



## Middle East Partnership Initiative MEPI Alumni Network in Jordan

### Empowering Election Candidates

**Going beyond slogans –  
The MEPI Alumni  
Network in Jordan holds  
training on effective  
public speaking for  
parliamentary candidates**



This project is funded through the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Office of the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI). MEPI is a unique program designed to engage directly with and invest in the peoples of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). MEPI works to create vibrant partnerships with citizens to foster the development of pluralistic, participatory, and prosperous societies throughout the MENA region. MEPI partners with local, regional and international non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academic institutions, and governments. More information about MEPI can be found at: [www.mepi.state.gov](http://www.mepi.state.gov).

Along with MEPI's goals to promote capacity building within individuals involved in civil society and public work, MEPI Alumni Network in Jordan held the first training session aimed to strengthen the capacity of those who want to run for elections. The training topics included legislative processes, community outreach, personal and professional skills in parliamentary practice, and fostering cooperation and information exchange between the legislature and other sectors of society.

Minister of Parliament Affairs along with 70 participants including former Parliament members, potential candidates, and civil society activists participated in the session. Topics included communication skills and public speaking, management of election campaigns, and public work skills needed to ensure optimal results.

The training was given by Amer Smadi MEPI Alumni and a well known trainer in media and media. Mr. Smadi has been in this field for approximately 20 years and has been actively working with local and international networks.

Mr. Smadi began with a discussion dealing with public speaking nerves and anxiety, explaining how speaking well is a skill, comprised of physical behaviors, learnable by anyone who cares enough to succeed. Mr. Smadi noted that the speaking style with the most impact is one that is not only confident, polished, and knowledgeable culturally—but one that engages and influences your listeners.

Through interacting with the participants, the training also tackled non-intimidating approach to physical skills required for effective public speaking, structuring a speech, words used to build credibility, and using proper gestures and tone of voice to create strong, lasting impressions. Certain campaign plans were also discussed to help the candidates gain the skills to bond with voters and to engender trust and empower candidacy.

Participants realized that election campaigns are more than just slogans. They expressed enthusiasm and demand for more topics to be covered in similar training that will help in preparations for public work.