

MEDIA NOTE

Secretary Clinton Announces Civil Society 2.0 Initiative to Build Capacity of Grassroots Organizations

In her remarks today to the Forum for the Future, Secretary Clinton announced Civil Society 2.0, which will help grassroots organizations around the world use digital technology to tell their stories, build their memberships and support bases, and connect to their community of peers around the world.

Building the capacity of grassroots civil society organizations will enable them to do the work that, in the past, Western NGOs and governments have done. With increased capacity, communities are better able to initiate, administer and sustain their own programs and solutions to shared problems.

“Civil Society 2.0” includes the following components:

1. Deploying a team of experienced technologists to work with civil society organizations around the globe to provide training and support to build their digital capacity. The competencies developed in the trainings will include:
 - How to build a website
 - How to blog
 - How to launch a text messaging campaign
 - How to build an online community
 - How to leverage social networks for a cause
2. Partnering these technologists with local civil society organizations and governments to develop and implement technology-based solutions to local problems.
3. Publishing interactive “how to” programs and curriculum online to help organizations that do not have access to in-person assistance.
4. Creating a curated open platform that allows any citizen or company to develop, share or suggest content for the curriculum.
5. Allocating \$5 million in grant funds for pilot programs in the Middle East and North Africa that will bolster the new media and networking capabilities of civil society organizations and promote online learning in the region.

The United States is a strong supporter of civil society around the world. Civil society activists and organizations work to improve the quality of people’s lives and protect their rights, hold leaders accountable to their constituents, shine light on abuses in both the public and private sectors, and advance the rule of law and social justice. They are key partners for progress.

The Forum for the Future is a joint civil society initiative of the countries of the Broader Middle East and North Africa region (BMENA) and the Group of Eight (G8). It brings together leaders from government, civil society and the private sector to exchange ideas and form partnerships to support progress, reform, and expanded opportunities for the people of the region.

###