

Newsletter 02/2012



Dear friends of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung,

We are happy to present the **second edition** of our newsletter informing you about our work during the second half of 2012. These are, again, difficult times in Palestine. The war on Gaza has just ended with a ceasefire. Now, the wellbeing of the civilian population is a priority, and political initiatives to revive a political process to prevent more violence will be crucial. Hbs has been active in the Gaza Strip ever since the foundation's office was established in 1999. We have many friends and partners there, and try to support the civil society under the difficult conditions under which they work. Only recently we held a **conference**, discussing solutions to overcome the blockade which had disastrous consequences over the last five years. We will try to continue to do our part so that the young population of Gaza will get the opportunities they deserve. At the same time, almost unnoticed by many, reform demands in Jordan have been significantly stepped up. The Syrian refugee crisis also affects Jordan. Hbs **visited** the "Al-Zaatari" Camp in early October. This newsletter is supposed to give you an overview over our work in the second half of 2012. As always, we thank you for your interest and encourage you to keep in touch with us and visit our office.

Dr. René Wildangel, Director hbs Ramallah (Palestine/Jordan Office)

News from hbs-Ramallah office (Palestine-Jordan)

Visits and delegations

From 09 July to 12 July 2012 the *Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung (hbs) Ramallah* organised the visit of **Tom Koenigs**, MP of the party Alliance '90/The Greens and **Chairman of the Human Rights Committee of the German Bundestag**. Koenigs devoted four days for an in-depth programme on the human rights situation in Palestine, including various field trips in the

occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) and several meetings with local human rights activists and civil society actors. Find a full article about the visit [here](#).

Past Events

On **October 22th**, **Pal-Think for Strategic Studies** in cooperation with the *hbs* held a conference entitled "**The Gaza Blockade: Addressing Consequences and Recovery Strategies**". Stakeholders from civil society and research attended the conference in Gaza, in order to focus on strategies to overcome the main economic and political challenges in the Gaza Strip. In order to read a report about the conference and the background- papers for the discussion in English or Arabic, visit the website of our partner [Pal-Think](#).

Between **September 21th** and **December 15th 2012**, the only annual women's film festival in the Arab world, **Shashat 8th Women's Film Festival in Palestine 2012**, took place. Under the Title "I am a Woman from Palestine", creative short movies from female Palestinian, Arab, and international filmmakers have been shown in Ramallah, Bethlehem, Nablus, Jerusalem and Gaza from. The program and description can be found on [Shashat's Homepage](#).



Poster of Shashat's 8th Women's Film Festival

In Cooperation with the *hbs office Ramallah* and 13 radio stations, Students from the **Media Development Center** of Birzeit University listened to the untold stories from villages



Closing ceremony of "Villages Voices" Project on the 6th of November, 2012

across the West Bank and transformed them into suspense audio productions. Please read an article about the Village Voices at the Webpage of the [MDC](#).

From **September 30th** to **October 4th**, the **Second Regional Summer School** organized by the *hbs offices Ramallah, Beirut and Tunis* took place in Amman. 24 young professionals, postgraduates, activists, and climate researchers from various Arab countries discussed the challenges climate change poses for the Arab Middle East and North African region. Special focus was set on gender-responsiveness and urban livelihoods. A report can be read [here](#).

The **Palestinian Young Filmmakers Association** with support from the *hbs Ramallah* send four Palestinian filmmakers to training workshops in **Cairo** from **July 2nd to 4th** and **Leipzig** in Germany on **October 30th, 31st and November 1st**. The Workshop aimed at documenting the influence of social media in the Arab Spring.

On **September 24th**, *hbs* invited to a **round table discussion in Ramallah**, focused on



Panel Discussion in Amman

“The German Energy Transition and the Potential for Renewable Energy in Palestine”. How the transition works and what it means for Jordan were the questions for a second event, a panel discussion on **September 25th** in **Amman** organised by the *hbs* in cooperation with **EDAMA**. Please visit Facebook to see some pictures; for an overview of the discussion and to watch the PowerPoint presentations have a look at our [webpage](#).

