area (DECA) model. Computer labs, sound studios, editing suites have already been set up in community spaces of selected partners where youth can gain structured access to digital applications, music and video libraries and workshops that enhance their capacities and production processes.

[2] Partner organizations: Alwan Wa Awtar, Hakak Helmak, El Nahda - Jesuit Cairo, Ruwwad for Development and El-Takeiba Center For Artistic And Cultural Development, Al Madina, Torraha, 7 crafts and Reflection for Arts, Trainings and Development.

FREE CULTURE

A free culture supports and protects creators and innovators. It is a culture where people do not need to ask permissions before they create or copy, modify or use others' work to build on it. As such, free culture is at the core of ADEF's mission, and represents a cornerstone in all its work.

The concepts of open knowledge and free software tools have been a cornerstone of the Arab Digital Expression Camps since their inception in 2007. Later on between 2011 and 2013 the use of free software tools and publishing outcomes under free/open licenses was a requirement by the MITR programme[3] for all interventions to support organisations and independent groups in their knowledge production, expression and media projects.

[3] https://goo.gl/k6z7AW

All of ADEF's projects as well as our interventions in projects of other groups and organisations are stem from the concepts of sharing and building knowledge, as well as the impact of individual's knowledge contribution to a global pool of shared knowledge, through the provision of technical support and mentorship as well as documentation of these experiences to facilitate learning through accumulation.

Naturally, everything we produce and publish is also published under a free license or put in the public domain. Examples are:

◆ our wiki[4], which is our organisational memory, is increasingly becoming known as a good Arabic reference on free licensing, free software, and good archival practices and open access;

◆ our video and photography archives that cover our ADEC and DECA activities; and

◆ our educational curricula developed for the camps and SHAMSHAR summer schools

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[4] https://arabdigitalexpression.org/wiki

The most recent platforms we supported in 2016-2017:

◆ Wiki Gender(**ويكي الجندر**) [5] a collaborative knowledge platform which is constantly collecting and producing material on gender and women-related issues in Arabic.

◆ History Narratives Wiki (**احكي يا تاريخ**) [6] a platform that contains narratives of histories , especially marginal histories of mainstream revolutionary events and enable its accessibility.

◆ Mazg Foundation's Archive of Arabic comics (**مزجيف**)[7] realised as a wiki and intended to be developed collaboratively by a community of comics fans and enthusiasts.

On the other side, ADEF's core team members are active members of the free culture community, participating in the Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) projects and contributing to collaborative projects to produce and localize knowledge. Examples of their work are: The localisation of the 4th edition of Creative Commons License into Arabic[8]; localisation of various free software tools[9] and applications and producing manuals for Arabic users[10]; training curricula and guides in various technical fields[11] such as privacy and security; and the development of the Internet Governance Glossary (IGG)[12], by the UNESCO.
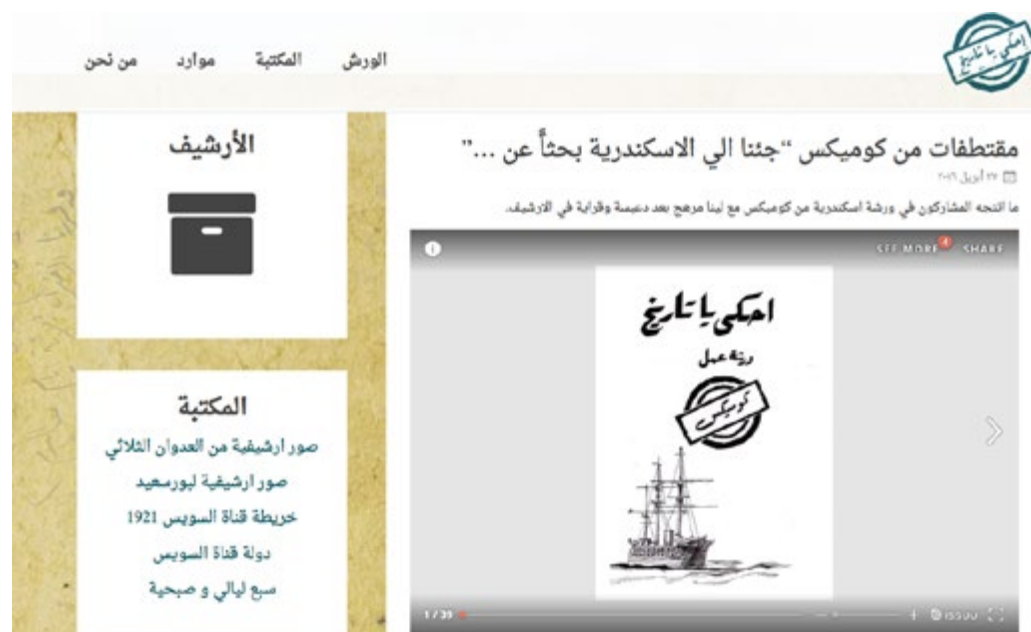

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[5] https://genderation.xyz/wiki/Project:About

[6] https://historyworkshopsegypt.net/wiki/Project:About

[7] https://mazg.org/archive/Project:About

[8] https://wiki.creativecommons.org/wiki/Legal_Tools_Translation/4.0/ Arabic#Translation_team

[9] https://ssd.eff.org/en/credits

[10] https://holistic-security.tacticaltech.org/credits

[11] https://securityinabox.org/en/about/

[12] http://en.unesco.org/glossaries/igg

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