As the media propagates values while giving citizens a sense of identity, it can be a powerful tool to enact social change and ease tensions in the Middle East, just like in other regions. Eradicating fake news also poses a major challenge.

The regional Qarib project is funded by the French Development Agency (AFD) and supports media outlets operating in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Palestine in order to boost social cohesion, promote the integration of communities, and women in particular, and encourage public debate.

**AIMS**

- Promote investigative journalism within communities that covers issues related to daily life;
- Make the media more independent and help it prevent the spread of disinformation;
- Turn media outlets into forums for interaction for local initiatives, with the aim of reducing tensions between individuals, communities and public authorities.

**FOR WHOM?**

- Promote investigative journalism within communities that covers issues related to daily life;
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WHEN?
From January 2020 to December 2024.

HOW?
- Encourage the sharing and dissemination of good journalistic practices at regional level;
- Bring media outlets and their audiences closer together: training journalists on how to cover topics aimed at improving social cohesion and on innovative formats;
- Strengthen trust in the media and the news: identifying and sharing initiatives for verifying information; raising awareness of source verification among young people, and of advocacy among media outlets and authorities;
- Encourage the sustainability of independent media and citizen-friendly journalism;
- Feed into the debate on local news and gain a better understanding of public expectations: meetings between the various stakeholders in the media ecosystem to promote a dialogue between citizens, the media and authorities.

EXPECTED RESULTS
- The regional emergence of a community of practices for journalists and an audience for content related to living together;
- The production and dissemination of interactive content on social issues revealing the challenges associated with cohesion, diversity, citizenship and inclusion;
- Heightened public awareness and understanding of news verification and production processes, particularly among young people;
- Trialling of economic models to encourage certain media outlets to use innovative approaches to achieve sustainability;
- Measurement, analysis and development of the extent to which the media focuses on social issues, and smoother relations between the media and authorities.

CFI, the French media development agency
CFI provides support to media organisations as development actors across several continents. A subsidiary of France Médias Monde and an operator of the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, the agency is currently working on around 30 projects that fall under three major programmes: Media and Governance, Media and Enterprise, Media and Development. The “Media and Development” programme helps media organisations to take ownership of development issues (education, health, gender) by strengthening the relationship of trust between journalists and civil society.

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60 months
€10M
4 countries