With support of the *hbs*, the Palestinian Institute for the Study of Democracy, **Muwatin** organized its 18th Annual Conference on **September 21st and 22nd** in Ramallah, entitled: **“Two Years on the Arab Revolutions - Questions and Fault Lines”**. Find a report about the event at our [webpage](#).

As Part of the Project **“Building common Agendas for Empowerment and Strengthening Women’s Participation”**, the **Arab Women Organisation (AWO)** in Jordan, organised a conference on ‘strengthening the links between women’s NGOs and state actors in order to promote women’s rights on the decision making level’ on **July 10th** in **Crown Plaza Hotel in Amman**.



Group Picture of AWO Conference

A **Conference** about the Present and Future of **“Area C”** and the Jordan Valley, entitled: **“Strategies of Confronting Israel’s Colonial Control”** took place from **July 6th till 8th** in Ramallah, organised by the **Institute for Jerusalem Studies**. It aimed to deepen knowledge about the goals, methods and practices of Israel’s colonial control in **“Area C”** and help building Palestinian strategies for challenging them.

hbs has supported a project on research and advocacy with the Center of Women Legal Research and Counseling (CWLRC) about the status of divorced young women in Gaza from January until November this year. You can find the summary of the project [here](#).



Young women during a workshop with CWLRC in Gaza

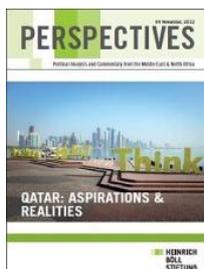
Upcoming Events

18th session of the **Conference of the Parties (COP 18)** on the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Qatar (UNFCCC) will take place on **November 26th to December 7th** in Doha/Qatar and *hbs Ramallah* is sending activists and partners from Palestine and Jordan to be part of the *hbs* delegation. *Heinrich Böll Foundation*, in cooperation with the World Future Council will host an official side event on “The Renewable Energy Revolution – Lessons Applied in the Middle East and Africa” on 30th November 2012.

In our web dossier “**Seasons of Change**” you can find a huge variety of Publications related to climate change and resource management in MENA. In addition to that, *hbs Ramallah* will publish articles during the COP, focusing on the topics of the negotiations on our [website](#).



Resources/ Miscellaneous



The 4th edition of our “**perspectives**” **publication** just arrived. Our offices in Ramallah, Tunis and Beirut asked authors from the region – and from Qatar - to look at the increasing role the small Gulf state tries to play in the Middle East. Qatar is also the host of the COP 18 Climate negotiations (see above).

After six years without elections on **October 20th**, 505.000 Palestinians **elect the local municipality councils**. The *hbs Ramallah* took part with three observers from *hbs* staff to

observe election stations all over the West Bank. Please read their [statement](#) to the electoral process and an [article](#) by *hbs* office director Dr. René Wildangel.

Since the last newsletter, our partner organization MA'AN Development Center has issued six editions of its environmental online magazine in Arabic. You can find the November issue here and all other editions on the website:

49: <http://www.maan-ctr.org/magazine/Archive/Issue49/index.php> (November 2012)

The Director of the *hbs Ramallah* René Wildangel visited the **Za'atari Refugee Camp in Jordan** in October. His article about the disastrous conditions he met at the camp can be found [here](#).

A [new study](#) by **Nicholas Pelham** from September 2012, which was co-funded by *hbs Ramallah*, tries to shed light on the background of the recently destabilized situation in the **Sinai**.

hbs Ramallah offers **internships** to students and graduates from Germany and elsewhere, for those with a strong interest in political and social development in the region and whose interests align with the *hbs* program. Our next call will be for the period from **January through March 2013**. For further information please check our [website](#).

Imprint:

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